Edition No.13 10th May - 6th June 2023 COURT OF CHARGE STATE OF CHARGE AND CHARGE STATE OF CHARG





New Opportunities and Flexibility in Social Housing being allocated in Kensington and Chelsea



Residents of Kensington and Chelsea have expressed their support for plans for a new, fairer housing allocations scheme that will give them certainty about their place on the borough's housing register. The new program was created in collaboration with locals to better inform them of the significant demands placed on the borough's extremely small supply of socially accessible housing.

Demand has grown significantly in recent years as a result of the national housing crisis, and there is a particularly high demand in Kensington and Chelsea when compared to the available homes. On the Council's housing register (waiting list), there are currently 3,181 households, 2,134 of which are living in temporary housing, and 75% of them are located outside of the borough. Only 409 social homes became available in 2021–2022 for those on

the housing register.

In addition to the 11,664 homes that registered social providers are responsible for managing in the borough, the Council owns 7,025 of them. The Council has committed to constructing 300 more social housing units. It was decided to introduce the new allocations policy before the summer at the leadership team meeting.

To help shape the proposals, tenants of Council housing were consulted as part of the new policy's development in January 2021. A more official three-month consultation for all residents took place as a result, lasting from December 2021 to February 2022.

By using a banding system, which will enable people to know exactly where they stand on the housing waiting list and how long it will probably take to be rehoused, the entire system promises to become more transparent.

Two MPs are hoping to challenge TfL's controversial policy of reducing Central London bus routes and adding them to outer London. This is being done to better match demand but has proven controversial for those affected by cuts. Those concerns have taken part in petitions, meetings, and local campaigns.

However, Greg Hands, MP for Chelsea and

However, Greg Hands, MP for Chelsea and Fulham, and Nickie Aiken, MP for Cities of London and Westminter, are calling for bus route 11, which runs from Liverpool Street to Fulham Broadway, to receive UNESCO World Heritage Status. This would give it similar protections to the Taj Mahal and Stonehenge

The route has been modified many times over the past century and is seen as the cheapest way to see many attractions, passing Chelsea, Westminster Cathedral and Abbey, Downing Street, Trafalgar Square, Covent Garden, St Paul's Cathedral, the Bank of England and Spitalfields Market, with a single fare of just £1.75. It undercuts sightseeing buses and takes commuters from Kensington & Chelsea into The Square Mile. It may take twice as long as a tube journey but costs half as much.

"The No 11 bus is a symbol of London and a unique way to experience the city's history and culture," Mr Hands, who is also Conservative Party chairman, told The Evening Standard. "The route takes passengers on a journey through the heart of London, past some of the most famous landmarks in the world." Both he and Ms Aiken have campaigned for the existing route to be maintained.





RBKC Mayor officially opens Grenfell Early Years Nursery

Grenfell Early Years Nursery was formally opened by Kensington and Chelsea Mayor, David Lindsay, in front of nursery employees, council members, and project architects. Since the incident in June 2017, the nursery, which spent 30 years in Grenfell Tower, has been without a permanent home. The occasion comes before a neighbourhood gathering scheduled for later in the summer.

After the fire, the nursery relocated to the Ilys Booker Centre, but it left the location in 2021 so that the centre could be extended and renovated to house the number of children it was designed to serve. It had been a

resident of Oxford Gardens Primary School since 2021.

In order to renovate and expand the facility to house the nursery, the Council spent approximately £2 million. Improved indoor and outdoor areas as well as a roof terrace, were part of this project.

Children between the ages of one and three get full and part-time early education via play at the nursery. It is part of the Lancaster West Children's Community Network, a neighbourhood-based organisation that seeks to provide childcare and family support to all of its users, regardless of their circumstances.

ENQUIRER Kensington & Chelsea

Published on behalf of Stratford Place Publishing Company LTD.

Contact: Emma Trehane, St Katherine's Dock Marina, 50 St Katharine's Way, London. E1W 1LA.

Directors - Philip Ashby Rudd and Emma Trehane

editor@eyeonlondon.online 07715 910 665

Advertising - Emma Trehane sales@eyeonlondon.online,

News - Fahad Redha fahad@eyeonlondon.online

Art Director - Steve Muscroft

Web Design - Michelle Powell papiliodigital.com 07477 599 757

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



We are thrilled to announce that Enquirer is undergoing a major rebranding to become Eye on London, a revolutionary hyperlocal news hub that will provide our online community with the latest news from Kensington & Chelsea, Hammersmith & Fulham, Westminster, Wandsworth, Richmond upon Thames and beyond. We are creating a vibrant community of readers and writers who share a passion for the best in news, culture & lifestyle, and we invite you to be a part of it.

Our websites (one for each of the same locations currently covered by Enquirer) will

Dear Enquirer readers,

have new and improved pages to provide upto-date local, national, and international news, recruitment, property and events listings, and modern classified pages. As we continue to grow, we plan to add more websites to Eye on London to expand our coverage to other neighbourhoods across the city.

We are committed to supporting small businesses in each location, and as such, we will be introducing new ways for local businesses to reach their audience through our digital platform. Eve on London will also be

teaming up with big businesses to support community projects and strengthen our local partnerships!

We are excited about the opportunities ahead, and we hope that you will join us on this journey. Our website will be changing to www.eyeonlondon.online, so check our website frequently for fresh updates!

In addition, we will be launching Eye on London social media sites and publishing weekly newsletters for our readers. These will provide additional ways to stay

up-to-date on news and events in your neighbourhood and across London.

Finally, we want to let you know that all of the writers who have contributed to Enquirer will be continuing to provide content for Eye on London, with new writers joining our online community in the coming months.

Thank you for being part of our Enquirer community, and we can't wait to continue bringing you the best content about London on our new platform.

> Best regards, **Enquirer Team**

London air pollution exceeding WHO guidelines

Every London borough exceeds World Health Organisation (WHO) limits for toxic air pollution according to new data from City Hall. The air quality data shows that every borough is breaching the guidelines for nitrogen dioxide.

All but two of the 33 London boroughs used diffusion tubes in 2021 to monitor various locations in their area with only Bexley and Harrow having not installed those monitors. City Hall has now compiled the data from 2021. This is the first time this data has been brought together. Every location monitored has exceeded global WHO recommended limits for nitrogen dioxide.

Fourteen boroughs had five or more locations monitored, which exceeded the less stringent UK legal limits. More than a quarter of locations in Brent, Croydon, and Merton were found to be breaching legal limits and the data revealed a very similar average pollution concentration in inner and outer London.

"London's toxic air is leading to children growing up with stunted lungs and causes around 4,000 premature deaths a year,"

Mayor of London. Sadiq Khan, said, "with the greatest number of attributable deaths in London's outer boroughs. This data is yet more shocking proof that London's air quality has been in serious breach of the recognised global standard – and it's a problem in every single part of the capital." The Mayor proposed the expansion of the

Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) which will charge a daily rate to drivers of vehicles that do not meet emissions requirements. The London boroughs of Bexley, Bromley, Hillingdon and Harrow, as well as Surrey County Council have all challenged this decision.



Nearly £18m allocated so far from scrappage scheme ahead of ULEZ expansion

The scrappage program is already assisting Londoners in switching to more environmentally friendly transportation by removing 5,000 of the city's dirtiest cars, motorcycles, vans, and minibuses from the roads. Nearly 5,000 applications have been approved thus far.

Almost 1,700 low-income Londoners have already received \$3 million, and 500 disabled Londoners have received \$1 million.

Drivers are urged to use TfL's vehicle checker to see if their car is compliant with the ULEZ, though on an average day, nine out of ten cars seen in outer London do so.

TfL is urging all Londoners with non-compliant vehicles to see if they can access the scrappage scheme because thousands of people could be eligible for assistance without realising it.

The vehicle scrappage program has committed nearly £18 million since the end of January to low-income and disabled Londoners, small businesses, and charities to assist them in removing some of the most polluting vehicles from London's roads.

While £13.5 million has been set aside for van and minibus drivers, with the majority going to support small businesses, more than £4 million has been committed to help Londoners with non-compliant automobiles and motorcycles.

With £17,727,500 committed so far, nearly 5,000 applications in total have been approved through the program.

London. This goal will bring considerable economic benefits to the Smithfield neighbourhood, with over two million visitors a

Museum of London can appoint subcontractors to commence the construction of the new museum. The main works will be overseen by construction management partner, Sir Robert McAlpine. Preview events and a festival curated by Londoners

with the museum's official opening as a tourist destination scheduled for 2026.

The new museum space will enable the Museum of London to display more of its collection, and it will have the capacity to host a diverse range of exhibitions, displays, educational activities, and events. The museum's overarching goal is to provide a world-class learning opportunity to every schoolchild in London, with the hope of inspiring the next generation to appreciate and understand the city they call home.



Funding announced for new London Museum

Thanks to a recent funding announcement by the City of London Corporation, the Museum of London will move to the Smithfield site of the historic markets. The project will receive £73 million to support the next stage of the museum's relocation and regeneration. This

funding commitment will also help ensure the long-term viability of the site's historic market buildings.

The new museum project is a significant undertaking for the City Corporation, and the funding will help the institution rank among the top ten tourist attractions in year expected to visit. With the £73 million in funding, the

will take place towards the end of 2025,



UK gardeners encouraged to take part in "No Mow May"

Scientists from the charity Plantlife are asking the public to look out for wild-flowers and other plants in their lawns and put the lawnmower away as part of a campaign called "No Mow May." The ten most common plants recorded during the campaign last were revealed as conservationists urge gardeners to let their grass grow for the month. These were daisies, creeping buttercup, yellow rattle, common bird's-foot trefoil, field forget-me-not, meadow buttercup, white clover, common mouse-ear, oxeye daisies and dandelion.

Plant campaigners were delighted with the proliferation of yellow rattle on British lawns as the semi-parasitic plant possesses an ability to act as a 'natural lawnmower,' reducing coarser grasses and enabling more delicate wildflowers to flourish. The appearance of common bird's-foot trefoil in a lawn means great news for other wildlife, being a rich source of food for over a hundred inspect species.

"Wild plants and fungi are the foundation of life and shape the world we live in," Nicola Hutchinson, the director of conservation at Plantlife, said. "However, one in five British wildflowers is under threat and we need to urgently address and arrest the losses.

"With an estimated 23m gardens in the UK, how lawns are tended makes a huge difference to the prospects for wild plants and other wildlife. The simple action of taking the mower out of action for May can deliver big gains for nature, communities and the climate, so we are encouraging all to liberate lawns as never before."

Mowing the lawn less, the charity says, could also help reduce the carbon footprint of British gardens. It estimates that British lawns can be cut as many as 30 million times a year under a weekly regime. This would be equal to the consumption of 45 million litres of petrol, causing 80,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions.





National Trust Blossom Week Highlights Importance of Hedgerows

The National Trust has published research on changes in hedgerows and density on its land in England and Wales since the start of the 20th century. The charity says that this research "will help inform its ambition for future conservation projects and aid plans to establish 4 million blossoming trees by 2030."

Results from the conservation charity's first-ever Blossom Week, which celebrates the beauty of the many different tree and hedgerow blossoms, showed that there were just under 10,000 km of boundaries on land now looked after by the National Trust in England and Wales in 1900.

A third (33%) of the boundaries on land now maintained by the National Trust have vanished over the past 100 years, covering nearly 3,300 km. This is in contrast to a 50% loss of hedgerows throughout the rest of the country, suggesting that, despite a

significant decline, National Trust locations have fared better than the wider countryside.

The loss on land managed by the conservation charity is likely due to farmers following government regulations or the fact that the loss happened before the land was acquired.

According to regional analysis, this loss seems to be fairly consistent across all regions and nations. The East of England seems to be the one significant exception, where nearly half (48%) and more than 400 kilometres of boundaries recorded in the 1900s appear to have been lost.

Hedgerow distribution at the turn of the century showed that the South West had over 3,300 km of boundaries (or 35% of the total), while the South East and North West had the fewest, with 1,350 and 1,500 km of hedgerows, respectively.

Imperial War Museum to exhibit conflicting views of the Troubles

For the first time in the museum's history, the Imperial War Museum will tackle the 'Troubles' of the 30-year long conflict in Northern Ireland.

"There was a realisation that this was something that the IWM should address," said Craig Murray, lead curator of the exhibition. "We wanted to show that it's complex, difficult – and not over. We wanted to listen to how and why people disagree about what happened, and air different viewpoints."

Visitors to the museum will have the chance to listen to conflicting and contradictory testimonies from different parties involved including paramilitaries, police, soldiers and civilians, collected by Murray over five years. "So much is contested, but

even if you disagree with what you're hearing, it's important to hear it," he said.

A 'key section' dedicated to events near St Matthew's church in Belfast at the junction of the republican Short Strand and loyalist Newtownards Road on the night of 27th June, 1970, where three people were shot dead will be among the exhibits.

There will also be rubber bullets, used by the British army to control a crowd in 1970, and a number plate removed by an army bomb disposal team in 1973, on display.

"I hope people come away accepting that disagreement and different perspectives are part of reality" says Murray. "All conflicts pose difficult questions, but hearing people's stories is crucial to a deeper understanding of what happened."



