

ENQUIRER

Kensington & Chelsea

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***News, Cinema, Music, Health & Wellbeing,
Arts & Antiques, Property, Education***



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Kensington's loyalty card offering***

N News



K&C launches “Greener, Safer, Fairer” new four-year plan



Kensington and Chelsea has published its new Council Plan following extensive consultation with residents, businesses, and community groups. After hearing from over a thousand voices throughout the borough, the Council’s leadership team has set out a vision that maps out the priorities for the next four years and what people want the organisation to focus on.

“The focal point,” the Council said in a press release, “of the new plan is a mission and a further shift in culture, with an ambition to become the best council for a borough that is greener, safer, and fairer.”

The Council has made a number of early announcements to underpin the plan. It will freeze council tax to support people with the cost of living, and go further by providing a £100 Cost of Living Rebate for

people living in properties that are council tax band A to D. This is putting a total of £1.7m back into the pockets of residents, at a time when they really need it. In the wake of Covid-19 and in the face of high living costs.

Further investment in tackling climate change, including a £14m fund to accelerate net-zero commitments in the Council’s own buildings and vehicles, this includes a ring fenced £8m fund for schools to achieve greater energy efficiency.

Furthermore, the Council has immediately launched a programme to better connect its own staff with the communities they serve, no matter their role or position. Every officer at the Council will be asked to spend at least two days a year volunteering in the borough on local projects and with local organisations.

The Children’s Book Project has found a new home in Golborne Road with a social investment lease supported by Kensington and Chelsea Council. The charity is a recipient of a Queen’s Award for voluntary services, receiving over 800,000 donations of books, which it sorts and donates to schools and families throughout London.

The Council has worked with the charity to find a place “where it can be at the heart of the community.” It has been provided with two leases, a social investment lease and another at a market rent. The Unit let on the former provides a free space for it to sort books and for storage while the latter will be an office for the charity to operate.

“We are determined to make the best use

of community space available,” Cllr Kim Taylor-Smith, Lead Member for Grenfell, Housing and Social Investment said, “and this lease will support a lifelong resident who has been helping children access literature for years to move their project to a place where it can help even more people. It’s great to see the value and community benefits that social investment brings to the borough.”

The charity began at Barlby Primary school in North Kensington, founded by local resident Liberty Venn. After years at Lots Road in Chelsea, it has returned to a new premise near Trellick Tower. It was formally launched on Thursday, 2nd March, “to celebrate the power of partnership and community and reflect on the impact it has made.”



Children's book charity moves to new North Kensington home



Beating the gender sports gap

Last summer, Nuffield Trust found that 47 percent of women had not done any vigorous exercise for the past 12 months, compared with 34 percent of men. However, it also found that most women want to do more exercise.

The main thing holding many women back include time and cost as well as embarrassment. With many women being primary caregivers, and rising childcare costs, many are unable to have time to exercise. The cost of gyms is among the factors.

In Kensington and Chelsea, the Active

for Life programme, leisure centre activities and parks programmes alongside the resident card, are all affordable opportunities for women to enjoy exercise either “in the zone on their own,” or with friends and family.

For International Women’s Day on the 8th March, women of all ages are invited to take part in activities at Kensington Leisure Centre and Chelsea Sports Centre. Many women-only classes take place throughout the day and they are a great chance to find out about the free and affordable options available.



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Enquirer 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.

CORRECTIONS & CLARIFICATIONS

The editorial team at Enquirer 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.

N News

Mayor announces further £8.5m to tackle violence and improve Met. Police

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has announced proposals to invest a further £8.5 million, as part of his commitment to tackle violence in the capital and raise standards in the Met Police.

The Mayor is proposing to allocate the additional funding to the Met and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime, to

help tackle drug supply lines, provide further training to leaders and line managers in the Met, and boost the work of the Violence Reduction Unit in a bid to tackle violence, which is rooted in prevention and early intervention.

The funding plan has been announced as the Mayor publishes his final draft budget for the Greater London Authority (GLA) Group for 2023-24, taking into account that council tax and business rates returns from local authorities are higher than were forecast in his draft Budget proposals in January.

This announcement follows a package of new funding for police that was announced in January as part of the draft budget. That includes £14.2 million to raise standards, improve performance, and rebuild the trust and confidence of all London's communities in the Met Police services and further investments in policing raised from a proposed increase in the council tax precept.

The £29.3 million raised by this proposed increase will also fund 500 additional Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) to work in areas disproportionately affected by crime, and support other work to tackle violence and drugs in London.



Soak up spring at Kew Gardens with new exclusive TfL offer

Ahead of spring in the capital, a new ticket offer with TfL is giving visitors to Kew Gardens access to discounted tickets when travelling to the UNESCO World Heritage site using its services. TfL customers can now get up to 30 percent off standard adult and concession tickets during peak season at Kew Gardens, saving up to £7.20 on the standard adult ticket price.

This offer is valid seven days a week until the 30th June, excluding the Easter weekend. It can be claimed in person at the entrance to Kew Gardens or online using the code KEWTFL30 at checkout. All visitors need is to show proof of travel via the TfL Oyster and contactless app.

London Underground and Kew's iconic Temperate House are both marking their joint 160th anniversaries with a commemorative artwork featuring the Grade I-listed structure, set to be unveiled on the TfL network later in the year. The Temperate House is the world's largest surviving Victorian glasshouse, home to over 1,500



species of rare and threatened plants from around the world.

Visitors can also buy TfL and Kew Gardens merchandise exclusively at the Kew shop and online at shop.kew.org. The range includes mugs, magnets, tea towels, cushions, tote bags, postcards, and bookmarks. Fans of the vintage railway posters can take home a new range of Kew Garden posters from the London Transport Museum collection, dating back to the 1920s.

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Evidence gladiators fought in Britain

Gladiator fights watched by roaring crowds in arenas took place in Britain in the late second century AD, new research has found. Crucial evidence has been discovered after a vase decorated with depictions of gladiatorial combat was found in a Roman grave in Colchester all the way back in 1848.

Now, tests have shown that the Colchester Vase was made using local clay around AD 160-200. The inscription features the names of two gladiators were cut into the clay before firing, rather than afterwards as experts previously believed. This means it was an intrinsic part of the vessel's original design and was not added later to be a generic arena representation.

That makes the vase a piece of sporting

memorabilia, and could even have been commissioned by a gladiator trainer or owner, or someone else involved with such contests.

Gladiators were typically slaves and those on the vase are identified as Memnon and Valentinus, thought to be their stage names. While gladiators were seen as social outcasts, they were also celebrities. Though no amphitheatre has been found, Colchester is known to be the home of two Roman theatres where these contests could have been held.

The vase will be displayed at a major exhibition on gladiators at Colchester Castle from the 15th July. Roman oil lamps, one of which is shaped like a gladiator's helmet, will be exhibited as well.



***Nearly half of
English neighbourhoods
lacking 'tree cover'***

Nearly half of England's neighbourhoods have less than 10 percent tree cover and lower-income areas are having far fewer trees compared with wealthier ones, analysis from Friends of the Earth has found. England's total tree cover is just 12.8 percent according to the research and only 10 percent is made up of woodland. By comparison, throughout the EU, woodland cover stands at 38 percent.

The government aims to increase tree cover to 16.5 percent by 2050 under plans to reach net-zero and protect biodiversity. However, this is not enough, say campaigners, as they call for tree numbers to be doubled.

The analysis was carried out by mapping experts Terra Sulis on behalf of Friends of the Earth. For the first time, it identified

lone trees and street trees in England using laser imaging, bolstering previous research that accounted only for those in woodlands and clustered in small groups. It found that 43 percent of all neighbourhoods in England had less than 10 percent tree canopy cover and 84 percent had less than 20 percent coverage.

Some areas have far less than others. South Holland in Lincolnshire has been found to have the lowest with just 2.2 percent. On the other hand, Surrey Heath in Surrey ranks the highest with 36.1 percent. Wealthier areas were better off. Neighbourhoods that ranked lowest on the Index of Multiple Deprivation, which looks at social disadvantage, had far fewer trees compared with affluent ones.



Scotland first to ban environmentally harmful anaesthetic

Scotland has become the world's first country to ban its hospitals using the anaesthetic desflurane because of the environmental threat it poses. NHS data suggests that the gas, used to keep patients unconscious during surgery, has a global warming potential 2,500 times greater than carbon dioxide.

Banning it in Scotland, from its peak use in 2017, would cut emissions equal to powering 1,700 homes a year. Hospitals throughout the UK have already cut down.

In the last few years, over 40 hospital

trusts in England and a few in Wales have stopped using the anaesthetic. NHS England is set to follow Scotland from 2024, prohibiting its use for all but the most exceptional circumstances.

Banning it across NHS hospitals in England would cut harmful emissions equal to those caused from powering 11,000 homes in a year, NHS analysis of desflurane use in 2020 has found.

More countries, including many in Europe, are expected to make a similar move in the next few years.

London Home Football Traffic Watch

Men's Home Football

March 8, Tottenham v
AC Milan, 20:00

March 11, Crystal Palace v
Man City, 17:30

March 11, Tottenham v Nottingham Forest, 1

March 12. Fulham v Arsenal. 14:00

March 16, Arsenal v
Sporting CP, 20:00

March 18, Chelsea v Everton, 17:30
March 19, Arsenal v

Crystal Palace, 14:00
April 1, Arsenal v Leeds,

April 1, Chelsea v
Aston Villa, 17:30

April 1, Crystal Palace v
Leicester City, 15:00

Leicester City, 15:00
April 1, Fulham v
Bournemouth, 15:00

Women's Home Football

March 12, Arsenal v Reading, 18:45
March 12, Chelsea v Man Utd, 12:30

March 15, Tottenham v
Leicester City, 19:00

March 19, Fulham v Millwall, 14:30
March 25, Tottenham v Arsenal, 15:00

March 26, Crystal Palace v
Blackburn Rovers, 12:00

Blackburn Rovers, 12:00
March 29, Arsenal v
Bayern Munich, 20:00

March 30, Chelsea v Lyon, 20:00
April 2, Arsenal v Man City, 14:00

Turkey-Syria hit by devastating earthquake



Image: Alaa Ealyawi

On Monday the 6th February at 4:17am, a 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck southern Turkey near its border with Syria. The shock released the equivalent of 8 million tons of TNT. Just nine hours later, the same region experienced a 7.5 magnitude earthquake.

At the time of writing, more than 50,000 people are known to have died, over 120,000 are injured, and many more are being discovered every day. Survivors, including children are being found under the rubble with more than 54,000 buildings, including hospitals, and schools being destroyed or damaged, leaving people in freezing conditions. At least 2 million people have been made homeless as a result.

It is among the strongest recorded in Turkey, equal to the 1939 Erzincan earthquake and surpassed only by the 1688 North Anatolia earthquake.

Turkey is one of the planet's most active earthquake zones because it is located in an area where three tectonic plates interact. As these plates move past one another, they are stuck at their edge because of friction. This causes pressure to build up. Once it's released, an earthquake is triggered.

A number of factors, both natural and human, are thought to be the cause of the devastation including the high number of casualties. Modern building codes in most countries should provide the necessary guidance to make earthquake-resistant structures. While many buildings in both Turkey and Syria are based on modern building codes, some experts point out that local infrastructure and recent development policies could be contributors to the destruction in the region.

"More information is required to fully understand the role of the quality of the building stock on the damage observed in Turkey and Syria," says Ashly Cabas, assistant professor of civil, construction and environmental engineering and a fellow at the Center for Geospatial Analytics, "for example, old structures lacking the necessary retrofit measures to comply with current building codes, or new buildings lacking the appropriate construction practices or compliance with the building code."

However, a structure's design is not the only factor that affects a building's resistance to earthquakes. The ground beneath

is also important. The softness and thickness of sedimentary deposits can influence the amplitude of seismic waves and change their frequency content and duration. Saturated, granular soils can lose their strengths and behave like liquids, leading to large deformations in the ground, which can damage structures.

"The resistant infrastructure is unfortunately patchy in South Turkey and especially Syria," Dr Carmen Solana, reader in volcanology and risk communication at the University of Portsmouth, said.

This is an area that had not experienced a major earthquake in a long time and was given no warning signs. As a result, the level of preparedness would be less than for a region that regularly deals with tremors.

As search-and-rescue attempts were underway, several aftershocks, including the second earthquake, added to the destruction, causing it to surpass Japan's 2011 earthquake, which caused a nuclear disaster at Fukushima.

Some theorised that the stress on the fault had been building up over centuries.

"GPS shows that across the East Anatolian Fault, the blocks are moving 15

millimetres per year relative to each other. That motion stretches the crust across the fault," Judith Hubbard, a visiting assistant professor of Earth and atmospheric sciences at Cornell University, wrote on Twitter. "A magnitude 7.8 earthquake might slip 5 metres on average. So today's quake is catching up on about 300 years of slow stretching."

The timing of the earthquake also played a part in the severity of the devastation, as the earthquake hit in the early morning, when many people were asleep and had little chance to escape.

Humanitarian efforts have been underway to provide aid to those affected by the devastation. The UK government immediately responded to provide aid to support the Turkish government, including a team of 77 search and rescue experts with specialist equipment, and is working with the UN and other partner organisations to coordinate the emergency response in Syria. The government also matched the £5 million in public donations to the DEC appeal.

To donate, visit dec.org.uk



INTEREST RATES RISE AS MORTGAGE RATES KEEP FALLING



The Bank of England has increased interest rates by 0.5 percent up to 4 percent, the highest level since October 2008. It is the tenth consecutive meeting in which the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has increased the official cost of borrowing, continuing to try and bring down high inflation.

The latest increase would add an additional £60 per month to repayments for any homeowner with a £200,000 mortgage. Those with variable rate mortgages have seen their monthly mortgage costs increase by £440 since the MPC began raising interest rates from 0.1 percent in December 2021.

As many as 850,000 homeowners have a tracker mortgage while 1.1 million are on their lender's standard variable rate. Both of these move up and down in line with changes to the Bank rate. However, despite increases to the cost of borrowing, the average rate charged for new fixed rate mortgages has continued to drop, falling by 0.35 percent for two-year deals and by 0.43 percent for five year ones. This offers hope to anyone needing to remortgage in the near future.

There is more good news for borrowers. "The tone of the minutes that accompany the MPC's interest rate announcement suggesting the Bank Rate could be close to peaking," says Zoopla. "There was a notable shift in language, with the MPC saying there "would" be further increases to interest rates "if" there was evidence of

persistent inflationary pressures."

This is in contrast to its previous remarks that it would continue to "respond forcefully," taking "the actions necessary" to restore inflation back down to its target. Two of the nine-strong MPC voted again to leave rates unchanged.

Despite interest rising by 1 percent since the end of October, the cost of fixed rate mortgages has been dropping, falling by just over 0.9 percent in the same period. Interest charged on fixed rate mortgages skyrocketed at the end of September 2022 following then Chancellor Kwasi Kwarteng's mini-budget. This triggered a sharp rise in government borrowing cost. That then influences the rate in which lenders borrow money for fixed rate mortgages. However, since Jeremy Hunt took over the post, they have been dropping and this is expected to continue in the coming months.

After a high of around 6 percent, mortgage rates for new business are now generally below 5 percent and are expected to stay between 4-5 percent for most of the year. This is good news for anyone planning to remortgage but is worried about passing the lender's affordability test as a result of the rising cost of living.

After meeting with regulators and the government, lenders have agreed to allow any customer up to date with payments the chance to switch to a new deal without having to pass an additional affordability test.

Most homes saw their prices drop in the last quarter of 2022 following a turbulent few months. This meant that the average house price rose 6.5 percent in the year until December 2022, the lowest annual growth since May 2021. It marks a slowing down compared to the 8.3 percent rise in the previous year as moves and prices were being fuelled by the pandemic's boost to the market.

Furthermore, it is expected that single-digit price falls will continue over the first half of 2023. However, thanks to a big jump in home values from 2020 to mid-2022, these moderate price falls will do little to affect the equity that most homeowners have gained in the long term.

Estate agents saw the number of enquiries fall by 50 percent in the last quarter of 2022 compared with the previous quarter. With far fewer buyers in the market and sellers uncertain about achieving a sale, buyers have been able to drive some bargains, getting an average of 3-4 percent off asking prices set by sellers. However, discounts will likely stay at this level and there is little reason for them

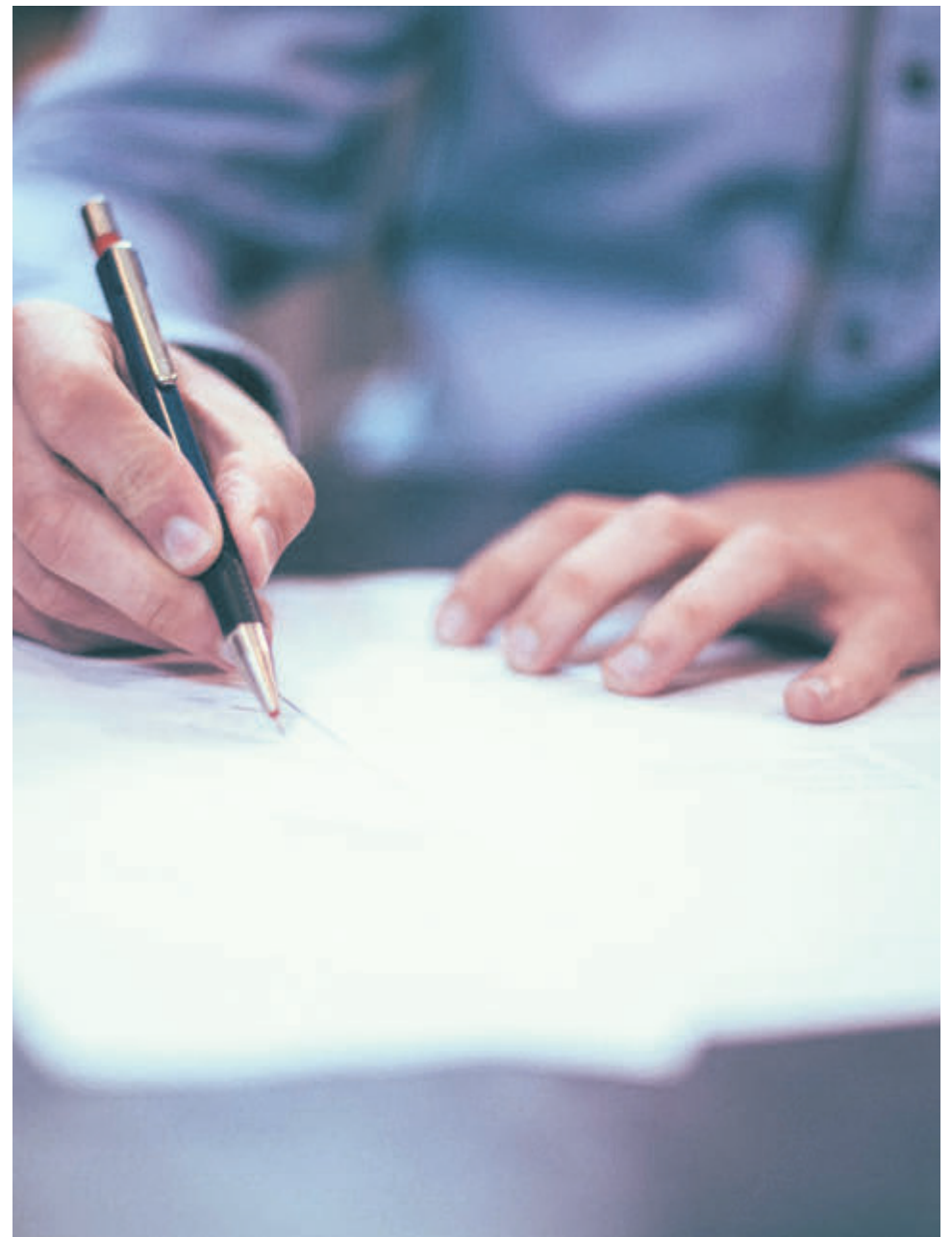
to go up in the next few months.

Many thinking about moving this year will likely be waiting to see if mortgage rates and house prices continue to drop. The economic outlook has improved somewhat recently, offering confidence to buyers and sellers alike. The number of buyers in the market has bounced back to pre-pandemic levels, in line with 2018 and 10 percent higher than in 2019.

However, priorities have changed as buyers are now more value conscious. Flats and towns close to big cities are high up on many people's wish lists. As people are seeing a "squeeze on disposable income" they are considering moving as many see it as a chance to either release equity or find homes that are cheaper to run. Demand from first-time buyers also remains as they look to escape rising rent.

There is good news. 92 percent of homeowners saw value gains on their homes in 2022 despite uncertainty at the end of the year. The average capital gain was £19,000 and nearly 3 million homeowners made over £50,000

"MODERATE" HOUSE PRICE FALL SET TO CONTINUE





Enquiring Minds

Adult Education Courses

Arts

Making Colour Pigments from Plants

V&A South Kensington

Have you ever wondered how colour pigments are made? All will be revealed in this workshop with artist and pigment maker Lucy Mayes from London Pigment. Over two days Lucy will introduce you to the history and theory behind lake pigments, colours made using natural dyes and a binder. After looking at historical examples in the V&A's collection, you will get the chance to try your hand at making a palette of primary colours using your natural primary pigments. We will use them to create a unique hand-painted colour wheel based on historical examples from the collection to take away.

Cromwell Road, London, SW7 2RL

vam.ac.uk

March 25-26

Business

Reset. Restart

British Library

Join one or more of this series of webinars for practical, jargon-free training and advice from marketing to sales, current trends and, of course, funding. These are being run monthly so make sure you check back here to see what's coming up. This programme is designed to help you overcome obstacles and thrive in the current climate. Reset. Restart began during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic with the aim to support small businesses to adapt and weather the storm. Even though the set of challenges business owners are facing today have changed, help is just as necessary now as it was then.

96 Euston Rd, London NW1 2DB

bl.uk/events/reset-restart

See website for dates

Culinary

Complete French Baking Workshop

Bread Ahead

Become a formidable French baker with this full day French baking workshop. With expert guidance from our Expert Bakers, you will create a rustic pain de campagne as well as delectable croissants, brioche and madeleines. This baking workshop is suitable for all levels of experience, runs for 6½ hours and includes lunch.

249 Pavilion Road, London, SW1X 0BP

breadahead.com

March 31, April 13

Language

Dutch Beginners

University of Westminster

Dutch Beginner is the first exposure to the language, allowing you to start to communicate. The course is made up of three parts. If you're an absolute beginner, you should start with Part 1. For those who've done some study before, you may be able to join Part 2 or Part 3 directly – contact the university if you're unsure of your level by using the details at the bottom of the page. These lessons follow a communicative approach to language teaching, focusing on the language you need to communicate in authentic situations with an emphasis on speaking and listening. Classes are taught by experienced language teachers who are native speakers of the language or equivalent.

309 Regent Street, London, W1B 2HW

westminster.ac.uk

See website to book

Science, Technology, Engineering, & Maths

Woodworking classes

Class Bento

Get creative with DIY crafts and discover fantastic new passions with a selection of woodworking courses in London. Whether you're looking for an experience gift to try with a loved one, you're on the hunt for team building activities, or you're searching for ways to meet like-minded others, you'll love this relaxing workshop experience in the city. You'll be able to connect with an expert local crafter, who'll show you a whole host of tips and tricks that will help you transform wood into amazing handmade designs using only simple tools and your new talents!

classbento.co.uk

See website for more information

Sport & Fitness

Become a Referee

The FA

The FA Referee Course is designed to equip new referees with the key skills and knowledge they will need to be able to referee grassroots football matches safely and effectively. It is for people aged 14 and over who want to referee mini soccer, 9 v 9 and/or 11 v 11 football. The course comprises online learning on the Laws of the Game and face to face training. You must complete the online learning before attending the face-to-face training. You will also need to complete online safeguarding training before attending the face-to-face training.

thefa.com

See website for more information

Compiled & edited by Fahad Redha

Health & Wellbeing

Heart disease is among the leading causes of death and disability in the UK. It is usually associated with a build-up of fatty deposits in the arteries as well as an increased risk of blood clots. It can also be associated with damaged arteries in organs such as the brain, kidneys, and eyes.

probably seen the adverts on TV with the acronym FAST. To refresh, it stands for:

Face – the face may droop on one side and the person may struggle to smile, or their mouth or eye may have dropped.

Arms – the person may be unable to lift both arms and hold them up, either feeling weak or numb.

Facts about heart disease

Anyone can be at risk of heart disease but if you are someone with high cholesterol, high blood pressure, or diabetes, you are more likely to develop heart disease. That also goes if you smoke, are overweight, don't eat a healthy diet, or don't get enough physical activity. Age and family history are also risk factors.

Coronary heart disease can occur when the flow of oxygen-rich blood to the heart muscles is either blocked or reduced. This puts an increased strain on the heart, leading to angina (chest pains due to restricted blood flow), heart attacks (when blood flow is suddenly blocked), and heart failure (where heart flow is unable to pump blood around the body properly).

It can happen as a result of cholesterol and fatty material building up inside the arteries. Too much cholesterol in the blood, high blood pressure, smoking, and too much sugar in the blood brought on by diabetes, are all among the biggest risk factors.

A stroke is when blood supply to the brain is cut off, leading to brain damage and potentially even death. You have

Speech – their speech could be slurred or garbled and they may not even be able to talk or understand you when you speak to them.

Time – call 999 immediately if you see these signs or symptoms.

A transient ischaemic attack (also called a TIA or "mini-stroke") is similar, except that the blood flow to the brain is only temporarily disrupted. Its symptoms are the same.

Peripheral arterial disease can happen when there's blockage in the arteries to the limbs, usually the legs. This can lead to dull or cramping leg pain which gets worse when walking and improves with rest, hair loss on the legs and feet, numbness or weakness in the legs and persistent ulcers (open sores) on the feet and legs.

These are among the many conditions that are associated with heart disease. For more information, visit [nhs.uk/conditions/cardiovascular-disease](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cardiovascular-disease).



Tips for a healthy heart



jigsaw puzzle can help relieve stress and may be worth trying after a particularly difficult day.