London Home Football Traffic Watch

Men's Home Football

May 6, Fulham v Leicester City, 15:00 May 6, Tottenham v Crystal Palace, 15:00 May 8, Fulham v Leicester City, 15:00 May 13, Chelsea v Nottingham Forest, 15:00 May 13, Crystal Palace v Bournemouth, 15:00 May 14, Arsenal v Brighton, 16:30 May 20, Fulham v Crystal Palace, 15:00 May 20, Tottenham v Brentford, 15:00 May 28, Arsenal v Wolves, 16:30

May 28, Chelsea v Newcastle, 16:30 May 28, Crystal Palace v Nottingham Forest, 16:30

Women's Home Football

May 5, Arsenal v Leicester City, 19:30 May 7, Chelsea v Everton, 14:00 May 7, Fulham v Sutton United, 15:30 May 10, Chelsea v Man City, 19:00 May 14, Chelsea v Man United, 13:30 May 21, Chelsea v Arsenal, 14:00 May 21, Tottenham v Reading, 14:00 May 27, Arsenal v Aston Villa, 15:00

International News



While bees are essential pollinators, and their role in agriculture and ecosystems is vital, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that urban beekeeping may actually be harming local biodiversity.

A new study published in the journal PeerJ suggests that the rapid growth in urban honeybee-keeping over the past decade may be negatively impacting nearby wild bee populations, especially small bees with limited foraging ranges.

The researchers compared bee population data from sites around the island of Montreal in 2013 to data from the same sites in the summer of 2020. Those with the largest increase in honeybee populations had the fewest wild bee species, according to Gail MacInnis, a former Concordia postdoctoral researcher and lead author of the study, along with coauthors Etienne Normandin from the Université de Montréal and Carly Ziter, an assistant professor in the Department of Biology.

The number of honeybee colonies on the island has increased twelvefold since 2013,

when there were under 250 colonies, while now the number has ballooned to nearly 3,000 in 2020, according to Quebec's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food.

Honeybees are not native to the area the researchers point out. As a result, they come into conflict with nearly 180 other species for resources such as pollen and nectar, something that was highlighted in the 2013 study.

The researchers visited 15 sites across the island of Montreal known to attract pollinators, including community gardens, cemeteries, and large urban parks, and used a standardised system of pan trap triplets along with nets to collect their samples. Pan trap triplets are multicoloured bowls designed to attract bees.

In 2020, the researchers utilised pan trap triplets at each site to attract and capture bees. The collection process was repeated five times between late June and early September, yielding a total sample size of 6,200 bees. Additionally, other factors that could affect wild bee populations were measured, such as the availability of

habitat and floral resources. Analysis of the samples revealed that out of the 6,200 bees collected, almost 4,000 samples were from wild bees belonging to 120 species, while approximately 2,200 were honeybees. In comparison, during the 2013 study, approximately 5,200 bees were collected, with almost all of them being wild bees from 163 different species.

Statistical analyses were performed on sites in 2020 that looked into wild bee diversity, bee traits, honeybee abundance, wild bee community composition, and pollen depletion. Similar analyses compared the bee communities in 2013 and 2020, which found that wild bee species 'richness' declined significantly. Honeybee abundance increased but remained similar to 2013 levels in areas where the honeybee population was lower by comparison. An abundance in honeybees was also associated with pollen depletion in white clover flowers

MacInnis points out that a lack of registry or regulation has made studying bee populations difficult. She emphasises that understanding colony densities is crucial,

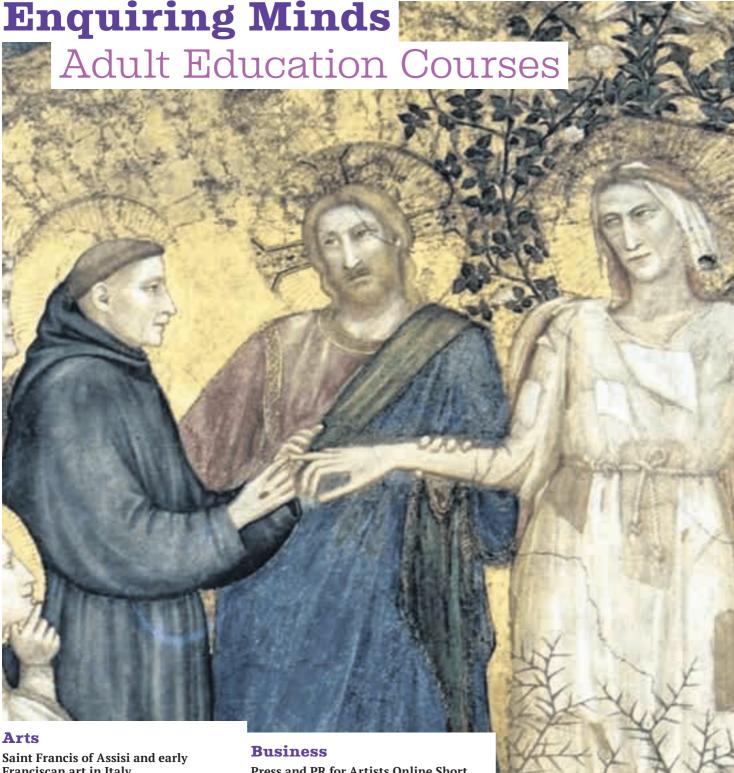
as just a single colony can support as many as 50,000 bees.

"If we want to support large bee populations, we need to provide food. However, we also need to be careful about population density, especially for commercially managed bees, because they are prone to many diseases," she says. "This issue can become especially problematic when there are many new beekeepers in the area who may not be knowledgeable about controlling for things like mites, viruses, and other pathogens."

Ziter adds that while beekeeping provides an agricultural product, namely honey, that is valuable to people, urban beekeeping is often "falsely marketed as a solution to biodiversity loss."

"Just as we wouldn't advocate keeping backyard chickens to save the birds, we shouldn't look to beekeeping to save the bees. It's important that our actions match our goals or motivations. If our goal is to increase urban biodiversity, we're much better off planting pollinator gardens than adding more urban hives," she concludes.





Franciscan art in Italy The National Gallery

Join Dr John Renner and guest experts for this four-week course, which focuses on the central Italian heartland of Saint Francis and his order from the 13th to the 15th centuries – a critical period of artistic change. By the time of his death in 1226 his followers, known as the Friars Minor ('lesser brothers'), were preaching his message all over Europe, and even beyond the frontiers of Christendom. But Francis had already resigned the leadership of his order, dismayed by the increasingly worldly and materialistic turn it was taking as it became a pillar of the established Church. So Franciscan art has at root this paradox: some of the most magnificent churches of the later Middle Ages and early Renaissance, with their monuments, funerary chapels, altarpieces and frescoes, were created by an order of mendicant friars, committed to poverty. How this came to be is what we will be examining over these four weeks.

Trafalgar Square, London, WC2N 5DN nationalgallery.org.uk

June 6-27

Press and PR for Artists Online Short Course

University of the Arts

In this four week course you will set goals and identify relevant publications and exposure for your work. You will learn how to write about your work, structure a press release, pitch your stories and give effective interviews. You will do this through personal assignments and gain feedback from your tutor and peers. This course is perfect for artists, independent creatives wishing to gain exposure in the press or media or anyone responsible for promoting the work of artists to the press and media. By the end of the course you will have a better understanding of; the media and the most relevant exposure for your work, how to identify stories and appropriate media outlets, how to write about your work confidently for press, how to structure effective press releases, how to pitch your work to print and media, how to give a strong interview, how to manage your artistic practice to include self promotion.

Online Course arts.ac.uk Starts June 9

Culinary

Diplôme de Boulangerie

Le Cordon Bleu

This course has been specifically developed to meet the needs of the expanding culinary sector of the hospitality industry. This boulangerie course aims to provide you with the classical and practical skills of Boulangerie arts, kitchen management, and gastronomy. Across the course, you will learn a large variety of Boulangerie techniques like basic bread doughs, viennoiserie, and creating and managing your own starter cultures for sourdoughs. You'll get a chance to develop your creativity while also growing your understanding of how to run a small business. The Boulangerie Diploma will provide you with knowledge of all aspects of the Boulangerie trade. You will learn through demonstrations, practical application, lectures, and on site industry

15 Bloomsbury Square, London, WC1A 2LS cordonbleu.edu

Language

Spanish courses for complete beginners Instituto Cervantes

Ready to learn Spanish with the most encouraging and best qualified teachers? The Instituto Cervantes in London offers a wide choice of Spanish courses for complete beginners six days a week, either regular (once a week), semi-intensive (twice a week) and intensive (5 days a week). All teachers are Spanish-speaking natives and are professionals in teaching Spanish as a foreign language. The classes are very practical and you will quickly learn how to communicate and carry out a conversation in the language.

15-19 Devereux Ct, Temple, London, WC2R 3II londres.cervantes.es See website for dates

Science, Technology, Engineering, & Maths

DIY in a Day - Plumbing

The Goodlife Centre

Learn how to tackle some basic plumbing tasks around the home in this practical, hands-on workshop. During this weekend's one day workshop, our experienced tutor will walk you through some 'dry' exercises to top up your skills in the 'wet arts' of your home. Plumbing means water in and water out. There will be plenty of time to learn how to isolate water supply, fix a leaky tap, rescue something from a U bend and unclog a blocked sink. All the basic essentials that you need to be able to do yourself without the expense of calling someone in. Learn the principles of replacing a tap, if the replacement washer didn't do the trick, or if you are just a fashionista that wants the latest design. Learn how to fit a washing machine and a dishwasher to the 'loo', or how to replace any non-working part in vour cistern.

49/55 Great Guildford Street, London, SEI OES thegoodlifecentre.co.uk

Sport & Fitness

Capoeira Academy Somers Town Sports Centre New to Capoeira? Complete beginner?

Feel you aren't flexible or strong enough? Regardless of if you have never tried Capoeira or been inspired by it on YouTube, but don't know where to start, here are dedicated beginner sessions on Fridays to enable you to feel more confident and to pick up the basics. After completing this for a few weeks, you will then feel more comfortable to attend the longer sessions. You are welcome to join the beginner's class on a pay as you go basis or the most popular option of paying the monthly pass. This is the perfect place for anyone who is looking to learn this unique and fascinating Brazilian martial art. Whether you're a complete beginner or an experienced practitioner, this school has something to offer. 134 Chalton St, Somers Town, NW1 1RX capoeiracademyuk.com

See website to book

Compiled & edited by Fahad Redha



Partner Content

Breaking Cultural Barriers: 🗥 🗸

Conversations with Arabic, Sanskrit, and Turkish Teachers at SOAS

Enquirer had the pleasure of interviewing three language teachers from SOAS Language Centre who all share the same message: learning a language at SOAS Language Centre is a remarkable and invaluable experience. These teachers have a deep passion for their respective languages and are dedicated to helping students gain a profound understanding of not just the language, but also the culture and history that surrounds it.





Eylem Brassington (Turkish Teacher, Linguist and Teacher Trainer)

Meet Eylem Brassington, a passionate Turkish teacher at SOAS University. Learning a new language can be tricky, and Eylem has noticed that one of the biggest challenges that students face when learning the language is what she describes as negative transfer. This happens when students try to apply the rules of their own language to the language they are learning. Since English and Turkish come from different language families, it can be frustrating for students when they realise that they cannot simply translate words and phrases from their own language.

To help her students overcome this challenge, Eylem explains how Turkish works and emphasises that it's a new entity. She breaks down long words into literal translations and encourages students to see that Turkish is nothing like English. This helps them to accept Turkish as a new language. Providing her students with lots of activities and exercises to help them reinforce what they have learned also allows them to develop their speaking, listening, and writing

skills in Turkish.

Eylem tells Enquirer that one of the most rewarding experiences is teaching students from different backgrounds who are learning Turkish for personal reasons. For example, some students come to SOAS Language Centre to learn the language to reconnect with their Turkish heritage or communicate with a Turkish parent they have never met. Eylem remembers one student who came to SOAS Language Centre to learn Turkish and find his father, whom he had lost contact with. After successfully learning the language and culture, he travelled to Turkey and located his father. Eylem felt touched when she received a selfie from the student, showing him with his father, and she felt proud to have played a small part in facilitating the emotional reunion.

Eylem's passion for teaching at SOAS Language Centre goes beyond the classroom. Some of her students have gone on to pursue careers in the Ministry of Defence, the British consulate in Istanbul, TV channels, and journalism, and seeking out extra tuition to continue their language learning. Teaching at SOAS Language Centre is not just a job for Eylem; it's a passion that she loves sharing with her students.



As an ancient language that played a vital role in South Asian history and culture, learning Sanskrit can help us gain a deeper understanding of how the region's languages and literature developed. Lidia, Sanskrit Language Lecturer at SOAS Language Centre, has offered valuable insights into teaching Sanskrit and the benefits of studying at SOAS Language Centre.

When asked what makes SOAS Language Centre a special place to study languages Lidia explains that the institution stands out as one of the few universities in the world that places a significant emphasis on language learning. With a dedicated Language Centre and degree programs that integrate language studies, SOAS offers a rare opportunity for students to become specialists in their area of interest while also building practical language skills.

Many students who are initially curious about Sanskrit, for example, eventually become enamoured with the language and pursue it as a passion project. Lidia attributes this to SOAS Language Centre's supportive teaching approach, which encourages students to explore complex historical texts and engage with a language that played a critical role in South Asian history and culture.

However, learning the language is not without its challenges, Lidia elaborates. Sanskrit is an ancient and courtly language and learning it can be challenging. The complex grammar, different script from English, and the need to memorise tables and other foreign concepts can also present difficulties. Nonetheless, with perseverance and dedication, students can achieve a high level of proficiency.

In discussing the unique challenges of learning Sanskrit, Lidia also highlights how this differs from other languages taught at SOAS Language Centre. Unlike conversational languages, Sanskrit is primarily based on reading ancient texts, which provides valuable insights into the literary and cultural practices of Ancient India. As such, studying the language requires a different approach and mindset. By offering a deeper understanding of the linguistic and cultural foundations of South Asian history, the study of Sanskrit provides a unique opportunity to engage with a critical aspect of human history.