Yoga, which can aid with balance, flexibility, and strength can also help with relaxation and stress relief. However, it can also help with heart health, research from the Journal of Evidence-Based Complementary & Alternative Medicine, has found.

Related to that, laughing out loud, some research suggests, can lower stress and decrease inflammation in your arteries, and even raise the levels of good cholesterol. Music, especially if you like to dance along, can also help. The Mayo Clinic reports that besides getting your heart and lungs to work, it can also burn as much as 200 calories an hour.

Whatever your weight, sitting still for long periods of time could cut years out of your lifespan. If you work at a desk, it's important to take regular breaks to move around. Go for a walk on your lunch break and try to find time to enjoy regular exercise. If you can, leave the car and consider walking or cycling. You won't just be helping the environment. You'll be improving your own wellbeing.

If you need to drive, remember that stress is detrimental to health. Try not to get bothered by that driver who cuts you off or hogs the middle lane. Try to eliminate stress on your drive. One way is to focus on what you could do rather than dwelling on what others should do. You'll always get drivers who don't do things the way you'd like them to and it's important not to let their mistakes affect you. Besides helping your health, it will also make you drive safer and may even save you some fuel.

The bottom line is that heart health is affected by how much stress and physical activity is in our lives, not to mention diet. It's important to stay on top of it as it can add years to our life.

There are many steps you can take to protect your heart and one of the best is to avoid tobacco. Smoking is among the top controllable risk factors for heart disease. There are many ways you can stop smoking including the NHS Quit Smoking app. It makes a difference not just to your heart but overall wellbeing including mental health.

Of course, the same applies to eating healthy and exercising. All of these are good for general health and that includes the heart. Eating fish, for example, is rich in omega-3 and can help stave off heart disease.

Doing things with your hands such as knitting and sewing, or woodworking and cooking, can all relieve stress and help your mind unwind and that has a positive impact on your heart. Even completing a

As a lifelong resident of Guernsey, Paul Le Breton kept a close eye on his heart condition. Having undergone surgery in 2008 to replace his faulty aortic valve – one of four valves that control blood flow through the heart – Paul knew within 15 years his bioprosthetic valve would likely begin to wear out.

“I knew my valve possibly was getting near the end of its life,” says 58-year-old Paul, who owns and operates an auto repair garage on Guernsey. “So, I had a CT scan and some tests done locally.”

He underwent testing in 2020. After being monitored for two years, in May 2022, his cardiologist reviewed new test results that showed a startling discovery. Not only was Paul’s replacement valve working at just 20% capacity, he also developed an

aortic aneurysm – a bulge in the wall of his aorta that could be life-threatening if it were to rupture or split.

“My doctor said, ‘You need to get this repaired within two weeks,’” recalls Paul. “It was a complete shock to me. He said there was one surgeon he would recommend do it.”

Paul immediately scheduled an appointment with Ranjit Deshpande, MBBS, FRCS, a consultant cardiac surgeon at Cleveland Clinic London. The hospital opened in March 2022, and Paul and his wife, Emma, made the 45-minute flight to London to meet with Mr Deshpande and schedule the surgery.

“I told Paul his artery was enlarged to almost six centimetres, a stage where it can rupture or lead to fatal haemorrhage or bleeding,” notes Mr Deshpande. “He would need a major operation, and we couldn’t put it off for too long.”

Paul experienced a sudden and unexpected tragedy when one of his brothers suddenly suffered cardiac arrest and passed away. While devastated by the news, it reinforced the severity of Paul’s situation, and he went ahead with the surgery just days after his brother’s death.

Mr Deshpande led a specialized team of physicians, nurses and anaesthetists through a simulation the night before the surgery. The next day, they completed the procedure, during which he repaired the aneurysm and replaced the faulty aortic valve, which had begun leaking blood into Paul’s heart.

Mr Deshpande emphasises one of the

Man Undergoes Complex Heart Surgery, Prompted by Family Tragedy



most important parts of the process is postoperative care. Having an intensive care team, including a consultant anaesthetist available around the clock, ensures patients like Paul receive the best care at all times. Adds Emma, “The staff were brilliant, and so informative. I was really happy with the way they looked after Paul.”

Paul points to his team of caregivers as the key to his thriving recovery. “I’m back playing golf and working out in the gym,” he says. “I thought I would never get back to the position I was, and now I feel better than ever.”





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grandappetites

To be a restaurant critic in London is a great privilege and although I have spent most of my adult working life in kitchens, restaurants and hotels, I have reached advanced middle age with a great appreciation of how tough a job it is to get any food to the table. As a critic, I risk nothing and only offer my opinions, which will soon be the next days 'fish and chip wrappings'. So, when I come across a young man of 27, Alex Webb, who has achieved so much and with such a young man's joy of cooking, it makes the years roll away and I remember the passion that only comes with youth. If we critics can offer anything, it is in praise of the new and the young. Alex Webb, is a fresh-faced chef from Essex

view of the cocktail counter and the hustle and bustle of Mayfair beyond. Tonight's fare was the tasting menu, priced at £110 per person and sourced from the finest of British seasonal suppliers from the Lake District to Exmoor. The restaurant's menu, we are told, is inspired from the flavours Alex remembers from his childhood and later adventures.

To set us off on our seven-course tasting menu experience, George poured a glass of Hattingley Classic Reserve NV (£17), English sparkling white wine, accompanied by the Sea, Land, & Tree Canapés. These were beautifully presented and consisted of a flavour explosion of delicate goat cheese tartlets, a tempura oyster and a staggering intricate beetroot pastry branch, for which



Alex Webb

Park Lane

who won MasterChef: The Professionals in 2020. He started his journey in Essex washing pots at aged 14, before going on to train at Hélène Darroze at The Connaught, Dinner by Heston, Roux at Parliament Square and the Frog in Hoxton, before taking MasterChef by storm. He went on to open a successful pop-up restaurant at Number One Park Lane terrace, during the full teeth of the Covid 19 circus. By October of 2022 he took up residency and launched his own restaurant, 'Alex Webb on Park Lane' at the Intercontinental London Park Lane.

Situated on Hamilton Place, Mayfair, the restaurant looks out onto the magnificence of the Wellington Arch on Hyde Park Corner. Alex Webb's intimate restaurant is welcoming and friendly. His knowledgeable staff (also, of a similar age) are eager to please and clearly enthusiastic about Alex's vision. George, our waiter, showed us to a booth table at the back, with a commanding

its complexity in preparation and attention to detail was staggering. The apple-aroma and flavours of the wine were superb and could rival the best Champagnes on the market. I particularly enjoyed the Herb Butter and Warm Crusty Roll served up on a bed of tiny warmed pebbles; a lovely touch. The Slow Cooked Butter & Thyme Potatoes and Black Garlic Foam Truffle, followed. A short pause was welcomed before the next dish, the Artichoke, Artichoke, Artichoke, which was presented in three different, distinctive and delicious guises. A glass of Skylark Pinot Blanc from the Orsi Vineyard (North California,) crisp and clear, cleared the pallet in preparation for the Black Cod, Sea Herbs, Onion Puree, Pickled Onions, Crispy Potato, Champagne Sauce & Exmoor Caviar, which were cooked to perfection. Leaning back and quietly undoing the bottom button of my waistcoat, I looked with unconcealed joy as George brought to the table one of the finest

Domaine Châtelaine Pouilly-Fumé (2020) I have tasted; full of green apple and pear tree-fruit notes and very reasonably priced (£17). A little whimsy followed in the form of Lobster Toast, Black Sesame and Chilli Jam, which will spoil you for any Chinese Prawn Toast ever again. You will remember this lobster version and realise what heights are achievable in this dish. For the mains finale we were served up a dressed plate of Beef Fillet, Black Mushroom Purée, Girolles, Tomato Gel, Savoy Cabbage, Beef Jus & Truffle, accompanied by the big red of the evening, a Domaine des Roches Neuves, Saumur-Champigny 'Fruit', 2021, from the Loire Valley; a good pairing for the tender-cooked beef (£15).

Outside, the life of the city protested in all its noisy and brash Park Lane brilliance, yet in Alex Webb, all was sublime.

As the sweet dessert wine flowed we were treated to an Espresso Martini soft serve ice cream, lovingly presented in a delicate cornet. Then to finish a puzzle! Your dessert arrives at the table in a mystery box with a magnifying glass and padlocked.

If you wish to enjoy the treasure that lies within you must love the puzzle and tuck in using a spoon moulded out of chocolate. I won't spoil the surprise of its contents but assure you that the whole dish was delicious and great fun!

The dining experience of Alex Webb on Park Lane was a joy, as were the staff, who were bursting with smiles and the magic of youthful ardour. Success is assured for Alex and his team. The only question is whether Mayfair, whose once dynamic and debonair atmosphere, is big enough to hold such a talented chef. I see a residency in Paris or New York, or who knows, Las Vegas. Alex is at the Intercontinental Park Lane for at least another year, so we have him for now. To paraphrase the bard, "The world is his tempura oyster".

If you are looking for inspiration this Mother's Day then look no further than Alex Webb on Park Lane. The seven-course tasting menu is available at lunch time and from 5.30 – 9.30pm.

Philip Ashby Rudd



Events Supplement

March - April '23

DANCE & OPERA

Jim Steinman's Bat Out of Hell

The Peacock

It's electrified audiences in London, New York, Toronto and Germany, and won the audience-voted Evening Standard Award for Best New Musical. Now, Jim Steinman's spectacular musical Bat Out of Hell hits the highway on UK tour in 2022. This award-winning wild child musical thunders through Meat Loaf's legendary powerhouse anthems including I'd Do Anything For Love (But I Won't Do That), Paradise By The Dashboard Light, Two Out Of Three Ain't Bad, Dead Ringer For Love and Bat Out of Hell, in an over the top theatrical spectacle unlike any other.

Portugal Street, London, WC2A 2HT
saderswells.com

Until April 1

Akhnaten

London Coliseum

Phelim McDermott's Olivier award-winning production of Philip Glass's Akhnaten returns to the ENO, following sell-out runs at the London Coliseum. Akhnaten is a mesmerising work whose text draws on ancient hymns, prayers and inscriptions sung in their original Egyptian, Hebrew and Akkadian. The opera's unique mood transports audiences to this ancient world through Glass's music (conducted by the returning Karen Kamensek) that combines his characteristic, minimalist voice with stylised movement, choreographed juggling and breathtaking costumes to visualise the rhythms of his score.

London Coliseum, St Martin's London, WC2N 4ES

eno.org

March 11 - April 5

Creature by Akram Khan

Sadler's Wells

In a dilapidated former Arctic research station, the Creature has been conscripted by a military brigade into a bold new experimental programme. He is being tested for his mental and physical ability to adapt to extreme cold, isolation and homesickness; vital qualities in mankind's proposed colonisation of the final frontiers, on earth and beyond. In humanity's fight for survival, who will be left behind? Rosebery Avenue, London, EC1R 4TN
saderswells.com

March 23 - April 1

EXHIBITIONS

Alice Neel: Hot Off The Griddle

Barbican

The largest exhibition to date in the UK of American artist Alice Neel (1900-1984) whose vivid portraits capture the shifting social and political context of the American twentieth century. Describing herself as 'a collector of souls', Neel worked in New York during a period in which figurative painting was deeply unfashionable.

Crowned the 'court painter of the underground,' her canvases celebrate those who were too often marginalised in society: labour leaders, Black and Puerto Rican children, pregnant women, Greenwich Village eccentrics, civil rights activists and queer performers.

Silk Street, London, EC2Y 8DS
barbican.org.uk

Ongoing

Andy Warhol: The Textiles

Fashion & Textiles Museum

Discover the unknown and virtually unrecorded world of textile designs by the influential pop artist and icon Andy Warhol. Dating from his early career as a commercial designer and illustrator in the 1950s and early 1960s, Warhol's textiles are now considered an important part of his body of work. These designs added considerably to his ability as an artist, which was then almost entirely devoted to realising the demands and deadlines of professional clients, leaving limited room for fantasy and vision.

83 Bermondsey Street, London, SE1 3XF
fashiontextilemuseum.org

Opens March 31

Once Upon a Time

White Cube

Imi Knoebel's exhibition 'Once Upon a Time' at White Cube Bermondsey, includes examples from three new painting series as well as a major installation exhibited for the first time. Exploring recent directions in Knoebel's ever-evolving engagement with non-representational art, the project also contains an element of storytelling, as the title suggests - the result of Knoebel looking back at his career as an abstract artist.

144-152, Bermondsey Street, London, SE1 3TQ

whitecube.com

Until March 26

Mechanical Hand

Unit London

Mechanical Hand, Tyler Hobbs' first solo exhibition with Unit London explores the interactions between man and machine, digital and analogue, and computer-driven and hand-made creations. Hobbs states that as our lives become increasingly digital 'there is an imperative for artists to help us develop a healthy relationship with computers - to help us build beautiful things.' Systems are at the crux of Hobbs' practice. He is a generative artist, meaning he uses autonomous systems to inject randomness into his pieces. In Hobbs' work, this could include anything from building an algorithm that assigns randomised probabilities to the features in the images it produces such as in Return Zero (2021) to using his hand to execute a methodical, mechanical pattern such as in Inevitable Triumph (2020). 3 Hanover Square, London, W1S 1HD
unitlondon.com

March 7 - April

FAIRS & FESTIVALS



Special Art Exhibit

Putney Pies

The Boat Race will finally be back to normal with Putney expecting lots of visitors to watch the famous, annual race on the Thames between the university rowing teams from Oxford and Cambridge. It will take place on

Sunday, 26th March and to coincide with it, Paul Mowatt, who runs Putney Pies Art, is curating an exhibition to celebrate the rowing heritage of Putney and the UK's most famous river - Catch 23.