Lidia explains that teaching an ancient language at SOAS Language Centre has been immensely gratifying due to the enthusiasm and dedication of the students, even though learning Sanskrit requires a certain level of commitment, the academic and personal rewards are significant.

If you are interested in learning more about studying Turkish, Arabic, Sanskrit or other languages, please get in touch using the following information.

SOAS Language Centre Thornhaugh St London WC1H OXG Phone: +44 (0)20 7898 4888

Phone: +44 (0)20 7898 4888 Email: languages@soas.ac.uk





Ahmad Alkhashem (Senior Lector in Arabic)

Ahmad's inspiration to become a language teacher came from his childhood teachers who were engaging and knowledgeable. After earning his BA and Diploma in English Language and Literature, he worked as a teacher trainer in Syria before dedicating himself to teaching Arabic and sharing his love for the language.

According to Ahmad, SOAS University stands out from other language institutions because of its diverse range of language offerings and the experienced and dedicated teachers. He also mentions that SOAS Language Centre is efficiently managed by coordinators for each language section.

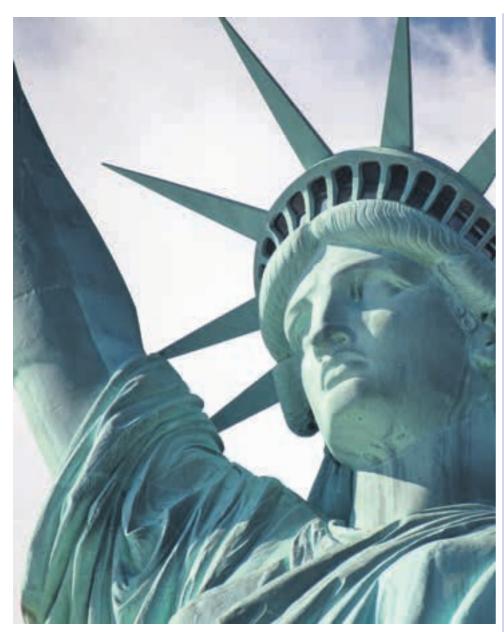
One of Ahmad's most rewarding experiences has been teaching students who have achieved proficiency levels and continue to enrol in speaking and listening short courses at SOAS Language Centre to maintain their language skills. Some of these students have gone on to become Arabic language teachers or joined postgraduate programs.

Ahmad, has designed a syllabus that integrates cultural and historical context into teaching, recognising the importance of cultural immersion in language learning. He is also the author of *Arabic for University Students*.

During the pandemic, SOAS Language Centre transitioned to online learning, but now as a means of cultural integration, the Centre has reinstated in-person social events. These events celebrate the accomplishments of students and teachers and showcase special themes like live music from diverse regions and Calligraphy workshops.

SOAS Language Centre, Ahmad tells us, offers a wide range of programs taught by highly experienced native-speaker teachers who assess each student's language proficiency level and help them choose the right course for their needs. The language courses provide students with insight into the culture of the region, increase their chances of employability, and build bridges with the society that speaks the language of study.

CRYPTO MAZE



NEW YORK FINANCIAL REGULATOR ADOPTS ASSESSMENT RULE FOR CRYPTO FIRMS

The New York State Department of Financial Services (NYSDFS) has passed a new law that would require any company holding a BitLicense to pay assessment fees. The ruling gives the department new power to "collect supervisory costs from licensed virtual currency businesses" under a provision in the state's fiscal year 2023 budget.

This treats digital asset firms similarly to insurance and banking companies, both of which pay assessment fees that fund the agency's operations. The regulator proposed the charges in December, claiming that it would bring in more resources that would allow it to take on more staff and expand its virtual currency unit.

On the NYSDFS website, it detailed that crypto firms would be billed five times in the fiscal year 2023-24 with four quarterly assessments throughout the year "based on the Virtual Currency Unit's estimated annual budget at the time of billing." There would also be a final assessment at the end of the year based on the unit's actual expenses.

The agency will require crypto firms to "meet rigorous standards for capitalisation,

cybersecurity protection, and anti-money laundering protocols, among other requirements," it said. Assessment fees will depend on the size of these firms, as well as their complexity. The assessment would "go a long way toward helping the space grow and helping make sure it grows safely."

The NYDFS has increased its digital asset unit staff over the past year, and its crypto unit now employs over 50 people. The latest legislation is one of a series of cryptorelated measures issued over the past year. Earlier, the regulators released new guidance mandating that companies separate their own crypto assets from that of their customers. That came after it was revealed that there was 'co-mingling' between the now-bankrupt cryptocurrency exchanges FTX and its trading arm Alameda Research.

New York is among a few states requiring businesses to engage in the transmission of fiat currency as well as virtual currency in order to have both a BitLicense and a traditional money transmitter licence. It also requires companies to undergo examination to ensure that they comply with both anti-money laundering and 'know-your-customer' rules.

'BRITCOIN' DIGITAL POUND PROPOSED

A "Britcoin" digital pound has been proposed, and a decision on whether to introduce it is due to be made by 2025 by the Treasury and the Bank of England. A consultation paper found that it is "likely to be needed in the future."

The decision will be made based on future developments in money and payments, the Treasury has said. Members of the public are being invited to give their views on the digital pound as part of the research and development being done by the Bank of England. A potential Britcoin would be issued by the Bank of England, rather than the private sector, unlike other cryptocurrencies. Also, unlike other cryptocurrencies, its value would be connected to the pound.

The needs of vulnerable people are being considered, according to the Treasury, in the design process, ensuring it would be simple to use and understood as well as trusted. The Treasury has also said that there would be a limit on the amount of Britcoin that people can hold during an introductory phase to find a balance between encouraging its use and managing

risks. These include the potential for large and rapid outflows from banking deposits into Britcoin, it added.

A digital pound hopes to work like paper money, being issued and controlled by the Bank of England, and would be interchangeable with cash and bank deposits. Digital money at the moment is only issued to banks, rather than the general public. But with digital currency, it can be sent without the need for a bank account.

Co-chair of the Bank and Treasury task-force, Sir Jon Cunliffe, said using Britcoin could be even cheaper and easier than card transactions. "They do offer the potential to bring down costs," he said. "At the moment, the average cost, I think, for a credit card transaction is about just over half a percent, but of course, if you're a small tea room in Shoreham-on-Sea, you're going to be paying more than that in some cases, well over 1% for that transaction."

Tulip Siddiq, shadow city minister responded to the announcement. "We fully support the Bank of England's work exploring the potential benefits of a safe and stable, Central Bank Digital Currency."



NTELLIGENT ARTIFICE

European Union legislators have advanced a draft of a new law intended to regulate artificial intelligence technology. Although they will be subject to more stringent transparency procedures, the high-risk tools won't be completely outlawed, the Bill states. There will be a requirement to disclose any use of copyrighted materials in AI training, especially for generative AI tools like ChatGPT and Midjourney.

Italy was the first Western country to temporarily ban ChatGPT as a result of the recent intense scrutiny the AI developers have received in Europe. Regulators in Germany demanded responses from OpenAI regarding the company's plans and capacity to abide by the stringent data privacy laws enshrined in the EU's General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

Regulations in Germany "want to know if a data protection impact assessment has been carried out and if the data protection risks are under control," Schleswig-Holstein's commissioner Marit Hansen told AFP reporters.

American-based AI companies are currently being investigated for alleged GDPR violations, according to Europe's data watchdog Wojciech Wiewiórowski, and he foresees a difficult situation for them. OpenAI, according to Wiewiórowski, now finds itself between a "European rock and a U.S. hard place," legally speaking.

U.S. lawmakers may be considering European developments as a potential local model as EU regulators step up their enforcement.

Government regulators should be "very involved," according to Mira Murati, chief technology officer at OpenAI, in creating



security guidelines for implementing cutting-edge AI models like ChatGPT. She does not, however, believe that the suggested six-month development pause is the best course of action.

For American-based artificial intelligence (AI) businesses that are currently under investigation for alleged violations of the General Data Protection

Regulation (GDPR), Wiewiórowski foresees a difficult situation. In a recent interview, Wiewiórowski warned data protection regulators to be on the lookout for another scandal due to the rapid pace of development in the AI industry, citing the Cambridge Analytica incident as an example.

Wiewiórowski's remarks follow

turbulent week for leading AI company OpenAI, maker of the enormously well-liked GPT suite of goods and services. While Ireland, France, and Germany are also considering similar actions, Italy had outright banned the company's GPT services while awaiting more information about its intention and capacity to comply with GDPR.



The UK government has announced the creation of an AI task force as part of its efforts to expand the country's technology sector. Prime Minister, Rishi Sunak, and Technology Secretary, Michelle Donelan, will provide an initial funding of £100 million to accelerate the nation's AI readiness. The prime minister believes that AI has the potential to drive economic growth and improve security and healthcare. The task force's goals are to promote the widespread adoption of safe and reliable AI models and ensure sovereign capabilities, including in public services, in line with the UK's goal to become a science and technology superpower by 2030.

The first pilot projects for AI usage and integration are set to focus on public services and are expected to begin operating within the next six months. The UK government has already planned a £900 billion investment in computing technology, and officials are promoting "safe AI" by regulating the technology to keep people safe without stifling innovation. Donelan stressed the importance of responsible AI development to gain public and business trust and fully realise its benefits.

In addition, the UK Treasury is reviving its Asset Management Taskforce to create cryptocurrency regulation, with Coinbase CEO, Brian Armstrong, advising regulators on the legal and tax implications of the relationship between banks and the fintech sector. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) wants to work with cryptocurrency businesses to create an industry-specific regulatory framework, and FCA Executive Director, Sarah Pritchard, has emphasised the importance of collaboration to ensure the future regulatory regime for crypto assets is right.

THE BOTTOM LINE



It has been said that Selfridges is for Londoners and Harrods is for visitors. Brought up in aspirational Chalfont St Giles, my first retail memory was of bacon and peanut butter toasted sandwiches while my mother bought china in the Harrods sale. I don't think I'd heard of Selfridges until, still an aspirant, I moved

council has a point, but the regular reader of this column (if you accept there might be such a thing) will know that I think you would stand a better chance of legitimate business being done on one of London's sleazier streets if we could sort out a fairer retail business rate. Having written a couple of novels about a Gatsbyesque figure who

and technically.

On the flipside, it must be good news for a street burdened by the memory of conveying the condemned from Newgate to the Tyburn Tree, giving rise to the saying "to go west," "pull your leg," and strangely enough "on the wagon." Oxford Street has never quite been able to shake off its seediness, not helped by

Every professional I know admits that you can't tell the difference. Where HMV might be going is the hyper-specialized arena of vinyl pressing, particularly going back to the early years of Rock through to the early seventies, where the stereo pressings were reputed to be something of a gimmick, and where the mono recordings were the ones the bands signed off on. I have spent my life trying to replicate the sound of "Come Together" (Abbey Road, The Beatles) only to be told that the difference was probably the original pressing and not the hi-fi.

original pressing and not the hi-fi.

With so much music being streamed, and with each mini-generation on the Moore's Law principle (that computing power doubles exponentially) improving the depth of the sound by increasing the file size, we won't be going back to buying our music in stores. However, HMV is a strong brand name and sent shock waves through the retail world when it failed four years ago. Accused of VOC failure (voice of the customer), I imagine they're listening closely now. The hi-fi market is strong. For the time being, humans will have to listen acoustically. Can a brand like HMV rely on merchandise? Maybe. Hard Rock Café merchandise accounts for 48% of revenues

The HMV brand has history on its side. Edward Elgar opened His Master's Voice in July 1921, and Brian Epstein produced a vinyl record from a Beatles' demo in 1962. If cassettes can make a comeback, HMV must have an even chance.

ALL ABOUT NIPPER AND THE GRAMOPHONE

HMV RETURNS TO 363 OXFORD STREET

to London in my twenties. More even perhaps than Harvey Nichols, Selfridges has become the classiest of bazaars, while John Lewis is the sensible option despised by the former prime minister's wife. These two retail icons are connected by that motley collection of retailers along Oxford Street, the US-style sweet shops, ubiquitous purveyors of nylon scarves with BNP ornamentation, and those spongy loaves with pizza toppings sold by the rectangular slice.

These latter outlets are much in the eye of Westminster City Council, considered havens of money laundering. I suspect the

funds his glamorous life with the proceeds of what he refers to as alternative banking, money laundering has been a focus, as it should be for a partner in a firm of accountants with a duty to report suspicious activities. Although sometimes I do think that the authorities feel the appointment of an accountant is a suspicious activity in itself. I would have said that Oxford Street is an ideal cover for money laundering. Bury the loot in the legitimate cash banking then management charges the proceeds into a tax haven, so neat it's almost legal. Good luck closing that dodge down. The alternative bankers will always have more resources, financially

the closure in recent years of Debenhams, BHS, and Top Shop. HMV's press releases promise a quality product. They won't be able to rely on a fifty-pound man on his way back to the office from the pub. While it may not, in itself, be enough to drag Oxford Street up to the level of Bond Street, which it crosses, or the King's Road, still less Knightsbridge, it has to be a step in the right direction.

Will it survive? Who knows. The vinyl

Will it survive? Who knows. The vinyl recovery has lingered longer than I expected, but I doubt that HMV is relying on what is surely a nostalgia strip. The idea that the smooth analogue curve of vinyl is significantly better than a digital CD is tenuous.