2 Putney High St, London SW15 1SL
putneypies.co.uk
March 22 - April 23

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Events

FAIRS & FESTIVALS

The Head of the River Race

The Head of the River Race is rowed annually in March from Mortlake to Putney on the Tideway in London. Up to 400 crews of eights take part, making it one of the highest participation events in London. The first race was held in 1926 and 21 crews took part. There was no race in 1937 (there was no suitable tide on a Saturday and no competitive sport took place on Sundays at that time) and none from 1940-45 inclusive, but the race was restarted in 1946 and has taken place annually ever since. What started as an event for Tideway crews has grown steadily until it now attracts crews from all over the British Isles and beyond.

See website for more information.

horr.co.uk

March 18

London Gaming Market

Royal National Hotel

The London Gaming Market is THE place to buy retro video-games, board games and merchandise all in one place and is the ONLY event of its kind held in the heart of London. Replay Events are proud to announce Numskull Designs as their main event sponsor for 2023 where they will be bringing a huge range of gaming goodies to London Gaming Market.

38-51 Bedford Way, London, WC1H 0DG
londongamingmarket.com

March 19

What, When, March

Eat & Drink Festival

Olympia

Indulge in scrumptious delights at the ultimate foodie experience! Treat yourself to an irresistible day out at the return of Eat & Drink Festival, packed full of live demonstrations from much-loved expert chefs, street food, cocktail artistry, and your favourite tipples. Explore this food paradise and sample a variety of fresh and flavourful cuisines. Tuck into a range of tempting dishes at The Great Eat, home to some of the most exciting new flavours in global street food culture. From gourmet burgers to a tour of Indian, Italian and Latino street food, you're bound to leave feeling inspired, but most of all, hungry for more.

Hammersmith Road, London, W14 8UX
olympia.london

March 17 - April 1

Art History in Focus

London Art Week

Immerse yourself in art and its history as these interim series of talks 'Art History in Focus' returns. Events to look forward to include new exhibitions opening up this

spring in London and the UK, industry panel discussions and themed editorials. The programme includes online and live talks, continuing an initiative devised by LAW during lockdown in 2020. Art History in Focus provides a platform for dealers, curators and collectors to share some of their passions and art world interests with an international audience.

See website for more information

londonartweek.co.uk

March 21-31

Hackney Flea Market

Various (see website for more information)

Hackney Flea Market started as a pop-up event on 20th July 2013, with the aim of offering vintage marketeers and creative independents an affordable space to sell their wares and promote their business, in the busy heart of Stoke Newington's Church St. Since then, its vintage events has grown to include Peckham Salvage Yard, Hackney Record Fair, The Big London Flea, Peckham Record Fair, and Walthamstow Flea Market, attracting the most eclectic flea / vintage traders from around the country, building a reputation as the go-to place to find an amazing mix of salvaged, one-of-a-kind, lost/found objects, and personal treasures.

73A Stoke Newington Church St, London, N16 0AY

hackneyfleamarket.com

See website for dates

FAMILY & CHILDREN

Brick Dinosaurs

Horniman Museum & Gardens

In this family-friendly exhibition, some of the largest beasts to ever walk the earth have been recreated in miniature form by artist Warren Elsmore and his team. Incredible models include the raptor-like Masiakasaurus, a life-sized flying pterosaur, the swamp-dwelling, crocodile-like Sarcosuchus, and a new Polacanthus model on display for the first time. The exhibition also features rarely seen specimens from the Horniman's stores, and a range of hands-on activities for children to enjoy including build your own dinosaur and digging for fossils.

100 London Road, London, SE23 3PQ

horniman.ac.uk

Ongoing

Diggerland

Various Locations

Diggerland is The Ultimate Adventure UK Theme Park Experience where children and adults alike can ride, drive and operate REAL diggers, dumpers and other full-size construction machinery. Located in Kent, Devon, Durham and Yorkshire, your closest Diggerland UK Theme park is the perfect destination for action, fun and thrill packed family days out. Fun for all ages (subject to height restrictions), Diggerland with its 20 different rides and drives and an array of additional activities is the ideal theme park for small to large groups looking for something exciting and truly unique.

diggerland.com

See website for opening dates

The Singing Mermaid

Polka Theatre

The singing mermaid is tempted away to join a travelling circus, with the promise of a life of excitement (and her own swimming pool!). The audience loves her singing but soon she finds she's been tricked by the dastardly circus master. Will she ever escape? And who will help her along the way? A cast of three performers, beautiful puppets and music & songs by Barb Jungr (We're Going On A Bear Hunt) bring Julia Donaldson and Lydia Monks' much-loved story to life.

240 The Broadway, London, SW19 1SB

polkatheatre.com

March 31 - April 8

FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY

The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize

Photographers' Gallery

Bringing together work by the four international shortlisted artists: Bieke Depoorter, Samuel Fosso, Arthur Jafa and Frida Orupabo, the exhibition runs from 3 March until 11 June 2023. The Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation Prize exhibition will feature a selection of work from the nominated projects of the four 2023 shortlisted artists.

16-18 Ramillies Street, London, W1F 7LW

thephotographersgallery.org.uk

Ongoing

One Day on Mars

Royal Observatory

Join the expedition to Mars and enjoy a thrilling experience where you'll dive into the depths of seemingly bottomless canyons and brave the violent winds that sweep across the Red Planet's icy dunes. One Day on Mars will take you to a world that humans could well visit in just a few decades in our ongoing search for life. Recommended ages 7+. Under-5s will not be admitted - Ted's Space Adventure is suitable for younger children

Blackheath Ave, London SE10 8XJ

rmg.co.uk

Until March 31

London LGBT Film Festival

BFI

The best new LGBTQIA+ cinema from around the world, exclusive filmmaker introductions and more. Available across the UK, with accessible screenings of all English-language titles. BFI Flare's inaugural immersive programme includes the world's first virtual LGBTQ+ museum. The free programme of new immersive works by LGBTQIA+ artists can be experienced for free at BFI Southbank.

Belvedere Road, London, SE1 8XT

whatson.bfi.org.uk

March 16-27

FAIRS & FESTIVALS



The 2023 London Desire Jewellery & Silversmithing Fair

Old Town Hall

This stunning mixed media jewellery and silversmithing event where visitors can purchase direct from contemporary designer makers selected from the best in the UK is an event not to be missed. Desire offers visitors a choice of individual jewellers and contemporary silversmiths who have been selected for their superb and innovative craftsmanship and have a genuine passion for the work they create. Visitors can see and purchase from an exciting range from both emerging British talent as well as more established designer makers. Anyone celebrating a special occasion - maybe a birthday or anniversary - may

also like to speak to many of the makers about commissioning bespoke pieces of jewellery or silverware. Several visitors in the past have commissioned engagement or wedding rings at the event and, by working with the designer maker, have been able to have input into the design and come up with something that means so much more and is completely individual. Many of the makers will also be happy to speak about remodelling inherited jewellery to give it a more contemporary feel.

£7 (if booked online in advance)

£10 on the day.

King's Road, Chelsea, London, SW3 5EE

desirefair.com

March 10-12, 10am - 5pm

Where? h - April '23

Antarctica 3D

Science Museum

Join Benedict Cumberbatch as he explores the mysterious and wild continent of Antarctica. With never-before-seen footage and the latest underwater filming techniques, this epic documentary transports you to the farthest reaches of this majestic land and reveals that what happens there affects every single one of us. BBC Earth, the filmmakers of Planet Earth II, capture the weird and wonderful creatures that thrive in abundance in the coldest and windiest place on the planet.

Exhibition Road, South Kensington, London, SW7 2DD

sciencemuseum.org.uk

Until March 20

MUSIC

Michael Bublé

O2 Arena

Multi-platinum selling global superstar Michael Bublé has announced that he will be bringing his headline tour 'Higher' to The O2. The 'Higher' tour will see Michael performing his most-loved hits and the greatest tracks from his phenomenal career, alongside songs from his No.1 album 'Higher', released earlier this year.

Peninsula Square, London, SE10 0DX

theo2.co.uk

March 26-28

Young Artists' Platform: Daichi

Yoshimura

Foundling Museum

For the last two years, the Foundling Museum

has partnered with the Philharmonia Orchestra to provide monthly recital opportunities for their MMSF Instrumental Fellows. The scheme has been developed to equip musicians at the start of their careers with real-world performance experience, whilst inviting them to engage with our history and collections through their programming. The Philharmonia MMSF Instrumental Fellowship Programme (formerly the Martin Musical Scholarship Fund) has supported young musicians since 1968. Over the years, the programme has helped to prepare exceptionally talented instrumental students for a professional orchestral career.

40 Brunswick Square, London, WC1N 1AZ

foundlingmuseum.org.uk

April 6

London Chamber Orchestra: 400 years of British Music with Jess Gillam

Cadogan Hall

A whistle-stop tour of British music spanning the past 400 years. The London Chamber Orchestra returns to the Cadogan Hall, bringing its trademark relaxed and welcoming concert format to music lovers and live-performance adventurers looking for something fresh and new. Run, don't walk, to get your tickets for this concert, presented and conducted by Christopher Warren-Green and featuring the superstar saxophonist Jess Gillam. The first saxophonist to reach the final of the prestigious BBC Young Musician of the Year, Jess has gone on to forge an exciting career as both musician and presenter.

5 Sloane Terrace, London, SW1X 9DQ

cadoganhall.com

March 15

Ronan Keating – Live at the Symphony

Royal Albert Hall

In 2021, Ronan Keating and the City Light Symphony Orchestra received standing ovations lasting several minutes for the debut concert Ronan Keating – Live at the Symphony at the KKL Lucerne. Now they're bringing this spectacular show to the Royal Albert Hall. Ronan Keating and the 65-piece orchestra will present his greatest hits in unprecedented orchestral splendour to the British audience, blowing the roof off the auditorium with a gripping and nostalgic orchestral show.

royalalberthall.com

Kensington Gore, London, SW7 2AP

March 19

TALKS, TOURS, & WALKS

Bach vs Beethoven: The Battle of the Great Composers, with Steven Isserlis and Norman Lebrecht

Cadogan Hall

Johann Sebastian Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven are without doubt two of the most sublime musical geniuses who ever lived. But which of the two was the greater? To battle it out, Intelligence Squared is bringing to the stage two celebrated figures from the world of music: world-renowned cellist Steven Isserlis for Bach and acclaimed music critic Norman Lebrecht for Beethoven.

5 Sloane Terrace, London, SW1X 9DQ

intelligencesquared.com

April 26

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Events Supplement

March - April '23

Brick Lane Tour – Multicultural Mixing Pot

Unseen Tours

A fascinating walking tour taking in the sights and sounds of Brick Lane and the lesser known streets of this vibrant community. This multicultural area, a primer for trade unions, women's equality and the Labour party is no longer a melting pot of the poor but now trendy and expensive. Hear about the sinister tales of Jack the Ripper and the philanthropists that changed the face of the east-end, and the world. Visit a Mosque that has had a very long, multi-faith history and a school with a ghastly secret. Hear about a truly engrossing mystery involving a man's disappearance from a room locked from the outside, and the legacy left by the different waves of immigrants to this most fascinating part of the East End.

unseentours.org.uk

[See website for dates](#)

The Walls of London

Open City

This insightful walking tour along the route of the ruined London Wall, led by City of London guide Paul Lincoln, chronicles how the protective stone barrier, which was originally built by the Romans, has been adapted, demolished, covered up, revealed by the blitz, and even rediscovered by recent building works. The impact of London's wall on the historic City of London and the wider capital is immense and yet it is rarely celebrated, noticed or understood. The recent building of the London Wall Place office development by Make — featuring a series of new skywalks — has however shone a light on some new aspects of these ancient fortifications.

Meet inside the new Roman London Wall Museum at 35 Vine Street, EC3N 2PX

open-city.org.uk

March 25

Private Tour:

The Holocaust Galleries

Imperial War Museum

This exhibition provides a comprehensive account of the events that came to be known as the Holocaust. This guided tour looks at the origins and implementation of the 'Final Solution', showing how persecution turned to mass extermination and highlights some of the incredible stories of the people caught up in these terrible

events. Explore the stories behind some of the key artefacts within IWM's extensive Holocaust Galleries. IWM London's expert guides have an unprecedented knowledge of the museum and will bring these historic objects to life for you. This private tour can take place inside or outside museum hours. Tours outside museum hours give you exclusive access to the galleries. Tours last one and a half hours.

Lambeth Road, London, SE1 6HZ

iwm.org.uk

[See website to book](#)

THEATRE

Their Finest Hour

Waterloo East

Their Finest Hour presents the story of the men and women who served with the Royal Air Force during the Second World War. It's the day of Bert's funeral, an RAF veteran of the Second World War. His family have gathered at his home for his last farewell, when they discover an old suitcase full of memorabilia in his attic. There's a photo. 'Me and Jamie, a bit worse for wear after a night out in London.' 'That was a night to remember. I'll say no more. Within 24 hours of that picture we were over Germany again.'