© Doug Shanks

Events Supplement May-June 23

DANCE & OPERA

GöteborgsOperans Danskompani: Skid by Damien Jalet and SAABA by Sharon Eyal

Sadler's Wells Theatre

GöteborgsOperans Danskompani presents an electrifying evening of work by Sadler's Wells Associate Artist, Sharon Eyal, and Damien Jalet. Israeli-born choreographer Eyal is known for her distinctive choreography; muscular, sensual and draped in the costumes of high fashion houses. French Belgian choreographer Jalet works across disciplines such as visual arts, music, cinema, theatre and fashion in a constant reinvention of the boundaries of dance.

Rosebery Avenue, London, EC1R 4TN sadlerswells.com May 11-13

Chaillot – Théâtre National de la Danse / Rachid Ouramdane

Sadler's Wells Theatre

A white climbing wall. A high wire above the stage. An ensemble of athletes and artists soar through mid-air choreography that takes dance to new heights. Corps extrêmes is a visually stunning exploration of flight and freedom with an ensemble of athletes and artists, defying belief on a set where the mountains meet the stage. Choreographer Rachid Ouramdane focusses on ideas of flight, states of weightlessness, and suspension – all key in extreme sports. This ambitious and captivating work brings together acrobats, flyers, a slackliner and a rock-climber. Rosebery Avenue, London, EC1R 4TN sadlerswells.com

May 23-24

Sleeping Beauty Tour with Lilac Fairy High Tea

Royal Opera House

Your choice of tea or coffee or champagne and cake in the Crush Room followed by an exclusive tour of the building and backstage areas themed around The Sleeping Beauty. On this one-hour tour you will explore the history of one of the most beloved ballets. From its first performance after WWII, fashioned from rationed fabrics and sheer determination, through to the present day. Before the tour, visitors will be treated to a delicious

Lilac Fairy Tea or Champagne High Tea in the splendour of the Royal Opera House. Bow Street, London, WC2E 9DD roh.org.uk Until June 6

Cinderella In-The-Round

Royal Albert Hall

The classic fairy tale becomes a truly spectacular ballet at the Royal Albert Hall with over 90 dancers, a live orchestra and magnificent sets and projections. Enter an enchanting kingdom where forest creatures live alongside princes, a growing tree appears to dance in the wind, and Cinderella's wit and generosity get her to the ball – with the help of a little bit of magic. Christopher Wheeldon's glittering choreography sees the arena floor flooded with exquisite dancers, while Prokofiev's sublime score is performed by the English National Ballet Philharmonic.

Kensington Gore, South Kensington, London, SW7 2AP ballet.org.uk June 15-25

EXHIBITIONS

Field Notes

Victoria & Albert

What can the forest teach us? That is one of the key questions that runs through this display of contemporary design projects. For the second iteration of Make Good: Rethinking Material Futures, the V&A has collaborated with environmental charity Sylva Foundation to create the Field Notes summer school. Twelve practitioners within art, design and architecture were selected to participate through an open call-out. Through seminars, forest walks, and handson making the participants explored ways of caring for woodlands and utilising locally sourced wood. Field Notes considered the importance of diverse thinking when envisioning sustainable futures, it also discussed issues of land use and ownership; and questions of access and inclusion. This display is part of Make Good: Rethinking Material Futures, a ten-year project supported by John Makepeace OBE. Cromwell Road, London, SW7 2RL

vam.ac.uk Until August 31

POTAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC POYASTUDIO PRODUCTION COLLEGE OF MUSIC London ROYAL COLLEGE OF MUSIC, LONDON 7PM | 28 & 30 JUNE, 1 & 3 JULY 2023 **BOOK NOW AT** MICHAEL ROSEWELL ELLA MARCHMENT **MADELEINE BOYD RACHEL ASTALL** WWW.RCM.AC.UK/RCMOPERA CONDUCTOR **DIRECTOR DESIGNER** LIGHTING DESIGNER 020 7591 4314



Luxury and power: Persia to Greece

British Museum

Drawing on dazzling objects from Afghanistan to Greece, this exhibition moves beyond the ancient Greek spin to explore a more complex story about luxury as a political tool in the Middle East and southeast Europe from 550-30 BC. It explores how the royal Achaemenid court of Persia used precious objects as markers of authority, defining a style of luxury that resonated across the empire from Egypt to India. It considers how eastern luxuries were received in early democratic Athens, self-styled as Persia's arch-enemy, and how they were adapted in innovative ways to make them socially and politically acceptable. Finally, it explores how Alexander the Great swept aside the Persian empire to usher in a new Hellenistic age in which eastern and western styles of luxury were fused as part of an increasingly interconnected world.

Great Russell Street, London, WC1B 3DG britishmuseum.org **Opens May 4**

Gerry Anderson's Century 21

The Cartoon Museum

Gerry Anderson revolutionised the world of puppetry with his advanced technique of Supermarionation in the 60s but his innovation didn't stop there. To capitalise on the nationwide obsession with this new and interesting style of television, the weekly comic in a newspaper format TV Century 21 was launched! This exhibition at the Cartoon Museum will take visitors back in time to a more magical period of retro-futuristic glitz, glamour and adventure, showcasing classic comic artwork based on the worlds of Gerry Anderson. It's an opportunity to relive the nostalgia of crowding around worn-out comics and dodgy TV sets, and to pay homage to the man who raised generations of children from the 60s to the 2000s on tales of science fiction and intrigue.

55 Wells Street, W1W 8HJ cartoonmuseum.org **Until Iune 4**

John James Audubon and his Birds of America Natural History Museum This free display of engravings from John This free display of engravings from John Nosted right in the heart of the City of London. This hugely exciting automobile

James Audubon's The Birds of America reaffirms why it continues to inspire artists, bird experts and conservationists alike. John James Audubon was born in 1785. A self-taught wildlife artist, he spent twenty years travelling North America to record birds for his book. Published between 1827 and 1838, the 435 prints transformed bird illustration through realistic proportions, animated poses and innovative new printing techniques. The Birds of America is a feat of artistry and technical skill. Cromwell Road, South Kensington,

London, SW7 5BD nhm.ac.uk See website for dates

FAIRS & FESTIVALS

F&: Laithwaites Wine Festival

Treat your taste buds to sumptuous wines at the spectacular Laithwaites Wine Festival. Join Tony Laithwaite and family at their new home Olympia London for their biggest wine festival to date, featuring more winemakers and collections than ever before. Bringing the vineyard straight to you, discover the aromas of delicious wines with this immersive wine-tasting experience. Take a sip of the finest tipples as this festival features over 350 wines from 100 producers, flying in from 17 countries. Plus, prepare for the ultimate taste sensation with a selection of artisan food stands, English fizz, luxury spirits and plenty more in store.

Hammersmith Road, London, W14 8UX olympia.london May 12-13

London. This hugely exciting automobile extravaganza will see 80 of the world's most precious cars gather in the gardens of the historic and beautiful Honourable Artillery Company Headquarters and will include a ferocious collection of horsepower arranged in specially curated and themed displays chosen by the London Concours Steering Committee. The three days offer entertainment on the lawns, beautiful retail chalets with luxury brands and artisan goods, and a delicious selection of food and beverages to match. Armoury House, City Road, London, EC1Y 2BQ

londonconcours.co.uk **June 6-8**

FAMILY & CHILDREN

Second Hand Dance: We Touch, We Play, We Dance

Lilian Baylis Studio

We Touch, We Play, We Dance is a mesmerising, engaging, and fun performance for children under 3 years of age. It is a show filled with surprises and joy, where you and your children can listen and watch or let loose and join in, either way, you'll have a wonderful time. With music mixed live by a DJ, the dancers respond to the children, guiding them through a series of exchanges and encounters with high fives, hugs, and dancing.

183 Rosebery Avenue, London, EC1R 4TJ sadlerswells.com May 19-20

Squirrel

Unicorn Theatre

Squirrel loves a good acorn. But not all acorns are good. Some are downright second rate. And Squirrel is fussy like that. Under the light of the sun, between the houses and the offices, and the rivers and the factories, Squirrel has buried their favourite acorn collection. It's easy to remember where; it's under the third tree from the left. This is a story of new growth and new beginnings with a sprinkling of magic and puppetry mayhem thrown in. Recommended for children aged 6 months to 4 years who are actively encouraged to take part in the show.

147 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2HZ unicorntheatre.com

May 27 - June 2

FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY

Gideon Mendel: Fire / Flood

Photographers' Gallery

Shown for the first time in the UK, Mendel's most recent portraits were shot in Bayelsa State, Nigeria and in Sindh Province, Pakistan. Since August 2022, both regions experienced unprecedented rain and were devastated by the worst floods in living memory. Countless structures and build-

ings were destroyed and millions left homeless. Visiting these communities months after the initial flooding Mendel found that the water levels remained high, still filling people's homes. Even as the waters recede. the damage to people's lives is immense. Mendel's images record this in a deeply intimate and graphically precise way 16-18 Ramillies Street, London, W1F 7LW thephotographersgallery.org.uk **Ongoing**

Wildlife Photographer of the Year

Natural History Museum

Discover the natural world in all its wonder and diversity at the newly redesigned Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition, where remarkable photographs illustrate the precious beauty of our planet. The redesigned exhibition space positions the photographs among short videos, quotes from jury members and photographers as well as insights from Museum scientists which invite you to explore how human actions continue to shape the natural world. Cromwell Road, South Kensington, London, SW7 5BD

nhm.ac.uk **Until July 2**

MUSIC

Late Night Jazz: Earl Okin

Royal Albert Hall

Jazz and bossa nova singer Earl Okin performs live in the Elgar Room. Earl Okin is one of the UK'S leading jazz and bossa nova singers. He's performed with jazz legends Benny Carter, Milt Hinton, Stephane Grappelly, and Cleo Laine, and is renowned for his legendary 'vocal trumpet' solos. Join Earl for a special performance of songs from the Great American and Brazilian song books as well as his originals...all seasoned with a little sophisticated humour.

Kensington Gore, South Kensington, London, SW7 2AP royalalberthall.com May 18

The Music of Zimmer vs. Williams

Southbank Centre

Hans Zimmer (The Lion King, Gladiator) and John Williams (the Star Wars series, Jaws) are responsible for many of the most memorable scores in the history of film. Relive the magic and power of their best scores at this event, where selections from these iconic scores are performed by the London Concert Orchestra with conductor Anthony Inglis. This dazzling show is back by popular demand following a sold out 2022 performance.

Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road, London, SE1 8XX southbankcentre.co.uk **May 20**



Where? - June 23

Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra

Cadogan Hall The Seventh is Beethoven's most fascinating symphony – a work whose new vision of rhythm's relationship with harmony produced the most physical, compelling music that had ever been created. Beethoven wasn't just exploring new techniques, he was giving voice to a wave of joy that had swept into his life and filled him with determination and optimism. Marios Papadopoulos is conductor and soloist for this visit to Cadogan Hall in celebration of the Oxford Philharmonic Orchestra's Silver Iubilee Year.

5 Sloane Terrace, London, SW1X 9DQ cadoganhall.com May 23

Elton John

O2 Arena

Speaking of the UK dates Elton John says "The Farewell Yellow Brick Road tour will take us to many places that have meant a lot to me over the last fifty years, but these UK shows will be incredibly special. The UK is home, and where my heart will always be. To celebrate some of the incredible moments we've shared with my British fans over the years will be wonderful. These homecoming shows will be very emotional, and a lot of fun." Kicking off in the U.S. in September, the 'Farewell Yellow Brick Road' tour has already been greeted with a wealth of praise from critics and fans alike. Peninsula Square, London, SE10 0DX theo2.co.uk

TALKS, TOURS, & WALKS

Mat Osman in Conversation with Zoe

Foyles Charing Cross

Mat Osman is the bassist and founder member of iconic British rock band Suede. Osman's first novel, The Ruins, was published in 2020 and he co-authored England on Fire with Stephen Ellcock. Zoë Howe is an author, broadcaster, musician and visual artist. Best known as a music biographer and Soho Radio's 'Rock n Roll Witch', her most recent books are The Jam: 1982 and Witchful Thinking: The Wise Woman's Handbook To Creating A Charmed Life.

107 Charing Cross Road, London, WC2H 0DT fovles.co.uk May 10

Special curator-led tour of Ashish: Fall in Love and Be More Tender

William Morris Gallery Ashish: Fall in Love and Be More Tender is the first major survey exhibition of fashion designer Ashish Gupta. It will showcase over 60 designs, offering an unprecedented overview of Ashish's subversive and playful

practice. The exhibition features a major new commission by the Mumbai-based photographer and film-maker Ashish Shah. See the exhibition with one of our curators as your guide. A great opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the work and ideas behind Ashish's creations.

Lloyd Park, Forest Road, Walthamstow, London, E17 4PP wmgallery.org.uk May 18

Lynx Recovery in Europe - Lessons for the UK?

Huxley Lecture Theatre

Once widespread across Europe, by the middle of the last century Eurasian lynx were on the brink of extinction. This collapse in population was driven by persecution, deforestation, loss of wild prey and, in some cases, government-led eradication. However, the species managed to cling on in four small isolated populations towards the northern and eastern edges of Europe. The survival and resurgence of Eurasian lynx, to a current population of approximately 8,000 individuals across 25 countries in continental Europe, is one of conservation's success stories.