Brad Street, London, SE1 8TN

waterlooeast.co.uk

March 8-26

Accidental Death of an Anarchist

Lyric Hammersmith

An Anarchist has fallen to his death from a police station window. But did he jump or was he thrown? As the police prepare for an inquiry into the incident, an unhinged showman known only as the Maniac is arrested and brought into the station. Seizing the opportunity to put on a show, he leads the police in an absurd recreation of their version of events, exposing the cover-ups, corruption and profound idiocy of an institution in free-fall. A razor-sharp satire, Tom Basden's wickedly hilarious adaptation relocates Dario Fo's classic farce to contemporary London and features a show-stopping performance from Daniel Rigby, as the Maniac.

Lyric Square, King Street, London, W6 0QL

lyric.co.uk

March 13 – April 8



FAMILY & CHILDREN

Shark Week

London Aquarium

Discover the different species of sharks which call the aquarium home and become a shark expert through a range of interactive activities focusing on myth-busting, conservation, fun facts and more! With opportunities to learn about and meet a variety of

sharks, from the small cat shark, to two-metre-long Sand Tiger Sharks, go below the surface and discover the ocean's most misunderstood creature. Riverside Building, County Hall, Westminster Bridge Road, London, SE1 7PB

visitsealife.com

April 1-16

Lord of the Flies

Rose Theatre

In the midst of a raging war, a group of British school children are left stranded after surviving a devastating plane crash. Ralph is voted the leader over outcast Piggy and rule-breaking Jack. As tensions rise and the hunger for power grows, the group divide and become wildly out of control. Left to fend for themselves, the children are tested to their limits as they struggle for survival in their new and mysterious surroundings. Directed by Amy Leach (Macbeth, Oliver Twist, Hamlet, Romeo & Juliet), this must-see production will be a modern staging of William Golding's menacing 20th Century classic.

24-26 High Street, Kingston upon

Thames, KT1 1HL

rosetheatre.org

April 18-22

The Lion King

Lyceum Theatre

Witness the circle of life in Disney's long-running and multi-award-winning musical at the Lyceum Theatre. London Theatre Week The Lion King tickets are available on London Theatre now. After the 1994 The Lion King film, the show went on to become one of the most successful piece of entertainment in history. Director and designer Julie Taymor crafts a colourful, imaginative and highly creative world that brings the flora, fauna and animals of Africa to life, set against a timeless score by Elton John and Tim Rice, with songs like "Can You Feel the Love Tonight."

21 Wellington Street, London, WC2E 7RQ

londontheatre.co.uk

Ongoing

Compiled & edited by Fahad Redha

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Classical Music

Rousset - the antidote to Spotify

Over the last decade or three, Christophe Rousset has emerged as one of the most inventive directors in the baroque revival movement. With his group, Les Talens Lyrique (which he formed in 1991), he has been rescuing 17th and 18th century works from being footnotes in musical history, or at best single aria extracts on compilation albums. I first saw him work half a dozen years ago in Strasbourg, conducting a wonderfully funny and gorgeously sung opera by Legrenzi, which had not been seen on stage since 1670. He has a rare ability to combine fearsome scholarship with theatrical energy.

On record he has steadily been rehabilitating the operas of Lully and Rameau in lively and immaculately recreated performances that begin to explain why Parisian audiences of the time found them more than a yawn. Louis XIV and XV would not have sat through them if they had been presented in the dour way that later centuries thought appropriate. In performance he has been tackling some of the major choral German repertoire too. At last year's Leipzig Bach Festival, he filled the galleries around the organ in St. Thomas's church, where J. S. Bach ruled the music, with singers and orchestra, for a programme originally put together by C. P. E. Bach, for a concert in 1786 that included C. P. E.'s *Magnificat* commissioned by his father. Again, suddenly

one could understand the father's faith in his son's talent. If you happen to be in Paris or Aix-en-Provence this Easter, Rousset's full forces can be heard in the St. Matthew Passion, with Ian Bostridge singing the role of the evangelist.

It is Rousset as virtuoso harpsichordist, rather than conductor, that he appears in the Wigmore Hall on 9 May, though, with a small selection of three players drawn from Les Talens Lyrique: violinist Gilone Gaubert, cellist Atsushi Sakai and flautist Jocelyn Daubigney. In some ways this London event leads back to that in Leipzig last year because it explores the trio sonatas written by some of J. S. Bach's many sons. As well as the father and C. P. E., who worked mainly in Hamburg, there are pieces by J. C., who ran some of London's most successful concerts in the 1770s, W. F., who had the least settled life of the brothers, and J. C. F, who lived the longest and seems to have been content in the small Hanoverian town of Bukeburg, as harpsichordist to the local Count.

Christophe Rousset's great strength is not only in his playing and direction, but in his ability to put the music in context. Works are juxtaposed so that they can be appreciated as contributions to their times, rather than isolated shards that happened to have come down to us. He is, I suppose, the antidote to the Spotify approach.

Simon Mundy



Bach Dynasty Wigmore Hall Tuesday 9 May 2023 7:30PM

Celebrating Bach's remarkable musical family

Les Talens Lyriques

Christophe Rousset - Conductor & harpsichord

lestalenslyriques.com

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NEW RECORDINGS

5 May 2023

Pancrace Royer
Orchestral Suites

Aparté



12 May 2023

Gaspare Spontini
La Vestale

Palazzetto Bru Zane

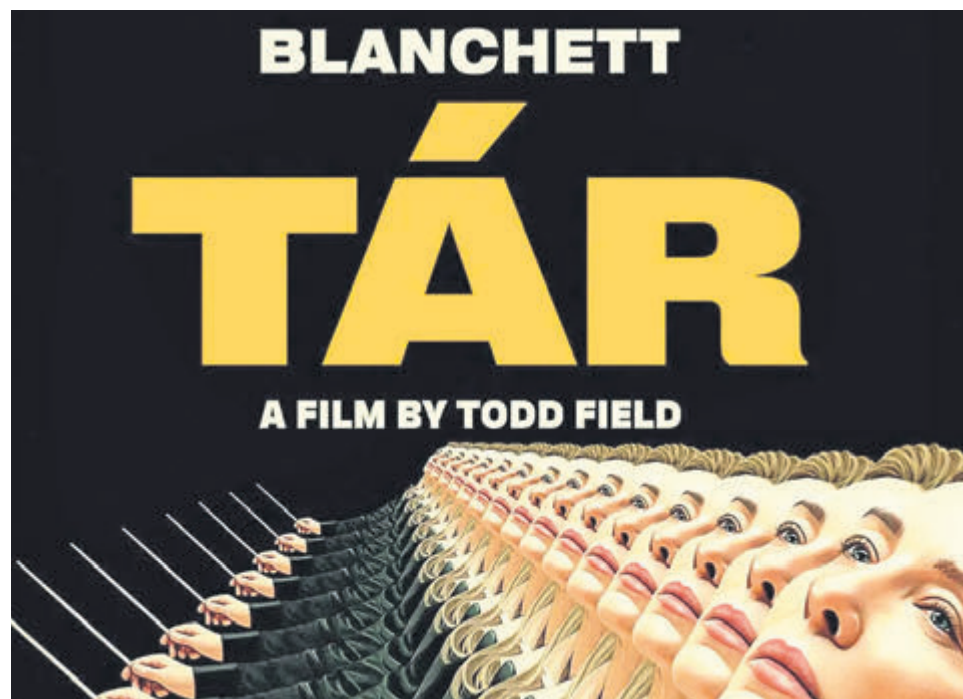




Three Films. One Theme. Redemption or Damnation?

Nostalgia is director Mario Martone's latest Italian feature to capture neorealism in the labyrinthian back alleys of Naples. Billed as 'a parable of a man and a city teetering between redemption and damnation,' the story centres around the homecoming of Felice (Pierfrancesco Favino) a successful, but world-weary archetype who returns to his birthplace after 40 years absence. He arrives at an apartment door where his mother is supposed to reside. The occupants have no idea who Felice nor his mother are. We discover that she'd been moved to a ground floor slum without windows. All in exchange for a drawer full of cash. These family scenes are some of the most heart wrenching, yet touching, I've seen. Felice cares for his mother, while not actually moving in with her. Within days she passes on.

Threaded throughout with flashback memories *Nostalgia* has a storyline of continual warning, which is 'never go back'. Especially when it leads back to former friends. The local Priest becomes concerned that Felice wants to locate his long-lost pal, Oreste, who is known to the locals of the Rione Sanita district as "O Malommo" or "The Bad Man". Scenes of motorbike gangs firing guns indiscriminately, heed a warning to keep away. Felice, however, knows that the gangs are run by the very man with whom he wants to reconcile his hidden past.



Tár features two-time Academy Award winner Cate Blanchett as a fictional orchestral conductor, Lydia Tár. Much touted with press hyperbole, the media spin promised a filmic journey into the mind of a 'maestro', delving into the dark side of her success. Lydia Tár is

interview with her segues into her student workshops. Here *Tár* gives way to the writer-producer-director's predilection for 'the method school' of acting. Theatrical performances that are far too reliant on lengthy dialogue.

Blanchett's role would have been more suited to a stage setting.

Looking at my watch, I noticed that the first in-vision full orchestral rehearsal appeared on-screen at seventy minutes into this lofty film. To clarify that's no orchestral music until that particular juncture in a film about a 'maestro.' *Tár* is also filled with all manner of pretension and plot ambiguity.

Plot guff or Hitchcockian MacGuffins?

One thing is certain, the movie isn't half as clever as the filmmaker would have us all believe. Furthermore, I didn't care for Blanchett's performance. Especially in her scenes of silent contemplation. Her eyes are empty. It looks like the lights are on, but nobody's home. Intentional? Surely not? I recall similar moments in the films of the late British actor, Ian Holm. 'Nobody's home' was an observation I made to the late film director, Karel Reisz, in 1986, who

concurred with the 'Holm factor.' What would he have made of *Tár*?

Enys Men is the second feature film to be directed by Cornish filmmaker, Mark Jenkin. His monochrome debut *Bait* was about Cornish Fishermen that had audiences thinking they were going to watch a Horror film. This time Jenkin has opted for a colourful *Ghost Story* set in 1973 on a deserted island off Cornwall, once occupied by Tin Miners. The central character is played by Mary Woodvine, a volunteer worker living alone in a stone cottage. She's staying there to monitor a particular species of wildflower that suddenly grows lichens on its petals. These soon rather oddly transmute on to her own body.

Haunted by the death of a girl in the cottage, she also sees apparitions of Cornish mine workers, their wives, and a drowned boatman who once delivered her supplies. A standing stone - a Menhir - echoes Bronze Age settlers, while wild birds in the shape of Curlew Sandpipers warble in the long grass, interrupting the tranquillity, of this idyllic yet dark island. *Enys Men* is strikingly shot with a strong use of vibrantly coloured clothing. Most notably, however, Mary Woodvine gives an award-worthy performance with minimal dialogue, which sees her acting reduced to insightful facial gestures that recall the subtlety of Charlotte Rampling's acting in *The Night Porter*. Albeit a wholly different film. With *Enys Men*, Jenkin has directed an astutely judged performance for real cinema and the antithesis of Cate Blanchett's theatrical 'method' in *Tár*. *Enys Men* is a better film by far.

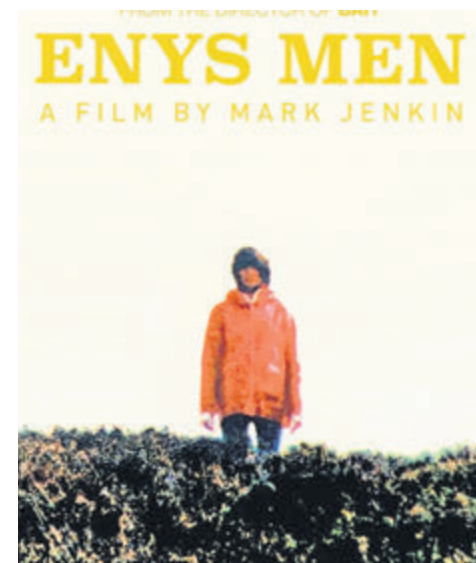
Henry Scott-Irvine



Filmed with zeal and directorial cunning, Martone uses real people as background actors in the very same manner that Vittorio De Sica did in Rome back in 1948 with the granddaddy of Italian neorealism, *The Bicycle Thieves*. Already an award winner at Italian Film Festivals, the underplayed subtlety of Favino's performance singles him out as an actor of international standing. Don't miss this film.

trolled by someone riddled with envy. A familiar type of resentment that can flourish within organisations where rivalry aims to destroy those who have blossomed.

Set in New York, Berlin, and the Far East, one might expect a film of almost three hours to be epic. Possibly on the grand scale of a Sydney Lumet film? It isn't. It's intimate. The opening onstage celebrity



Antiques & Art



Shock! This was the buzzword around the art and antiques world at the beginning of 2023. The capital's two major summer fairs – the prestigious 'Masterpiece', founded in 2010 and the 'Art and Antiques Fair Olympia', established in 1973, have been cancelled. However, as Anthony J. Lester points out it's not all bad news.