Nuffield Building, Outer Cir, London, NW1 4RY zsl.org

Trump and Clinton's Nemesis: James **Comey Live On Stage With Armando** Iannucci

Intelligence Squared

June 6

James Comey is the former director of the FBI who is disliked by Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump in equal measure. His decision to investigate Clinton's personal email server during the 2016 presidential election campaign is viewed by her supporters as a decisive factor in her losing the race to Donald Trump. But Trump is no fan of Comey either. In 2017, the then President summoned Comey to a meeting in the Oval Office where he pressured him to deny that Trump and his entourage were under investigation for collusion with Russia. Comey refused to give information to Trump and was fired from the FBI in May 2017. 19b Compton Terrace, London, N1 2UN

intelligencesquared.com

THEATRE

When Winston Went to War with the Wireless

Donmar Warehouse

In May 1926 Britain grinds to a halt, as workers down tools for The General Strike. With the printing presses shut down, the only sources of news are the government's The British Gazette, edited by Chancellor of the Exchequer Winston Churchill, and the independent, fledgling British Broadcasting Company, led by John Reith. What follows is a fierce battle for control of the news and who gets to define the truth. 41 Earlham Street, London, WC2H 9LX donmarwarehouse.com Opens June 2

Mustard

Arcola Theatre When E meets the man of her dreams, a professional cyclist, love hits her in the pubic bone like a train. But when it ends she plummets into a black hole of heartbreak at the speed of a doped up team on the Tour de France. A one-woman show about heartbreak, madness and how condiments are the ultimate coping mechanism, by award-winning playwright & performer Eva O'Connor.

24 Ashwin Street, London, E8 3DL arcolatheatre.com **Until June 3**

Aspects of Love

Lyric Theatre

34 years after having starred in the original West End production, Michael Ball returns to Andrew Lloyd Webber's celebrated musical Aspects of Love at the Lyric Theatre for a strictly limited season, this time playing the role of George. Joining Michael Ball will be Olivier nominated Laura Pitt-Pulford (Seven Brides for Seven Brothers and Sunset Boulevard), Jamie Bogyo (Moulin Rouge! The Musical) and Danielle de Niese (Man of La Mancha and It's a Wonderful Life English National Opera). In ravaged post war France, beautiful actress Rose Vibert finds

herself homeless and penniless after her hoped-for career break play closes early. Invited to a country villa by a love struck young American, Alex Dillingham, she impulsively accepts. When unexpectedly interrupted by Alex's distinguished uncle George, everything changes.

29 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W1D 7ES thelyrictheatre.co.uk

Opens May 13

Glory Ride

Charing Cross Theatre

Gino Bartali, Tour de France winner and one of the most beloved Italian athletes of all time, had a secret life. With his cycling career as a cover, Bartali cycled thousands of miles between cities across Italy. Hidden in the frame of his bike were falsified identity cards and other secret documents to help victims of the Second World War cross borders to safety from Mussolini's fascist regime. His efforts saved hundreds of persecuted Jews and other refugees, many of whom were children. Bartali was a local hero as well as a national figurehead, renowned in his community for his unwavering commitment to helping others. His story has a powerful message for audiences today about bravery, loyalty and doing the right thing regardless of the consequences

The Arches, Villiers Street, London, WC2N 6NL charingcrosstheatre.co.uk **Until July 29**

Compiled & edited by Fahad Redha

LSO St Luke's

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS

Christian Tetzlaff & Friends

The electrifying violinist is joined by his musical friends for dazzling duets and tuneful trios, with music by Beethoven, Dvořák, Kodály and more.

18, 19 *←* 26 May 1pm; 26 May 6pm

Save 50% with code EN0506

161 Old Street, EC1V 9NG lso.co.uk/bbcradio3



Events Supplement May-June 23



The Chelsea Flower Show and its gardens are the best place to go to spot the newest trends and cutting-edge ideas in garden design. It promises "a slice of gardening theatre" as it explores everything from scientific innovations to the benefits of gardens on well-being.

One must-see area is the Discover Zone in the Great Pavilion, home to educational exhibits that promote the latest innovations and discoveries within the science of horticulture. There, you can explore the displays that champion gardening's effects both on tackling climate change and on improving your mental well-being. Studies have already found links between time spent in nature and mental well-being.

More plant-filled home inspiration can be found at the Houseplant Studios in Ranelagh Gardens. As houseplants gain more popularity, you can use this opportunity to get inspiration for your own backyard garden. Look out for unusual plants that you can add to your home.

One exhibitor that has been associated with the RHS since its formation in 1927 is the Barbados Horticultural Society. The society has had an exhibit at Chelsea's Great Pavilion for nearly three decades and has been showered with awards over the years. The Horticultural Society of Trinidad and Tobago will also be exhibiting.

Westdale is a family-run nursery dating back to the 1940s and specialising in Bougainvillea. These stunning plants come in a variety of colours and show great versatility, reminiscent of warmer climates. The nursery, based in Bradford-on-Avon, has over 200 varieties, selling year-old and mature plants for cultivation.

A Little Bird Company will showcase its "sustainable wild bird feeders." The company sells a range of products and will help you attract birds to your garden. "When

you set about feeding the birds you imagined blue tits and finches, but all you seem to see are pigeons and crows. The birdseed you put out makes a big difference to the birds you see in your garden. We help you care for the little birds in your garden."

Look out for Architectural Heritage, which specialises in fine garden statuary, planters, fountains, and ornaments. Its collection includes "verdigris copper and lead planters, age-patinated artificial stone fountains and pool surrounds, hand-carved natural limestone seats, benches, and ornaments." And after the show, head over to the galleries and grounds of Taddington Manor in the Cotswolds to see more of what it has to offer.

There are many different exhibitors besides the aforementioned, displaying a stunning variety of horticulture, as well as other quirky items. The Outdoor Living range, for example, provides 2-in-1 heater

barbecues, which provide the warmth of an outdoor wood burner for an indoor environment. In this instance, Outdoor Living will be showcasing equipment that has the ability to grill, roast, bake, smoke, and wok, as well as to make pizzas!

Explore new designs and colours from Carry On Clothing's weatherproof coats. Its collection promises to be perfect for travel, light to wear and pack, and comes in a range of unique colours. Head over to Dubarry of Ireland's stall. This is a "premium heritage footwear and clothing brand" that is conveniently based in Chelsea. Its flagship store is just off the King's Road and sells waterproof leather country boots, luxury tweeds, and practical jackets.

Every year, the Chelsea Flower Show manages to inspire and dazzle with its spectacular displays. This year hopes to be no exception. Visit the iconic event between the 22nd and 27th May.





Barcelona has had its ups and downs over the last 200 years but is definitely in an up phase at the moment. Its three main music venues reflect its history with resonant accuracy. There's El Gran Teatre de Liceu, the fine opera house on La Rambla, halfway between the sea and the business centre. It was built in the 1840s, the same decade as Covent Garden's Royal Opera House and with much the same layout. It exudes confidence, the building of Barcelona's new boulevards on a grid pattern like Haussmann's Paris and the emerging New York. Barcelona, it shouts, may not have Spain's government but it has the industry and the money. Then there's Palau de la Musica, built by Luis Domencc i Montaner in 1908 with startling flamboyance sixty years later - an astonishing flourish of Catalonian Art Nouveau - its stage furnished with angels emerging from the wall as if they are about to take over the playing from the orchestra. It is part of the movement that also produced the eccentric brilliance of Antoni Gaudi and Salvador Dali.

Then there's L'Auditori, the severe slab of modernism dumped on the edge of the centre close to the bus station in what is one of the city's less glamorous districts – a symbol of the painful emergence from the Franco years when Barcelona had been treated as a dangerous challenger by the fascist regime in Madrid. That emergence, in the years between Franco's death and the Barcelona Olympics in 1992, was a serious awakening after a long nightmare. The severity of L'Auditori's concrete reflects this. Although it houses a fine musical instruments museum, a conservatoire (like the Barbican) and two halls, nothing about it suggests that hearing music inside might be enjoyable. It is an austere place for serious music.

While this might sound dispiriting, once

seated inside, the mood changes. The night I went to the chamber hall, that sheer unadorned invitation to concentration was perfect for Bach's Goldberg Variations, played complete without interval by a string trio in Dmitri Sitkovetsky's wonderful arrangement by Abel Tomas, Jonathan Brown and Arnau Tomas. The instrument museum, by the way, has (as one might expect) a fascinating collection of guitars, from the

very beginnings in the sixteenth century to the modern electric variety. It also has some eccentric early pianos, my favourite of which is an aide to composition that every composer should have: a writing desk from 1820 with a small flat piano in a drawer.

The three music venues have come together to promote their joint work as Barcelona Obertura (Overture), which means the city's music programme can be

coordinated into a series of mini-festivals through the year - some themed, some more a matter of convenient coincidence. A couple of nights after the Bach, Liceu Opera Barcelona was staging Olivier Py's new production of Massenet's Manon that - replete with bordello corsets and much dropping of trousers - could not be further from austerity, except for the moments when the monumental sets by Pierre André Weitz hinted at the grey stone of the city's Gothic cathedral. The orchestra at Liceu is excellent, especially when so sensitively conducted by Marc Minkowski. This is world class stuff!

The following night it was the turn of the Palau - full on a Sunday afternoon for Midori, the veteran Japanese violinist, playing Tchaikovsky's violin concerto. The Music Palace is not the largest concert venue in Europe but it has to be the most exciting to enter. The sheer fantasy of the decor and the interior architecture is breathtaking and the spirits lift the moment one walks in. It fits the flamboyance of Tchaikovsky perfectly.

If the music can provide a focus for a stay in Barcelona, there is always the pleasure of Catalan cuisine and wine. I was lucky enough to have lunch at its oldest restaurant, Can Culleretes, founded in 1786, which is neither pretentious nor absurdly priced and is still a firm favourite with the local political and artistic elite. A few streets away, past the City Hall and the Catalan Government headquarters, in the shadow of the ancient cathedral (not Gaudi's never quite finished one), there is a hotel that goes for contemporary luxury over tradition. The Grand Hotel Central, on Via Laietana, is fastidious in its service, and has a rooftop terrace, which surveys the city from the mountains to the sea. It is the place where Barcelona's young take their partners for cocktails and to impress by the infinity pool. Whatever one's budget, the combination of Barcelona's artistic vibrancy and its taste for good living makes it a constant delight.

Simon Mundy



20th and 24th March 2023 saw both BBC1 and BBC 4 screen the documentary IMAGINE Stephen Frears: Director for Hire currently at BBC iPlayer

'Mr Frears had sticky out ears, and it made him awful shy'...

.. sang Liverpool's trio The Scaffold in their 1968 hit *Lily the Pink*, referring to Frears, after having worked with him on a promo film. Never work shy, Frears is one of Britain's most prolific and purposeful filmmakers. His acclaimed debut Gumshoe (1971) starring Albert Finney, led to his working continually for 13 years on TV commercials, TV dramas, and single-slot TV films, where he excelled.

AWARDS

Frears has worked as a director since 1968, winning 17 BAFTA nominations with three wins, 4 Primetime Emmys to include one win, two Academy Award nominations, and a Golden Globe nomination, plus prestigious wins at Cannes, Berlin, Venice, and Toronto's film festivals, among others.

TV FILMS - A SELECTION

His films for TV could be loosely classed as life stories of thematic diversity. Notably he shot Three Men and a Boat (1975) for BBC TV, which was adapted by Tom Stoppard, and starred Michael Palin. Huge publicity surrounded Channel 4's Film on Four debut for Channel 4's launch night, which premiered Frears' film adaptation of Walter (1982) starring Ian McKellen. Channel 4's Comic Strip (1984) parody of ITV's The Professionals with The Bullshitters was one of three films to be directed by Frears for The Comic Strip Presents. Stateside the live-to-air black-and-white Cold War drama Failsafe (2000) for CBS garnered awards, while Channel 4's *The Deal* (2003) about Tony Blair & Gordon Brown gained critical acclaim. Mohammed Ali's Greatest Fight (2013) about his avoiding Vietnam drafting was a critical success for HBO USA, while five years later A Very English Scandal (2018) a three parter for BBC TV and Amazon Prime, looked at Liberal MP Jeremy Thorpe's famous court case, starring Hugh Grant. *The Trial* is possibly Frears 'most popular TV work to date in Britain.

FEATURE FILMS -A SELECTION

Hanif Kureishi's script for My Beautiful Launderette (1985) for Film on Four was produced by Working Title Films to good reviews. Back working with playwright, Alan Bennett via *Prick Up Your Ears* (1987) we saw a portrayal of the late gay playwright Joe Orton. It was and remains a filmic tour de force. This heralded a roll of great Frears movies. Most notably the period piece Dangerous Liaisons (1988) for Warners, which vaulted Frears back into the Hollywood limelight with the neo-noir crime thriller The Grifters (1990) and Mary Reilly (1996) a gothic horror, shot in the UK, starring Julia Roberts and John Malkovich. This was followed by two highs, namely the overlooked Western Hi-Lo Country (1998) and an American take on Nick Hornby's Record Store novel Hi-Fidelity (2000) starring John Cusack. Success continued with the London-based social thriller *Dirty Pretty Things* (2002) and *Mrs Henderson Presents* (2005) about Soho's Windmill striptease theatre; followed by the widely acclaimed film The Queen (2006) starring Helen Mirren, concerned with the events leading-up to Princess Diana's death.

FILMS THE

Philomena (2013)-starring Steve Coogan focused on the named woman's 50 year search for her son, aided by BBC's TV journalist Martin Sixsmith, while Florence Foster Jenkins (2016) looked at an heiress with pretensions of singing opera (badly). This saw Meryl Streep get her 20th Oscar nomination for Best Actress. Meanwhile, last year's The Lost King delved into the tale of Philippa Langley's quest to find the grave of King Richard III, which she claimed was under a Leicester car park. This saw Frears reunited with Steve Coogan, in a true story where academics attempted to steal the credit from Langley who had discovered the grave.

RETURNING TO TV

This year sees Frears busier than ever. At 81 he is still making films, but admits that TV is the better place to make his films these days, due to the plethora of sci-fi and comic book franchises operating out of Hollywood. Undeterred, the past four years has seen Frears output increase massively, with 20 Episodes of Nick Hornby's comedy *State of* The Union (2019-2022) for Sundance TV; The Loudest Voice 2015 (2019) for Showtime, centred around the rise of Fox News; plus Quiz (2020) an ITV drama series written by former NME scribe Bob Woffinden about TV Quiz Shows. Finally, we have Frears upcoming HBO mini-series The Palace.

FREARS LOST TV FILMS? DAYS OUT: NOSTALGIA & NIGHTMARE

A Day Out (1972). Frears directed this BBC single-slot film intended for BBC 1's Play for Today series. Produced by Innes

FREARS STEPHEN

Lloyd, it was Alan Bennett's first TV 'play' to be made for TV. In truth, it is a locationbased 'film' shot in monochrome. A period piece shot in and around Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire, by a then in-house BBC Lighting Cameraman, the great Director of Photography the late Brian Tufano who subsequently shot British movies such as The Who's 'Rock Opera' Quadrophenia for director Franc Roddam, and Danny Boyle's Trainspotting.

Inspired visually by Edwardian photographs, it depicts town folks going for a cricket match on 'A Day Out'. It features a then virtually unknown cast who went on to become mainstay actors in famous BBC TV sitcoms such as Hi Di Hi and The Last of the Summer Wine. So, the casting here is not only exemplary, but influential. A role that Frears had a massive hand in. Oddly, one ridiculous reviewer at Amazon described the film as "a quite minor, if sometimes charming, early piece by Frears and Bennett". The said reviewer (Tommy?) must not only be deaf, but dumb and blind. The film falls nothing short of being an unsung time capsule of Yorkshire's lost heritage. A comic, yet poetic masterpiece, filled with wit and wisdom.

Bloody Kids (1980) was produced for the British independent production company Black Lion Films for ATV-ITV. Maligned online by many. Ridiculed by some. I think that this is Stephen Frears finest TV film. Stephen Poliakoff's dark urban noir screenplay about a recalcitrant, manipulative schoolboy who is hell bent on pranks that are violent and twisted.

The film is set mainly at night. Prototype police security cameras literally watch the 'watched', namely the troublemaker kids who look back knowingly. Soon they become carjackers, driving through the neon-lit streets of the Essex seaside resorts of Canvey Island, Leigh-On-Sea, Westcliff-On-Sea, and Southend. Speeding through the streets in a blaze of flickering night light. Cinematically choreographed by Frears and the genius Lighting Cameraman, later Director, Chris Menges (Kes, A Sense of Freedom, The Killing Fields, The Mission, and as Director A World Apart). Bloody Kids is a rollercoaster of a movie. Add to it George Fenton's eerie Spaghetti Western-styled soundtrack, taking us hurtling on a night trip to hell, with the two 'bloody kids' calling all the shots.

Shot in 1979 Bloody Kids is a TV film masquerading as the big screen movie experience that it always should've been. Once again, the casting is exemplary. From the bit parts of undiscovered actors such as bouncer Mel Smith RIP (Alas Smith & Jones) a nurse played by Brenda Fricker (My Left Foot) and the character of Ken, played by the late Gary Holton of *The Heavy Metal Kids* (later a star of TV's Auf Wiedersehen Pet) in a film produced by Barry Hanson, who would go on to produce John Mackenzie's seminal British gangster movie *The Long Good* Friday, a year later. An incredible roster of talent. Not least from the two young leads.

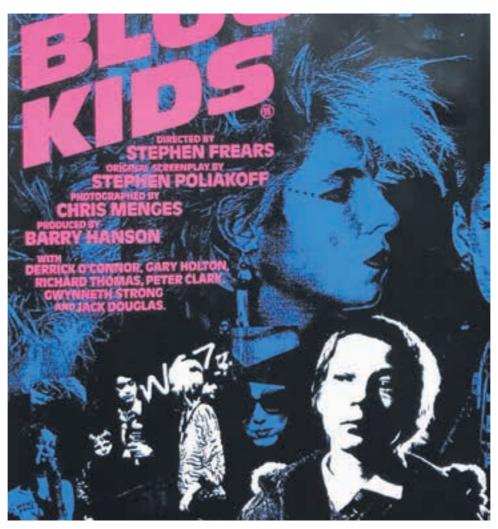
Song of Experience (1986) was made for BBC 2's Screen 2 series. Set some 64 years ago, during The Lady Chatterley obscenity trials, in the wake of the Penguin Books imminent paperback publication of 1960. Shot entirely on film and set in an undisclosed northern town during the heady rock 'n' roll days of Frankie Lane and Johnny Ray, during the final days of British steam trains. A tale of the rights of passage into adulthood, honed within the script's 'boys' day out' premise, where three very different schoolboys go train spotting together. It's an achievement of period-based film making, with massive steam trains chugging along real railway tracks into Victorian stations.

Martin Allen's script is incredibly well written. At first reading it must have literally leapt off the page. Not just in terms of the characterisation, but through his ear for accurate Yorkshire dialogue, and a well-honed narrative. The naturalism at the beginning is almost shot in the 1970's tradition of films made by Ken Loach, Jim Allen, and Tony Garnett's school of

Documentary-Style-Drama.

The script soon ventures into darker areas. This begins with the power-play scenes between the more mature rock 'n' roll leather jacketed lad who ridicules the pair of wet-behind-the-ears mummy's boys in tow. The tale soon turns dark - both literally and metaphorically - when the three boys venture inside a dank marshalling vard for retired steam trains.

The film's sad and unexpected conclusion resonates heavily.



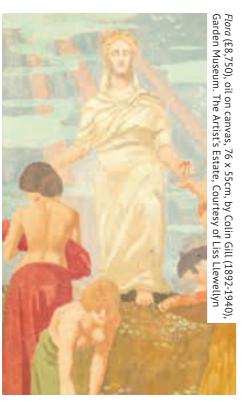
Henry Scott-Irvine





Take a stroll around the streets of Chelsea between 22nd - 28th May and you will definitely know spring is here! It's Chelsea in Bloom and the frontages of over 80 businesses, shops and restaurants are transformed with stunning floral creations. A personal favourite is the awesome façade of The Ivy Chelsea Garden in the enduringly chic King's Road. In celebration of Chelsea Flower Show (23rd-27th May) the restaurant's exterior becomes a mind-blowing floral installation – an art form in its own right!

Russian-born Marc Chagall remarked: You could wonder for hours what flowers mean, but for me, they're life itself, in all its happy brilliance. We couldn't do without flowers. Flowers help you forget life's tragedies." And, of course, for many artists flowers and gardens are a significant inspiration, some of which can be viewed at the **Chelsea Flower Show**, London Gate, Royal Hospital Road, Chelsea, SW3 4SR. Seek out the colourful acrylic paintings of Paul Jackson on the stand of the Pencil Tree Gallery from Bath. The show also has dealers selling decorative items, one of the best being Hungerford-based Garden Art Plus Ltd, who will be displaying a wide range of antique garden urns and statues. For a more modern look visit stand SR43 where **Guruve** has an extensive collection of stone Shona (Zimbabwe) sculpture.



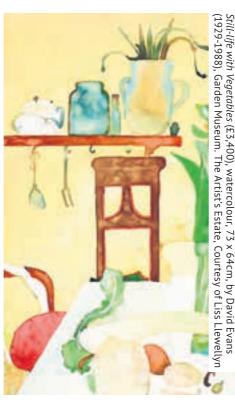
Botanic Gardens, Kew, declared that despite enhanced photographic technology, there was simply no substitute for the discerning talents of the artist capturing the essence of plant form. This hypothesis is admirably demonstrated at **The Society of Botanical Artists (SBA)** annual exhibition taking place between 16th - 20th May at the **Mall Galleries**, The Mall, SW1. Established in 1985, the Society is renowned for consummate work by artists such as Vincent

Moving away from botanical art but still retaining the involvement of plants, I advocate a visit, before 27th May, to the JGM Gallery, 23 Howie Street, Battersea, SW11 4AY. The remote inland mountains of Oro Province in Papua New Guinea is the home of the Ömie people, who create exquisite works of art on barkcloth or nioge. The 'cloth' is made from the fibre of trees, such as mulberry, which are pounded into flat sheets, these are then decorated with organic dyes extracted from plants. Traditionally, nioge hung in every village and were used for various purposes, including exchanging as a bridal wealth. Prior to 2004 these indigenous people had no audience for their art outside their mountainous region but now their captivating designs are highly collected. This current show represents 17 accomplished Ömie artists, whose styles contrast vastly, from the

"one of Britain's best-selling figurative painters". During the intervening sixteen years there has been no respite in his success, including several outings at Panter and Hall, 11-12 Pall Mall, SW1Y 5LU. From 16th May - 2nd June, Manchester born-andbread Demsteader returns to the St. James's gallery for a showing of his compelling studies of his female muses. Full of movement, dynamism and expression, his oils and drawings are priced between £3,000 and £18,000. Another figurative painter worthy of inspection is Nneka Uzoigwe (b. 1990), who, from 24th May - 9th June, has a showing at the same gallery. Trained in classical painting, her alluring portraits and still life compositions incorporate dreamlike elements and imaginative use of light. Prices range from £2,400 up to

Finally, have you discovered the Design

"You could wonder for hours what flowers mean"



Natural pigments on *nioge* (barkcloth) by Albert Sirimi (c. 1935-2012), 160 × 65cm, JGM Gallery



Away from the hustle and bustle of the Flower Show (over 160,000 people are expected) a more serene ambiance can be found at the Garden Museum, 5 Lambeth Palace Road, SE1 7LB, where until 4th June eminent London art dealership, Liss **Llewellyn**, present a beguiling exhibition entitled *Private & Public: Finding the* Modern British Garden. The display examines the ways in which Modern British artists of the interwar period engaged with private and public spaces. Among the varied opuses are the charming woodcut Sitting Hair (£375) by Charles Tunnicliffe, RA (1901-1979), View from the Artist's Garden, Shooters Hill (£4,350) painted by Victor Tempest (1913-2003) in the 1940s, Frank Brangwyn's (1867-1956) large gouache Study of Artichokes (£6,750) and Gilbert Spencer's (1892-1979) oil painting Man at a Sluice Gate on the Thames, 1932 (£55,000).

Professor Peter Crane, who between 1999-2006 was Director of the Royal

Jeannerot (b. 1961), who is also a member of the French and American Botanical Art Societies and Australian Beverly Allen (b. 1945), this year's recipient of the highly prestigious *Shirley Sherwood Award for Botanical Art*.

Best described as an alchemist, Jean-Vincent Simonet (b. 1991) creates pictures that sit uneasily in the borderlands between photography, sculpture and painting. His current outing can be seen until 26th May at Messums London, 28 Cork Street, W1S 3NG and includes Flowers, Novembre, an on-going body of work started in 2018, and Sapporo Lights, created last year. Both centre around images of flowers – one using a medium-format camera in the studio, the other, striking images of large neon flowers, taken by Simonet on his iPhone while visiting Japan at the end of 2022. Images are priced from £2,500 to £5,000, each is unique, an atypical concept when it comes to photography.

densely patterned and hallucinogenic aesthetic of the highly respected Albert Sirimi (c. 1935-2012) to the more reduced and monochromatic motifs of Patricia Warera (b. c. 1985).

(b. c. 1985).

With the demise of so many high street shops, it is heartening to convey the opening of an impressive new commercial art gallery. Opened in late January, Saatchi Yates, 14 Bury Street, St. James's, SW1Y 6AL, is the creation of husband-and-wife duo Arthur Yates and Phoebe Saatchi Yates, the 28-year-old daughter of art impresario Charles Saatchi. Until 28st May the 12,000 square feet gallery stages the inaugural solo show of American Michael Todd Horne (b. 1975) – better-known on *TikTok* as Bijijoo (over 110,000 followers). His large-scale oil and acrylic canvases are of imaginary, amorphous, colourful monsters – they are indisputably wacky!

On 17th April 2007 *The Daily Telegraph* described Mark Demsteader (b. 1963) as

District at Greenwich Peninsula? It is a permanent home for the creative industries -16 buildings by eight architects, one minute from North Greenwich underground station and the O2. It's a vibrant place which is always worthy of a visit but even more so between 19th - 27th May. This is the date of the 9th Flux Exhibition, The Design District, The Retail Unit (adjacent to Tesco Express), 6 Mitre Passage, SE10 0ER (there is an entertaining Private View, 6-9pm on 18th May, tickets £8.50). This is one of the most exhilarating and inspirational shows for emerging and established artists. Tremendously diverse in style, some of the 50 painters, sculptors and performance artists could well be the eminent names of tomorrow. Curated by Lisa Gray, the founder of FLUX, and the beautifully produced magazine, The FLUX Review - this event is an art adventure - don't miss it!

Anthony J. Lester

The Literary Review

The name Stanley McMurtry will not be hanging on every reader's lips as they scan this but in truth they will probably have known his work for decades, whenever they have picked up a newspaper or magazine that has cartoons. As 'Mac' he has caught the political mood and pointed out absurdities for over fifty years. Now, late in life at 86, he has published his first novel under his own

Daily Sketch. When that folded it was taken over by the Daily Mail. Mac stayed with the merged paper and drew for it for fifty years. He found himself sharing a studio with Wally Fawkes, who drew the Flook strip in the paper and, like Mac, signed himself with a nickname - Trog - and doubled as one of the country's finest jazz clarinettists. Fawkes died only a few weeks ago at the age of 98. Stanley found Fawkes' facility at both amazing and missed him when Trog

Stanley McMurtry;

The Golden Chrysalis (Pressman House Books, 273pp, £11.50) is the story of a man who becomes inadvertently caught up in a massive robbery and finds himself on the wrong end of everybody's wrath. 'I started writing it a long time ago and finished in lockdown,' Stanley says. 'The idea came when I was building a wall in my garden about the time of the Brinksmat robbery and I thought, "what a great place to hide gold," and, though it's preposterous, I came to like it.