There is no denying the demise of *Masterpiece* and the *Art and Antiques Fair Olympia* are a major blow to the art and antiques market but it's certainly not all doom and gloom. In the *Enquirer*, No. 9, I featured *The London Art Fair* held in January at the Business Design Centre, Islington, and it's reassuring to report the event generated strong sales. Among works finding new homes was Walter Sickert's (1860-1942) *The Painter and His Model*, which sold for around £75,000, Lynn Chadwick's (1914-2003) bronze *Conjunction XIII* went for a six-figure sum and a Keith Vaughan (1912-1977) painting flew off at around £100,000.

Prefer a more frenzied ambience? Then make your way to the **Affordable Art Fair**, Battersea Park, SW11 4NJ, which runs from 8th - 12th March. With over 100 stands and 1000's of works to deliberate over, it can be quite overwhelming but, a personal recommendation is **The Linda Blackstone Gallery** (stand E3). Linda has teamed up with her grandson, Jacob Talbot, to present 'BANG – Blackstone Art Next Generation', which presents young, up-and-coming artists. Savvy investors will be pondering, will any of these break into the blue-chip art world?

Diamond Jubilee Tea Salon, named in honour of Her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth's visit in 2012. Revitalised, you can explore the numerous commercial galleries in the streets of St. James's. They range from **Colnaghi**, 26 Bury Street, SW1Y 6AL – founded in 1760, it's world's oldest commercial art gallery and is renowned for Old Master paintings – to the conspicuous **White Cube**, 25-26 Mason's Yard, SW1Y 6BU, who until 18th March, display the first UK exhibition by artist duo TARWUK (Bruno Poračnik Tremow and Ivana Vukšić, both born



Autumn Sunlight on the Regent's Canal, Islington (£3,500), oil, 25 x 78cm, by Melissa Scott-Miller, Chris Beetles Gallery

eminent art societies, he was an artist who had international success during his lifetime but after his death somewhat drifted into obscurity until 1994 when A. H. Knighton-Hammond by Peter Norris was published. Between 8th March - 6th April **David Messum Fine Art**, 12 Bury Street, St. James's, SW1Y 6AB will mount the first selling exhibition of the artist's work since

It's not all bad news...

The demand for original prints has grown dramatically in recent years – the sales of which have increased by 352.9% between June 2017 and June 2022. So, print enthusiasts should make their way to the **London Original Print Fair**, taking place between 30th March - 2nd April at the elegant galleries of Somerset House, Stand, WC2R 1LA. With works spanning six centuries of printmaking, it offers significant pieces by the likes of Dürer, Rembrandt, Picasso, Hockney and Grayson Perry. As a special tribute to renowned print dealer and restaurateur, Andrew Edmunds (1943-2022), the Fair is displaying a compendium of prints by satirist James Gillray (1756-1815) from Edmunds' personal collection.



Temporary Sitters, 2023, oil on canvas, 200 x 160 cm, by Emily Gillbanks, JD Malat Gallery



Moonlit Waters (£2,695), mixed media, 55 x 38 cm, by Rosa Sepple, Connect Art Fair, Adrian Hill Fine Art

Also registering buoyant business was *The Winter Decorative Antiques & Textiles Fair* held in January. When I visited, one elated dealer described the first hours as "a whirlwind of buyers" and several long-time participants revealed it was their best fair ever. It was also encouraging to witness an impressive number of American trade buyers keen to spend their dollars! For the diary – the Spring edition of *The Decorative Antiques & Textiles Fair* takes place between 9th - 14th May at the Evolution London Marquee in Battersea Park, SW11 4NJ.

London is, of course, not bereaved of art and antiques events. A short distance from Trafalgar Square, the **Connect Art Fair** takes place at the Mall Galleries, The Mall, SW1 from 22nd - 26th March. Unlike other art fairs, which can be daunting because of their size, this small, affable event is quite refreshing. Among the exhibitors are **Adrian Hill Fine Art** from Holt, North Norfolk (stand 19), who will proffer paintings by the ever-popular Rosa Sepple, who, between 2017-2022, was President of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, and **Blondes Fine Art** from Hertfordshire (stand 30), whose display will include paintings by Jo Brocklehurst (1935-2006), renowned for her lively portrayals of London punks and the European club scene.

Moving-on from the fairs, there are plenty of exciting shows to inspire. I can enthusiastically recommend *Spain and the Hispanic World*, which is on until 10th April at the **Royal Academy**, Burlington House, Piccadilly, W1J 0BD. Stunningly displayed are works from antiquity to the 20th century, including ceramics, silver, jewellery, illuminated manuscripts and masterpieces by Goya, Velázquez, El Greco and Joaquín Sorolla. For me, some of the more unpretentious items are the most intoxicating – for example, a sixteenth century iron door knocker with the head of a man, which suggests links to the Spanish slave trade (apparently, by the end of the sixteenth century it is believed Spain had the largest population of enslaved Africans in Europe).

From the Academy, cross over the road and refresh yourself with a sophisticated afternoon tea in Fortnum & Mason's,

in 1981). A short walk away is the **Chris Beetles Gallery**, 8 & 10 Ryder Street, SW1Y 6QB, who until 18th March, will display 26 oil paintings (£950-£6,500) of London scenes by Melissa Scott-Miller (b. 1959). A member of the Royal Society of British Artists, she is well-known for her colourful, detailed urban landscapes.

On 18th July, 1924 *The Times* newspaper wrote: "Breadth of vision and arrangement and vigorous brush-drawing are the attractions in the water-colours of Venice and the Riviera – and elsewhere – by Mr. Knighton-Hammond at the Beaux Art Gallery." Also, on 30th May, 1933 *The Times* penned: "Space, light and movement are the chief preoccupations in the recent paintings in water-colour and pastel by Mr. Knighton-Hammond at the Leger Galleries." Both citations impeccably capture the essence of Arthur Henry Knighton-Hammond's (1875-1970) paintings. A member of several

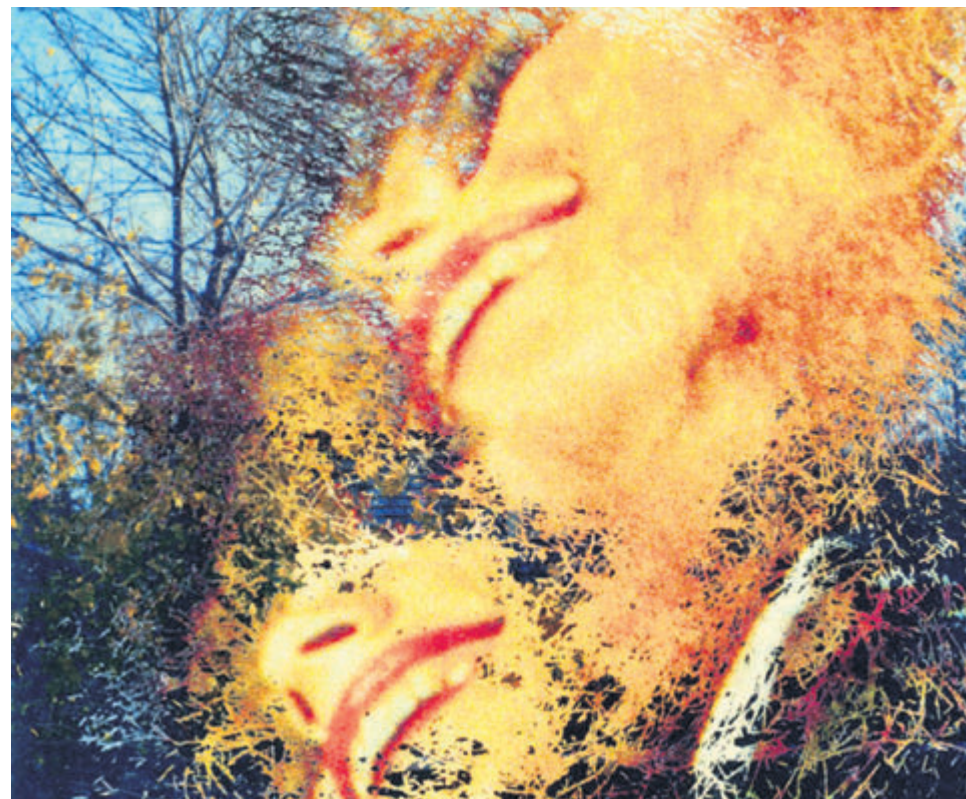
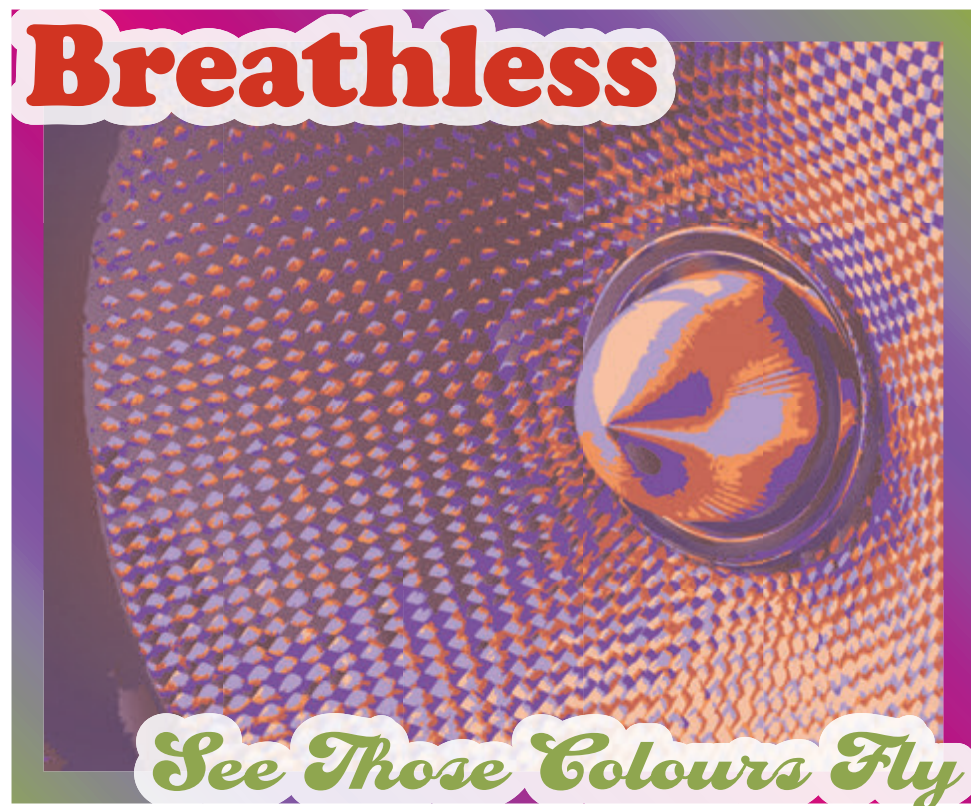
1976. The 60 paintings, including wonderfully fresh *en plein air* watercolours, are priced between £1,850 and £12,500.

Last year I curated an exhibition at the Mall Galleries entitled *Winners: Award Winning Artists* and one of the artists I included was Emily Gillbanks (b. 1999), who graduated with an MA in Painting from the Royal College of Art in September 2022. I am delighted that the influential **JD Malat Gallery**, Claridge House, 30 Davies Street, Mayfair, W1K 4NB have recognised her extraordinary talent and from 15th March - 8th April will stage her first solo show, entitled *Temporary Sitters*. Starting from images captured on her iPhone, Gillbanks uses sharp edges and saturated colours to give us self-assured oil paintings of the populace. This is a young artist well on the way to becoming one of the art world's blue-chip names. You read it here!

Anthony J. Lester



On the Beach at Lyme Regis (£7,850), watercolour, 50 x 76 cm, by Arthur Knighton-Hammond, David Messum Fine Art



Hardened Breathless fans (I confess to being a relative newcomer) will know that the band releases an album on average every five years and has done since the early eighties. See Those Colours Fly has taken a little longer, perhaps primarily following serious injury to Tristram Latimer Sayer, who we are told in recent interviews, is recovering. That and the pandemic. Artistically, it would be understandable if the band felt their last outing Green to Blue casts a long shadow.

Most bands on close examination become hard to pigeonhole. Breathless, are an extreme example. They've sighted Barrett era Pink Floyd and Joy Division as influences. While their product is truly unique these comparisons are relevant. Breathless carry the flag of Post-Punk Neo-Prog, which David Bowie, Joy Division and The Clash did so much to influence all but a half a century ago with a Floyd-like wash of Space Rock, the connections cemented by Barrett's own Proto-Punk. Throughout an illustrious career, which might have been capped by Green to Blue in 2012, Breathless have developed their own flamboyant brand kept in check by stripped back base-heavy

melodies.

Tenor Vossa was amongst the earliest labels to embrace the return to vinyl. Wherever you stand on that issue, and I have still to make up my mind, the pursuit of the highest quality of music reproduction has to be in the music industry's interest. Convention has it that analogue vinyl is richer than CD while streaming is the poor relation. This is complicated by the various remixes and remasters across and within the formats, and I'm not sure where that leaves digital cassettes, reel to reel or the ill-fated but excellent Stereo 8 clunking out Elton John in my mother's 1970s Scimitar. Green to Blue is available as a quite beautiful double album.