'I've really been writing all my life, since the school magazine. I wrote a book for my children, a time machine story, The Bunjee Venture, which was taken over by Scholastic [the education publishers], then Hanna-Barbera made it into an animated film.' He even wrote comedy scripts for Dave Allen and Tommy Cooper in the 1970s. "But The Golden Chrysalis is my first story for adults and it is quite dark." He has been careful not to mix his role as a political cartoonist with his calling as a writer. "The only illustration I did was the cover but it has been changed and 'tarted up' by the publisher, so it's not all mine. The book is seriously adult, with sex and violence, and so any other illustrations or cartoons would make it too lightweight. I'll save the drawings for children's books.'

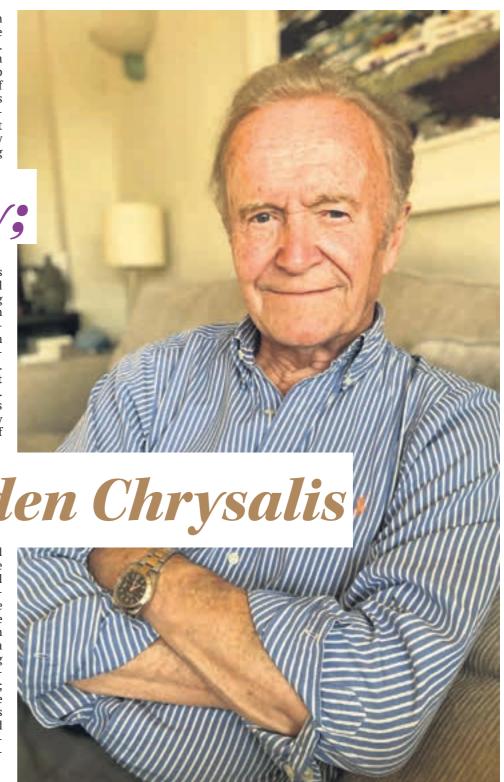
Although he was born in Edinburgh (and still has the hint of a burr in his voice), he moved to Solihull a few years later and trained at Birmingham College of Arts and Crafts. In his twenties he started to work as an animator, on films that did well when shown at Cannes in the late 1950s. As he approached his thirties, he started producing cartoons for Punch and the London Evening News, then in 1968 joined the moved to the Daily Mirror.

The gestation of The Golden Chrysalis has its roots in McMurtry's own emotional life several decades ago. 'I have a feeling that, subliminally, there are parts of me in there. I started it years ago during a marriage break-up and this book is about a man who hasn't got much in his life. I was feeling the need to escape and be by myself. This man escapes by walking the dog late at night and that's how he discovers trouble. The chrysalis part of it is the way he comes out of himself through the bullion robbery which he witnesses. It gives him a sense of purpose as he confronts the robbers.

The Golden Chrysalis

He retired as a cartoonist from the Mail in 2018 but only briefly. While not in the daily edition, he still draws for The Mail On Sunday. Various professional organisations have made him Cartoonist of the Year, in at least ten different years, the latest in 2018, and he was made an MBE in 2004. Now that he is not having to draw a cartoon every day he is finding the writing bug has bitten him properly. He has written two more books, one a ghost story; both almost ready for publishers. "I write everything by hand, I find a computer gets in the way, then send it to a very good typist. When I am writing I find the process quite obsessional. I find myself scribbling notes in the supermarket.

Simon Mundy



ENQUIRER

Never miss an edition

ENQUIRER provides readers with the latest news stories, information about upcoming events & exhibitions, and a range of exclusive features. We celebrate all that's inspirational in London's boroughs, and across the wider national and international scene.

Buy a print subscription for as little as £42 a year (including postage) at www.eyeonlondon.online and receive your regular copy.





For the first time in over three centuries, there has been no artist commissioned to record the Coronation. It doesn't appear to have been a conscious decision; just that no-one thought of it.

Enquiries started with Buckingham Palace, who said "No comment"; in 1953 the official artists were commissioned by the Government Art Collection, but this time they passed questions on to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. They deflected to Buckingham Palace, who repeated their first response: "No comment".

The Master of the King's Music, Judith Weir, was commissioned to create a new piece of music for the coronation on 6th May, as were 11 others, including Andrew Lloyd Webber and Roxana Panufnik. But no commissioned painter.

The tradition of a coronation commission goes back at least to Charles II when, in 1660, he got Wenceslaus Holler to record his enthronement. Fifteen years later, Francis Sandford did it for his brother James II. George Nayler did it for George IV in 1821, George Hayter for Queen Victoria in 1838, Edwin Austin Abbey for Edward VII in 1902, and Frank Owen Salisbury for George VI. In 1953, there was a plethora, ranging from L S Lowry to Edward Ardizzone to John Ward to Kenneth Rowntree to Laura Knight to Edward Bawden to Terence Cuneo.

And most famously to Feliks Topolski, and an exhibition of his work, including some of his coronation images never seen before in public, coincides with the latest crowning. The show is in his old studio in the arches underneath Hungerford Bridge

next to the Royal Festival Hall, which he moved into in 1951, a convenient place to make the enormous Festival of Britain frieze that was commissioned from him; it was open to the elements on either side until the gift of a glass wall arrived, part of the temporary annexe for the coronation at Westminster Abbey. The gift was from the Ministry of Works.

Topolski was pretty well-connected for an émigré former Polish artillery officer. Having also studied fine art in Warsaw, he already had a reputation as a magazine illustrator when a Polish publication sent him to cover George V's Silver Jubilee in 1935. He stayed, not wanting to return to the looming threat from the Soviet Union, illustrating published plays (notably by G B Shaw) and developing a name as a portraitist with an uncanny eye and a unique animated style. His perceptions of the most prominent in British society, from H G Wells and Dame Sybil Thorndike to Harold Macmillan and Evelyn Waugh, adorned magazines from Picture Post on. "I think he saw the British establishment as uniquely exotic; he loved it," says his historian grandson, Lucien, director of the Topolski Memoir charity and custodian of Feliks's massive archive and reputation.

He was an official war artist for both the Polish and British governments in the Second World War, joining the Arctic Convoys from which he could draw the Russian front, travelled to China from Burma sketching the brothels of Calcutta on the way, and was in Rome for its liberation before entering Germany with the Allies, witnessing the horrors of Bergen Belsen and being present at the Nuremburg Trials. In 1945, Topolski became something of a celebrity with his famous depiction of the first ever meeting of the United Nations

During the war, he made a firm friend of Prince Philip, attending his wedding in 1947 and later painting his portrait for the Royal Collection – although it was the republican Aneurin Bevan who sponsored him to become a British citizen that year. Topolski accompanied the royals on several official visits but found street people more intriguing, almost never recording the former in his lightning drawings.

In 1959, Prince Philip called Topolski to Buckingham Palace to create a monumental murial for the lower corridor, where it remains. The Prince had previously bought several drawings from Topolski series, A Coronation Album. It took Topolski a year to complete the 29 metres long by 1.2 metres tall mural, working in his cramped arch.

arch.

"Although I don't pretend that the completed panels exactly match my original concept - I defy anyone to predict how Topolski will deal with any particular subject - I think the completed project is a success. It is a fascinating contemporary record by a master of visual commentary of a great state occasion presented in his own highly individual idiom" Philip wrote later. "It remains to be seen what future generations will think of it...."

However, the exhibition, Punks, Princes and Protest: the Chronicles of Feliks Topolski RA, opening at the Topolski Studio on 2nd May, is about more than his royal connections. It's a clarion call for the

kind of observational art he exemplified and which is the hallmark of, for instance, the war art of the likes of Linda Kitson and John Keane but may be dying.

In 1953, he began producing his own hand-printed broadsheet, Topolski's Chronicles, with which he wanted to raise the status of artistic reportage. For instance, there is a stunning image from 1965 of the civil rights leader Malcolm X during a visit to Britain which he published a few days later, the day his subject was assassinated. The Chronicles continued until 1979, a decade before his death aged 82, and out of them grew what he regarded as his magnum opus, Memoir of the Century, which he regarded as a pictorial autobiography of an artist who had witnessed some of the key historical events of his life.

Lucien is planning to relaunch the Chronicles, and there's is an appeal to raise funds for his Topolski Memoir charity to open the studio as an archive as well an exhibition centre, and a place for artists-in-residence who want to revive the tradition of reportage made famous by Topolski.

"An artist's eye on the world is like no other, and Feliks made that power of observation his own with his immediately recognisable and unerringly accurate paintings and drawings" Lucien Topolski says. "I would love his studio to become not only an exhibition centre but a place for exchange and conversation and make a record of life now as Feliks did in his own lifetime"



Wim Hof Method

Stress is a major contributor to a range of health issues, including heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression, and anxiety. While monitoring food intake or physical activity is easy, managing stress is not so straightforward. However, breathing exercises have been found to be an effective way to manage stress.

Dutch extreme athlete Wim Hof, also known as the Iceman, has developed a breathing technique called the Wim Hof Method. It claims to develop control over the body and mind, as well as tolerance to extreme temperatures.

According to Hof's website, inhaling oxygen is an unconscious process that is regulated by the autonomic nervous system. Breathing exercises strongly affect the chemical and physiological activities in the body. Hof has developed special exercises that he claims have kept his body in optimal condition and in complete control in the most extreme conditions.

When taking a deep breath in, the vagus nervous system is triggered, which runs down to the abdomen and is the main component of the parasympathetic nervous system. This system is responsible for the "rest and digest" activities from the body, and triggering it is said to help in calming down. Like exercise or meditation, the benefits of breathing exercises are best achieved through practice, allowing the



Can cold water therapy improve your health?



Cold water therapy has seen a rise in popularity in recent years, as there are now cold water retreats, tv programmes, and even celebrity endorsements. Its devotees claim that it offers a host of health conditions. However, what benefits does it offer and is this backed up by scientific evidence?

This can involve immersing your body in cold water that's below 15°C. For comparison, water coming from the cold tap is less than 20°C and usually between 10 and 20°C. It can involve taking an ice bath, cold shower, or an outdoor swim, usually for a few minutes at a time. There are also centres and retreats, which run cold water immersion therapy sessions. The most extreme of all is swimming in water that is no more than 5°C.

It is reported to benefit the body in various ways. It claims to reduce swelling and inflammation to ease post-exercise muscle pain and stiffness, lower cardiovascular disease risk factors like blood pressure and cholesterol, strengthen the immune system, which helps to reduce the risk of infection and enhance overall health and potentially assist in the treatment of depression

However, the evidence behind it is based on anecdotal evidence as well as a few small studies. That doesn't mean that it's not helpful, only that there is not enough evidence to support its claims. Some also suggest that other things connected to cold water therapy, including breathing techniques and meditation are what provide the benefits, rather than the exposure to extreme cold.

Cold water puts the body under some stress and that's what is believed to trigger the effects including a boost to the immune system. However, cold water immersion can be dangerous, causing hypothermia or cold water shock. Building up sessions can help your body adapt to the extreme temperature. It's always best to discuss it with a GP before trying it out as it isn't suitable for everyone.

One less intense way to try it out is a cold shower. See how your body responds when you gradually reduce the temperature and increase the amount of time you spend under cold water, giving your body time to adapt to it. For the other methods, it's best to find an organised group or session with expert supervision.

Health & Wellbeing

Partner Content



Health is defined as physical, mental, and social well-being, not just the absence of disease or infirmity. Yet, how can we secure our physical, mental, and social well-being as we age in a fast-paced, ever-changing world?

The secret is wellness.

Wellness is about taking control of our physical and mental health by actively participating in healthy daily habits. As we mature, our ability to bounce back from a lack of sleep, poor nutrition, and lack of exercise becomes difficult.

Therefore, wellness isn't about becoming the strongest or the wisest; instead, it's about reaching equilibrium within the body so that you can live a healthy, prosperous life at your best.

Why is this important?

Despite modern medicine drastically increasing our lifespan, this increase hasn't necessarily been accompanied by an equivalent rise in our health span.

Lifespan, meaning the total number of years we live, differs from our health span, which refers to how many of those years we remain healthy and disease-free.

Health span, therefore, is a vital component of what provides us with a quality of life. Studies have shown that our lean body mass degrades 10% each decade beyond 35. This is known as sarcopenia, and reports show that those with sarcopenia have 2.3 times the risk of having a low-trauma fracture from a fall.

Combatting sarcopenia requires physical activity, more notably, resistance training. Additionally, nutrition, recovery, and rest shouldn't be ignored.

So you may be thinking, "Wellness sounds like a lot of work," and while long-lasting wellness will require a certain level of commitment, getting started doesn't need to be overwhelming.

Taking small steps towards healthy lifestyle improvements is at the core of wellness principles; small, consistent improvement triumphs fast but short-lived effort. You can work towards wellness without gruelling 5 am wake-ups, four-hour gym sessions, or eating lettuce and kale for the rest of your life.

While seemingly unimpactful, a brisk

walk on your lunch break and a quick phone call to your friend can substantially impact your mood, health, and energy. These small, incremental changes ensure you can maintain these habits in the future.

Yet, while these actions may be small, implementing them daily is easier said than done, especially when relying on one's willpower. Fortunately, a wide range of recovery therapies can aid with wellness and be enjoyable.

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) is one example, whereby lying in an airpod, you breathe in 2% hydrogen - a potent antioxidant - and ambient air in a pressurised environment, increasing oxygen absorption by 35%.