See Those Colours Fly sorted one thing out in my mind. I listened to this immaculately produced work on my half decent hi-fi (Bowers and Wilkins), pretty much a must for a music hack. See Those Colours Fly is gold to one who aspires to identify 2023's The Dark Side of The Moon, so naturally enough I listened to it in the car. It was a good enough car but the hi-fi wasn't. Input is important but output is critical. Quality of reproduction is essential to appreciate

Breathless' sophistication.

I rate Green to Blue as amongst the best albums of the century, quite possibly the best, so I approached See Those Colours Fly with interest. There isn't a filler track on any Breathless album; whatever the first impressions See Those Colours Fly would be a grower. I needn't have reassured myself. The opening track Looking for the Words draws a firm line under Breathless' past and reinforces their continuing relevance. The Party's Not Over exploits Breathless' ease with melancholia.

This is a band at the height of their considerable powers. Breathless have avoided the pitfall of asking See Those Colours Fly to compete with Green to Blue's lush melodies and symphonic crescendos, or its epic 69-minute scale. Restrained, by their own standards, the band have reined in some of the excess that is of course a huge part of their appeal, and in doing so arguably have capped a masterpiece.

What's the best track? Pay your money and take your choice. The first two above-mentioned and the last two, So Far from Love and I Watch You Sleep are definitely candidates and perhaps the band thought

that which is why they are there. They're all gorgeous. The one that blew me a way first listen is Somewhere Out of Reach, which goes a long way to debunking what I was saying about not following Green to Blue. Ari Neufeld's melodic bass alongside Dominic Appleby's haunting restrained vocals and Gary Mundy's ornamented lead guitar are the signature sound of one of the truly great bands of this or any other era.

Give something back Please just do that

Such sparse exuberance surely encourages us to hope that we won't have to wait another decade for this unique band's next outing.

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**Breathless - See Those Colours Fly
Tenor Vossa - 29 July 2022**

BREATH24 CD and red-coloured LP
A straight five-star album, for the avoidance of doubt



Image: Kevin Westenberg

Arts & Culture

I am late to this show. I thought arriving 45 minutes before closing time would be enough to see an exhibition without a catalogue. I forget that the Victoria & Albert Museum room attendants start warning you about closing time just after lunch. I am told in an annoyed tone by the presiding attendant that though it is now 40 minutes to closing time, I will need to leave in 10 minutes, so I rush around photographing the wall text, an act of perverse self-harm. When not reviewing shows, I studiously ignore these sans-serif offerings, but when I am, I feel misplaced, and certainly an arrogant protectiveness over the viewer's right to a first impression, unclouded by academia's current manner. Photographing the wall text gives myself more time, even if today it will be seconds, for looking, with grist for my sad public defending safely tucked away in my camera roll for later. For a V&A exhibition, I am relieved to find the wall text recessive, and, though each poor woman is introduced in the text under her work using the question 'Who was X? (birth date - death date)' and the title of the exhibition is irritatingly glib, there is no sculptural MDF (a V&A temporary exhibition staple) enclosing the works - perhaps because this is a free display - and the contextual writing is largely free from retroactive finger wagging.

complex than all the other works in the room, such as those by Maria Cosway and Caroline Watson, it is startlingly modern and intimate. I reread my photograph of the first piece of wall text, and think it sounds a little grand for such a small selection of works, but its last sentence states, "This display continues in the adjoining gallery." I am disappointed and relieved; I need to go back.

I am now less ill-disposed toward the exhibition, and the whole world. On my second visit, I brought a friend. As we arrive before noon, the attendants leave us alone. The second room is much livelier than the first, and more colourful. It holds more modern works, and therefore contains artistic sentiments, which I find closer to my interests and therefore more

Looking Lately

This show, Prints and Prejudice: Women Printmakers 1700-1930, stems from the PhD research of Dr. Hannah Lyons (thesis title, "Exercising the ART as a TRADE": Professional Women Printmakers in London, 1750-1850') and it feels like it. It is thoroughly researched, dry, and full of social art history. It has that air of the classroom that many academics cannot seem to shake out their pens. After my photographic lap of the room, I stand in the centre. All the prints are tastefully framed and match each other. I am immediately drawn to one work. When I get home, desperate for the loo (to the attendants shoo-ing me out, I must appear a woman incapable of urinating within the 30 minutes that the museum was still technically open), I look at my blurry photographs and consider why this might be. The piece is Queen Victoria's wiggly etching of her baby daughter, also Victoria, with her nursemaid. Technically, far less

compelling. With the optimistic eyes of a new day and with more time, we walk around both rooms a few times. The selection is marvellous and the subject matter of the prints very noticeably feminine. I detect again, in the wall text, the implication that this is in some way the result of being down-trodden. I do not know enough about the subject to say if this implication is accurate, but I think a celebration of the distinct femininity of the works might be an enjoyable exercise. Despite the obvious quality of the works on show, I can't help finding it difficult to enjoy the exhibition. I feel callous, as I have often complained of patronising over-relating in exhibition

presentation, and here I am, given its sober opposite, and still find it lacking. It is an almost unsolvable problem, that of wall text, I do not have an answer to it, but walking through the Sacred Silver rooms, which one must, in order to get to Gallery 90, I melt into the rapture of admiration with nothing but a date and a name to guide me. I have different ideas to many

as to the role the V&A ought to play in the lives of its visitors, and so cannot pretend that what I want is in the public interest, but if granted two of them, my wishes would be that the V&A would close when it says it is going to close and would let its objects speak for themselves.

Sophie Pretorius



Victoria, Princess Royal, Empress Frederick of Germany, with her Nurse, 1841, Etching. By Queen Victoria

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HISTORIC PEOPLE & PLACES

Lynne Reid Banks is still alive, she is 93. Her first book *The L-Shaped Room*, which follows the pregnancy of a young, unwed woman in a seedy bedsit in Fulham in the '50s, was published 63 years ago, when Reid Banks was 30. She describes writing it almost by accident, one day testing out a teleprompter typewriter keyboard while at her job as what was called a 'girl-reporter' at ITN news. She describes, in her Radio 4 interview, how Jane, her protagonist, emerged before her in what would become the book's memorable opening paragraph, as she typed in the large, half-inch letters. The book is very funny, very female, and it is excellent, and all the more spectacular because of its status as a debut. It was made into a film in 1962, which I think is more famous, but which has very little to do with the book, and so if you are thinking of the film's plot line as you read, don't. *The L-Shaped Room* follows Jane, an endearingly self-knowing and thereby self-doubting 28-year-old woman, who has done something silly, cruel, and utterly forgivable and is paying a large



Lynne Reid Banks, 1956, photographer unknown.

"Confession' doesn't ease the soul, but challenges it."

price. She is gluttonously joining in on punishing herself by choosing this room, for which the book is named, when she could afford a much better one, as a jail cell in which to grow more pregnant. Instead, the room becomes something of a sanctuary, and the building's colourful and lovably written inhabitants grow on her and with her. The book's sympathetic telling of the then, rather taboo subject of conception outside wedlock, won the book immediate criticism and immediate acclaim. Reid Banks is often classified, rather usefully, as belonging to a group of writers thought of as the female counterpart to the Angry Young Men. In fact, the model for the L-Shaped room was a

nasty little flat Reid Banks once visited at the top of the illustrious Chepstow villas in Notting Hill, where many of the Angry Young Men themselves lived.

Defying this categorisation entirely, however, later in her career Reid Banks turned to children's literature. Maybe you are not so ignorant as was I, but until beginning research for this article, I did not know that she is the author of *The Indian in the Cupboard* series, and it is from this series, the first instalment of which was published in 1980, that she truly began to make a living from writing. These books remain very popular, though there has been some controversy surrounding her depiction of Native Americans. So too, in *The L-Shaped*

Room, the black character, John, is portrayed to us through the eyes of Jane and her very racialised fear (which Reid Banks admits, she shared). Though quickly John and Jane's interactions evolve into a touching friendship. Reid Banks in interviews is good-natured, honest, and willing to take responsibility for her writing and characters, as well as her own current and former prejudices. In her interview with Radio 4, she cheerfully asks her interviewer, 'would you care to ask the race question, openly, go on?'

Reid Banks is much sillier in interviews than she is in her books. It is perhaps for this reason that her odd interview of herself, which she conducted because 'interviewers

hardly ever ask me the questions' was removed from her website around the beginning of last year. One can still use The Wayback Machine to read it. It turns out the questions she wished interviewers to ask her were about her being a Leo and about her son's names. She calls the two voices Me and I, and they speak of themselves collectively as 'we', though she switches, which is answering and asking the questions too many times to count in the short piece. Reid Banks's honesty, openness and sense of whimsy are her most brilliant traits, and the self-interview, though it sets your teeth on edge with awkwardness, is a testament to this. As the quote in the title of this article (taken from the *L-shaped Room*) suggests, true honesty is a challenge. Anyone who takes the (short) time to read *The L-Shaped Room* would agree that we, as readers, benefit hugely when someone else succeeds in writing it down.

Sophie Pretorius



Incomplete cast of Jacob Epstein 'Newborn' on Zimbabwe House © Hans Wild

A sad state of affairs – Zimbabwe House

I do not understand what goes on inside the Zimbabwean Embassy on the Strand. It never seems to be open, but then it has been a long time since I have passed it during office hours. It has a toy plane in the window, or it did, a poster for our government owned airline, Air Zimbabwe, which goes in and out of extinction. I associate the place most with the protests that used to go on in the little square beside the building, against President Robert Mugabe's dictatorship every Saturday. I once bought a luminous green gummy bracelet there, which stated 'MUGABE MUST GO' in black letters, a sentiment about which I had no conviction one way or another. I was born in Zimbabwe, during his rule and am not old enough to remember its calm beginning, and, though his rule brought my family tragedy, I also couldn't and can't find within me much resentment of Robert

Mugabe himself, at least no more than I have for any other world leader whom I don't know and whose problems I don't understand. Which is to say, all of them. When I bought the bracelet, I thought it was funny, as it very much seemed like he would rule forever: a dayglow screamed into the void. Since his 37-year rule ended in 2019, Zimbabwe after Mugabe looks much the same to me, I don't think he has gone yet. Whatever the case, I learned the hard way that wearing that bracelet was a mistake the next time I visited home.

The building is huge, austere, and rather beautiful. It was completed in 1908, by architect Charles Holden, more famous for his underground stations and for the Senate House building. It is empty-looking and dirty, and the lights are always off, and when it was Rhodesia House, it destroyed the best things about itself, the 18.8-foot-tall sculptures made by Jacob Epstein,

depicting the ages of man and the vital forces, which adorned its parapets. They were, apparently, too vulgar, and, what's more, dangerous. In 1936 it was reported that an appendage (in some accounts a penis, in some a head) fell off one of these grotesques and injured a pedestrian's foot. What appears to have actually happened was a piece of one of the sculptures was dislodged while bunting was being removed after the coronation celebrations for King George VI. Whether or not someone got hurt is unclear. This reawakened the campaign that had begun when they were erected in 1908, to have them destroyed for the sake of public decency, and now, safety. Members of the art establishment duly came to Epstein's defence, with then president of the Royal Academy, Walter Sickert R.A., resigning as an Academician over this when the campaign unfortunately failed. In 1937 the mutilation of the figures went ahead. Now they remain in an odd state of disfigurement, which only adds to the building's general sense of disrepair. It has been suggested that in 2002 Mugabe handed the deeds of Zimbabwe House, to Libya's then leader, Muammar Gaddafi, as surety in part of an oil deal.

Sophie Pretorius



The Bavarian Motor Works has produced some of the greatest machines of all time. Here are some that are among the most iconic.

While Mercedes and Nissan had made dedicated super saloons before BMW, the 300SEL 6.2 and original Skyline GT-R from 1969 respectively, (not to mention a few four-doors from America) it was the M5 that many regard as the original sports saloon and gave rise to today's AMGs and Audi RS models. While the 5 Series had always been a sportier alternative to Mercedes and other rivals, it was the M5 that took it to a whole other level. Taking an engine from the M635CSi, it arguably led to the development of sports saloons from almost every car maker today.

Going back nearly a decade is the BMW M1, which like the M5, was far ahead of its time. The 1970s was an era where supercars were ungainly, impractical, and difficult to live with. While it was conceived as a racer with input from Lamborghini, the road going version is best remembered as a more user-friendly supercar, something we take for granted today. It was a commercial failure for BMW and didn't manage to race but that doesn't diminish its significance.

When the original M3 was being developed, it was only made to be a race car for the German Touring Car or DTM series. However, rules required a road going version and the company was forced to sell a few to the public. They couldn't know then how legendary it would become. In the time since, we've seen multiple generations of the M3, as well as the M5, but the

The greatest BMWs of all time



original is one of the most sought-after BMWs ever.

Since the Z1, BMW has always had a two-seater roadster in its line-up. It was replaced by the Z3, the Z8, and the Z4. However, before the aforesaid was the V8 powered 507. Perhaps the most stunning car the company has ever produced, it was made to do battle with Mercedes' recently launched SL and particularly its success in

America. The high price meant that, like the M1, it lost the company money. As a result, 507s today are worth close to £1 million.

However, it's not just cars that BMW is known for. There have been many great motorbikes to wear the Bavarian roundel and one of the greatest of all time has to be the S1000 RR. Like the cars on this list, it was built to go racing. It became so

popular that the first 1,000 were sold out in next to no time. It was considered so exceptional that BMW instantly became the leading litre-bike maker.

There are many more besides, with both two or four wheels. Since its founding in 1916 in Munich, BMW has been a key player in both the bike and car industry, and models like these are the reason for that.

It's weird to think of a car as an investment. Unlike property, cars see their value plummet as soon as they're driven off the lot. Take, for example, the 2012 Jaguar XK, which cost around £70,000 when new. A year later, one with less than 10,000 miles on the clock could

cost as little as over £40,000. Today, a similar car with 70,000 miles can go for around £24,000. It's possible that in the future, the XK will become a sought-after collectible, which will go up in value, as the 2-door Jags tend to and with good reason.

This is where some cars can become investments. Sometimes people finally appreciated it for what it was. Think of the early Honda NSX, which offered something few cars offered, supercar styling and handling in a reliable Japanese package. Other times, certain cars end up gaining a

following and the ones that haven't rusted away are kept preserved in pristine conditions. That category is primarily the once cheap and cheerful cars that you would see every day and one of the most obvious is the original Mini.

The easiest way to spot a future classic is to start with a once expensive car that has become cheap. BMW M cars are among the best. The M5 made between 1998 and 2003, for example, offers V8 performance in a luxury saloon for little more than £20,000. It's already started rising a decade ago, and you could find a decent one for half that.

However, beware! Even if it can be had for a tenth of what it once cost, a £100,000 car always has the repair bills to reflect its original price. With any used car it's important to double check its condition but with depreciated luxury cars, it's vital to know what you're getting into.

The great thing about buying modern classic cars is that, while fixing them can be more difficult, diagnosing them couldn't be simpler. In Europe, all cars made after 2001 should have OBD-II or on-board diagnostics. This means you can plug a device under the dash and, through an app on your phone, find out what's wrong.

Many companies, BMW included, are keen to preserve their heritage. To that end, they offer services to keep their cars on the road. While it's mainly the cars that have already risen in value, from the 507 to the Z8, there should still be a way to keep any car on the road.

It may be too late to get your hands on that legendary motor you've wanted all your life. However, buying a car that will one day be a classic might just be the way to go. In addition, you'll enjoy the benefits of modern cars while also having something that sticks out from the crowd.

Spotting Future classics





CHESS

By Barry Martin

Chess players play better

breathing clean air

The national press recently reported the findings of a scientific study conducted over three years in Germany, based on the performance of 121 chess players in three 7 round tournaments, in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

The researchers using the chess engine Stockfish compared the moves the players made with the optimal moves determined by the computer program. Juan Palacios, an economist and co author for the research stated, 'we find that when individuals are exposed to higher levels of air pollution, they make more mistakes, and they make larger mistakes.' The study found that chess experts make more mistakes when air pollution is high. Stockfish analysed the quality of games played and found that with a modest increase in fine particulate matter, the probability that chess players would make an error increased by 2.1 percentage points, and the magnitude of those errors increased by 10.8%. (*The Guardian* 3rd February, and *Management Science*). Thinking back to the days when smoking was de rigueur in many fine establishments with cigarette and cigar smoke forming clouds over chess boards, it's easy to see now that the results of games may well have been different without the pollution. I remember being taken out into the middle of the Jordanian desert, where just one pink coloured tent could be discerned to play against King Hussain's younger brother, Prince Muhammad bin Talal, and becoming intoxicated by the clean air. It certainly heightened my concentration as it was the only game being played and members of the Jordanian government were present to watch our game.

The setting for this year's Varsity chess match, Oxford and Cambridge, 4th March, at the Royal Automobile Club, Pall Mall, London, continues its march as the oldest fixture in the chess calendar. This annual tournament has continued unabated, give or take several world wars since the 1870's. An approach to initiate such a competition by R.B. Nicholson, President of the Oxford University Chess Club, Trinity College, Oxford, in the early 1970's, was announced in a letter published in *The Cambridge*

Chronicle, Saturday 25th February, 1871. The letter requested information as to whom he should contact at Cambridge University since he wished to challenge them to a correspondence match with my own club. The challenge was rejected by the Cambridge club, when the dons learnt that the Oxford club was composed of young undergraduate members. The idea of an inter—university chess match was first advocated in 1853, by no less a person than Howard Staunton, writing in *The Chess Player's Chronicle* stating, 'It would be admirable indeed if, between the universities, a set contest of Chess took place annually, between Oxford and Cambridge.' In March 1871, there began, by correspondence, the first definite trial of chess strength between the universities. The result favoured Oxford with a 4.5/2.5 win. Cambridge in the following year reciprocated with an overwhelming win of 4/1. On 28th March, 1873, the first inter—university chess match across the board took place, in the rooms of the City of London Chess Club. Since 1953 the teams have competed for the magnificent gold cup the Margaret Pugh Trophy and in 1973 the RAC, Pall Mall, hosted the centenary match at its very convivial, now clean air clubhouse, just a stone's throw from Buckingham Palace. From 1978 the club has continually hosted the event. Henry Mutkin, the Hon. President of the RAC's

Chess Committee, captained Oxford on board one in 1957 and has been 'a driving force of the event to the present day.' Along with Stephen Meyler (Chairman), Robert Mathews (Captain) and Hon. Sec. Henry McWatters. The varsity match has been magnificently organised in the RAC's wonderful surroundings, with the professionalism of the Club's staff, in their extremely successful smoke free conditions and ambience, for this serious annual event. Long may it last!

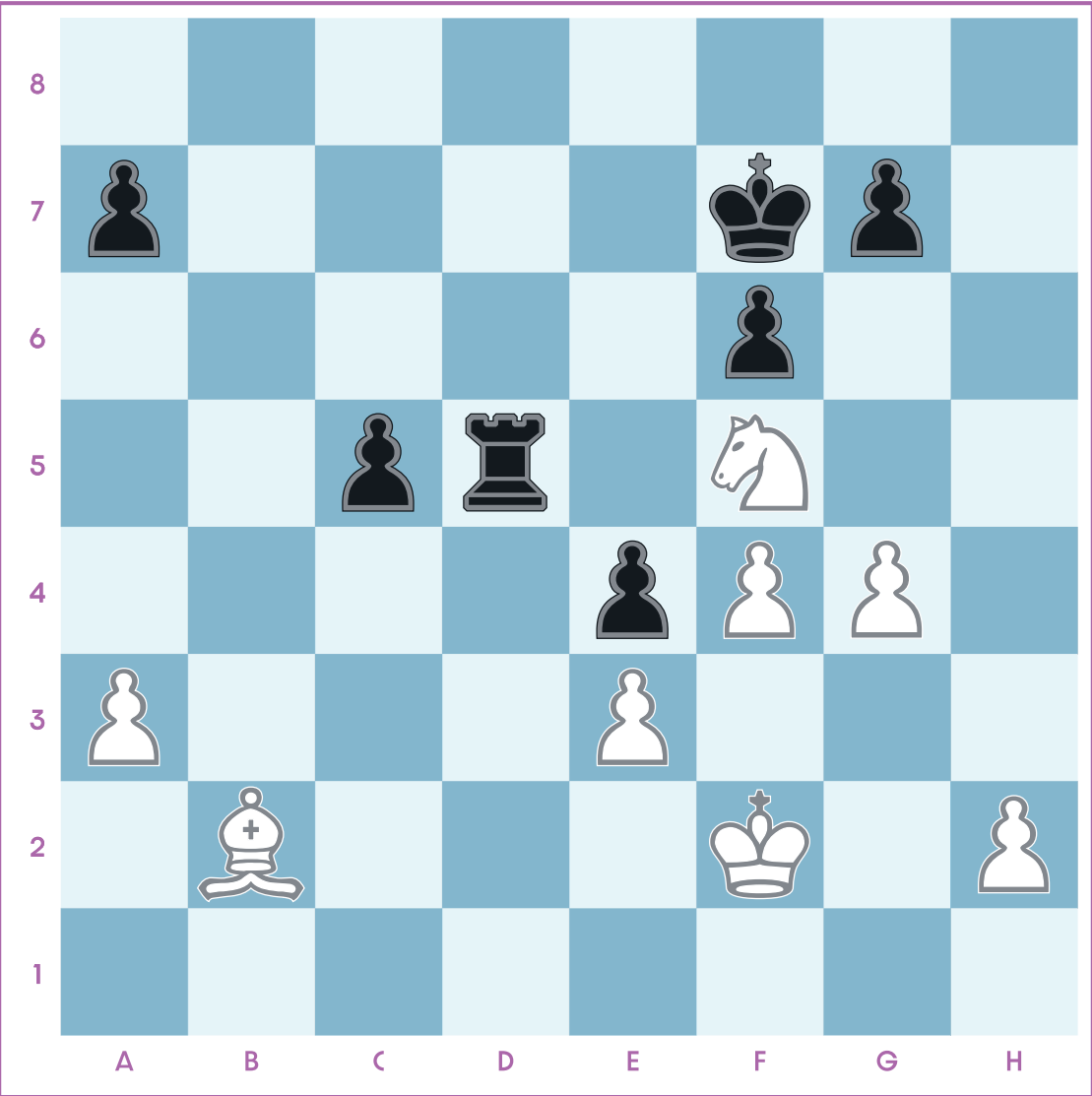
I will give the results and my comments on the varsity match in my April chess column. Alexandra Kostenuik GM, won the second leg of the FIDE Women's Grand Prix that finished mid February with a score of 7.5/11 points. She was invincible throughout the match and only stumbled in her final game losing to WGM Zhu Jiner. The results from the final round had only one decisive result, with the other 5 games all resulting in draws, with Nana Dzagnidze GM coming in 3rd place with 6.5/11pts, and finishing her final game with an 11 move draw. Koneru Humpy GM, the only other player in contention for the top spot, needed a win against Tan Zhongyi to succeed but could only draw at 2nd place, giving her a slice of the 80,000 Euro's prize money. Tan Zhongyi was the World Women's Chess Champion 2017/2018, an event in which China has dominated with

Hou Yifan 2016/2017, and Ju Wenjun 2018. Wenjun, the current champion, is the person that the aspiring candidates will be looking to beat in the second stage of their tournament, this spring.

The overall prize money for The Women's Candidates Tournament is 250,000 Euros, with the winner given the right to challenge, Ju Wenjun. The World Chess Championship FIDE match between Ian Nepomniachtchi and Ding Liren, has now been set to be played in Astana, Kazakhstan, in April this year. The prize money for this world event is \$2,000,000, (£1.62m, €1.84m). The 14 game contest begins 17th April through to 1st May. Ding Liren represents China, whilst Nepo, as a Russian, has to play under a neutral flag. Russia is currently banned from international sport under FIDE regulations. Nevertheless, come May the world should see two new World Chess Champions, unless whoever plays Ju Wenjun loses. Since Magnus Carlsen declared he would not defend his championship title again and stepped down, Ding Liren by dint of being the runner up to Nepo in the Candidates tournament, is the other contender for the WCC, and a different King will be ordained in the new order of chess this year.

The Jiner v Kostenuik final game in the Women's Grand Prix mentioned above is the game puzzle for this issue.

Barry Martin



The Solution

33. Rxd5, 34. Ke2, prevents Black's Rook from checking the White King on d2 and taking the Bishop on b2!

34. g6.

35. Nh6+, ke6.

36. f5, gxf5, Ke7.

37. gxf5+, Ke7.

39. Ng8+, Kf7.

41. Nxe4, Rh5.

43. Nxc4, Rxb4.

45. Kd3, Rg4.

47. Ne4, a5.

49. Kc4, Ra1.

51. Ka4, Ka6.

53. Nc5+, Kb6.

55. Bc3, Rh1.

57. Bb4, Kb6.

59. Nc2, Kc6.

61. Kc3, Ke4.

63. a4, Kd5.

64. Bb6.

In this game, White's knight leaps are significant in an all encompassing deadly jig. Each time Black attempted to outplay White, forking King and pawn several times, in a wonderful but deadly balletic display that neutralised Black's material and hypnotised the onlookers. In a wonderfully dramatic equestrian end game, by showing the power a knight has, when placed in the right open position.

The Challenge

Zhu, Jiner, 2486, White
v Kostenuik, Alexandra, 2519, Black.

Black has just played 33...., Rxd5. Although Black is a piece down her Rook is centrally placed and her C pawn has an open file, with 5 pawns each in this end game.
What was White's next move that seeks to counter Black's intention to control the centre of the board?
The answer is opposite.

The logo for 'Token' features the word in a sans-serif font. The 't' is orange, the 'o' is white, and the 'ken' is orange. The 'o' is stylized with a white outline.A large, stylized illustration of a carrot is positioned diagonally across the center of the page. The carrot is orange with a green leafy top. The text 'Stick to Kensington and we'll give you the carrot' is overlaid on the carrot, with 'Stick to' and 'carrot' in orange and 'Kensington and we'll give you the' in white.

Stick to Kensington and we'll give you the carrot

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