By increasing oxygen and hydrogen to the cells via atmospheric pressure, the AirPod supports the body to optimise detoxification, increase energy production, improve mental clarity, deepen sleep quality, and improve your health and wellbeing baseline to help you thrive in everyday life.

HBOT has also been shown to increase our telomere length by 20%, helping us delay the ageing process.

Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy is an excellent example of how we optimise our wellness through a unique experience. Another great option is Cryotherapy, a therapeutic process of reducing body temperature through extreme cold application.

through extreme cold application.

Whole-body Cryotherapy is a short recovery where users experience a boost in mood, short-term improvements in anxiety management, and a reduction in headache pain. Similarly, Cryotherapy's ability to reduce inflammation is unmatched, as it can elicit an anti-inflammatory response without impacting the muscle regeneration process.

For an alternative option, Red Light Therapy (RLT) provides an equally unique experience.

RLT is a type of phototherapy that uses red and near-infrared light to stimulate the cells in our body. As a painless and non-invasive process, it's perfect for those with little free time each day to optimise their wellness.

It works by stimulating our mitochondria, our cells' primary energy producer, which absorbs light, enhancing the production of the molecule adenosine

triphosphate (ATP). This increase in ATP reduces inflammation and improves skin appearance and energy levels.

While these therapies can substantially impact our wellness, maintaining a consistently healthy schedule can still be challenging.

challenging.

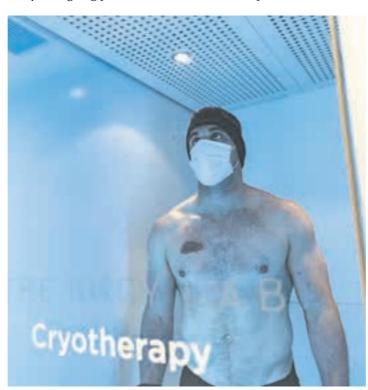
At The Body Lab, you have access to dedicated personal trainers, nutritionists, osteopaths, meditation coaches, and more. Through our trifecta of fitness, recovery, and nutrition, our experts can help develop holistic programs for your goals and well-being.

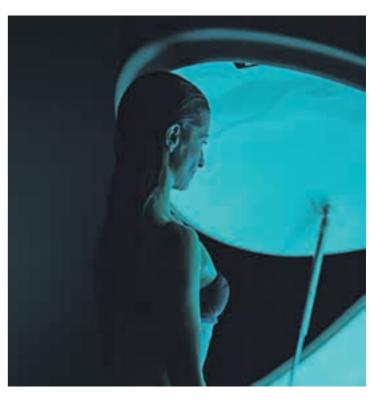
and well-being.

Through well-designed resistance-based programs, we can help offset sarcopenia while supporting all activities with focused recovery through exclusive recovery therapies. Finally, our nutritionists can help ensure that your eating habits support your goals and future.

Take the challenge out of wellness with The Body Lab and become your best self.

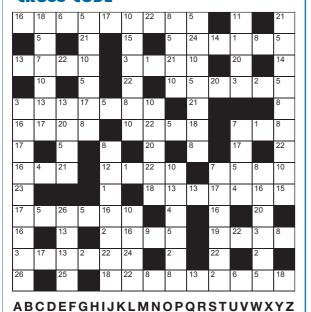
The Body Lab, 151-153 Kensington High Street, London W8 6SU 020 7937 5853







CROSS CODE



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

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

2

8

7

3

MAGIC SQUARE

R

IRRITANT WENT WIDE

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



Quiz Challenge

- Cassa is used as a natural
- What does the expression 'free house' mean when applied to pubs?
- The skin of which small shark was once used as a natural form of sandpaper?
- What is the capital of the Spanish region of Catalonia?
- The ancient ruins of Tiwanaku are in which country?

S

I

NONAGRAM

G

0

How many words of four

letters or more can you make from this

Nonagram? Each word

must use the central letter, and each letter may be

used only once. At least

one word using all nine

16 Good; 19 Very Good;

22 Excellent.

Any word found in the Concise
Oxford Dictionary (Tenth Edition) is
eligible with the following
exceptions: proper nouns; plural
nouns, pronouns and possessives;

third person singular verbs; hyphenated words; contractions and abbreviations; vulgar slang words; variant spellings of the same word (where another variant

3

letters can be found.

Guidelines:

L

U D

- Anna Kendrick plays college student Beca Mitchell in which musical film series?
- Jude the Obscure was the last completed novel of which writer?
- 8. Which male tennis player finished the 2020 year rankings at number one?
- Who wrote the radio play Under Milk Wood?
- 10. Your Song was the first UK hit single for Elton John; what was his second?

WORD PYRAMID

chambers once and may only proceed through openinas in the walls. The first letter may walls. The appear in any

E $\mathbf{v} \times \mathbf{E}$ MXEXC 'o×n×c×n $\mathbf{E}^{\vee}\mathbf{Y}^{\vee}\mathbf{H}$

FIVE ALIVE

AU	DP	HD	IE	DR			
UN		AE		EI			
ID	ос	WI	NE	LG			
TI		тк		HV			
ET	GA	SY	PT	TE			

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

Spell out a 15-letter word or phrase by moving from one chamber to another within the pyramid. You may only enter each of the

- 1. Tardily date belly dancer (9)
- 8. Strange to keep a rejected part of wall (4)

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

9. Blissful state (9)

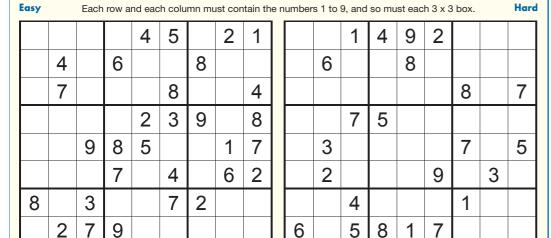
ACROSS

- 11. To Eric it is strangely amatory (6)
- 12. Information a District Attorney put about the matters to be discussed (6)
- 13. Forty-eight hours from yesterday (8)
- 16. Diagnose trouble suffered (8)
- 20. Building without a rounded 15. Cordial welcome to start with
- 21. I'm not one to weaken (6)
- 23. Perform another opera in the country (9)
- 24. He entertains a large crowd (4)
- 25. I weed less around Alpine

DOWN

- 2. Taking on, that's charming (8)
- 3. A sandwich near at hand (6) 4. Fix a title on back issues (8)
- 5. Left very cold water for insects (4) 6. Father's right to include a
- clergyman (6)
- 7. Doctor has endless frown in Russia (6)
- 10. With little hesitation go hence (4)
- 14. It is foolish to equip a learner with an unaccompanied song (8)
- guns (4,4)
- 16. A claim made correctly (6)
- 17. Have an anti-work attitude? (6)
- 18. One's double flower (4)
- 19. Plates are adapted for this diet (6)
- 22. Thanks! Mother strips tropical tree of bark (4)

SUDOKU



EQUALISER

11 $6\bigcirc 3\bigcirc 7$ 3 $3\bigcirc 1\bigcirc 8$ 2 6

Place the four signs (add, subtract, multiply, divide) one in each circle so that the total of each across and down line is the same.

Perform the first calculation in each line first and ignore the mathematica law which says you should always perform division and multiplication before addition and subtraction.

This puzzle page is supplied by Sirius Media Services Ltd.

To try our new puzzle, Zygolex, go to © Sirius Media Services Ltd

SOLUTIONS

5

GLADIOLUS; goad; goal; gold; idol; lido; load; loud; loud; loud; sago; silo; adios; agio; aldol; aloud; also; audio; dago; diol; doll; doula; gallous; gaol; :МАЯЭАИОИ

(1) Across – Aphid; Dowel; Taste.

Down – Audit; Hawks; Delve.

(2) Across – Udder; Icing; Egypt.

Down – Unite; Deity; Right.

Option; 22 Aegean; 23 Tipple; 24 Petite; 27 Wits; 28 Dodo. Across – 1 Intercom; 6 Silt; 8 Eta; 9 Sundries; 10 Dank; 12 Fault; 14 Maris; 18 Intitate; 20 Moralist; 24 Pore; 25 Speed; 26 Tiges; 29 Pile; 30 Imprison; 31 Ant; 32 Anon; 33 Skeleton.

Down – 2 Mous; 3 Endear; 4 Chilli; 5 Meah; 6 Sadiet; 7 Linnet; 11

Swims; 12 Fibre; 13 Tryst; 14 Aid; 15 Tabor; 16 Rebel; 19 Old; 21

Swims; 12 Fibre; 13 Tryst; 14 Aid; 15 Tabor; 16 Rebel; 19 Old; 21

Option; 28 Acresm; 33 Tipple; 24 Mist; 27 Witts; 28 Dodo опіск своггмовь:

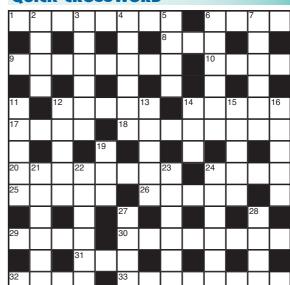
Down – 2 Engaging; 3 Around; 4 Emanates; 5 Lice; 6 Pastor; 7 Moscow; 10 Ergo; 14 Madrigal; 15 Open arms; 16 Aright; 17 Oppose; 18 Isis; 19 Staple; 22 Rind. 24 Host; 25 Edelweiss.

13 Tomorrow; 16 Agonised; 20 Rotund; 21 Impair; 23 Singapore; Across - 1 Belatedly; 8 Dado; 9 Ignorance; 11 Erotic; 12 Agenda; свуртіс своѕѕмовр:

divide. Total: 11.			9	Z	9	Þ	3	6	8	ļ	2	1	ε	Z	ŀ	2	8	Þ	9	G	6	
subtract; add;				7	Þ	3	7	ļ	8	G	6	9	11	9	8	G	l	3	6	Z	7	₽
left – multiply;				6	8	ļ	9	g	2	Þ	Z	3	11	6	Þ	7	7	9	G	3	l	8
EQUALISER: Clockwise from top				8	3	Þ	6	Z	l	9	2	G	1	7	9	ε	Þ	6	Z	l	8	G
				G	2	Z	8	Þ	9	6	3	ŀ	11	L	l	Þ	9	G	8	6	3	7
Елеп-топеу сhance.				ļ	9	6	3	7	9	L	Þ	8	11	8	9	6	3	7	ı	Þ	9	L
:MORD PYRAMID:				Z	6	8	L	9	3	7	g	Þ	1	Þ	6	9	8	ı	2	G	Z	3
				Þ	l	7	G	8	7	3	9	6	11	G	3	8	6	Z	9	7	Þ	l
twit; wire; Iran; tend.				3	G	9	7	6	Þ	l	8	Z	11	ļ	2	Z	g	Þ	3	8	6	9
EASY SUDOKU HARD SUDOKU MAGIC SQUARE:																						
H _{9Z}	_{S2}	X	ع ع	I	22	z N _{IZ}		V	M so		Z ₆	ر 16		11	٦		A ⁹¹		۲		٦ _₽ ι	
Oει	اک	١١	Tor	>	1 6	S			В		٥ ٧		Ξ ς		M _*		٩		7 ء		۱٦	
																	=	DE	၁၁	S	SO	ED.

Novak Djokovic; 9 Dylan Thomas; 10 Hocket Man. ONIX CHAFFERIGE: 1 Setural; S. Not fied to beet from one brewery; 3 Dogitari; 4 Barcelona; 5 Bolivia; 6 Pitch Perfect; 7 Thomas Hardy; FIVE ALLE

QUICK CROSSWORD



- 1. Telephone 6. River mud (4)
- 8. Greek letter (3) 9. Miscellaneous
- objects (8) 10. Musty (4) 12. Defect (5)
- 14. Showy flower (5)
- 17. Low dam (4)
- 18. Annoy (8) 20. Ethical teacher (8) 24. Skin opening (4)
- 25. Rate (5)
- 26. Large feline (5) 29. Heap (4) 30. Incarcerate (8)
- 31. Social insect (3) 32. Soon (4)
- 33. Bony structure (8) DOWN
- 2. Common sense (inf.) (4) 3. Win over (6)
- 4. Hot pepper (6)
- 5. Network (4) 6. Lover of cruelty (6)

7. Small finch (6)

- 21. Choice (6)
 - 22. Arm of the Mediterranean (6) 23. Drink regularly (6)

11. Travels through

13. Assignation (5)

15. Small drum (5)

16. Disobey (5)

14. Help (3)

19. Aged (3)

water (5) 12. Filament (5)

- 24. Small and dainty (6)
- 28. Extinct bird (4)





The World Chess Championship is in full swing, with Ian Nepomniachtchi on 6 points and Ding Liren on 5 points, with three games to go. The closing ceremony will be held in Astana, Kazakhstan, on 1st May when the tournament is completed in 14 classic rounds. While the world press eagerly awaits the culmination of this unique championship to decide the top player in this mind sport game, another FIDE event has just concluded in Rhodes, Greece. The World School Chess Championship took place between 14th and 23rd April, and was held for school children aspiring to shoot to the top. The event attracted 530 participants from 53 countries and over 1500

Although the World Championship started shakily for the two combatants, with howls of 2nd class performances from many on social media, including many of Carlsen's supporters, the 7th game brought the championship back to a higher quality of play and shook off the lack of aura from the opening games. Ding Liren, in particular, spoke of how his nervous mental state allowed him to claim the upper hand. Not surprisingly, Carlsen supporters claimed that Carlsen had left a huge hole at the top of world play and that neither Nepo nor Liren "were big enough to fill it." Following the opening games, Liren spoke candidly about his struggles with mental health and how the pressure on him was heightened when he learnt that Carlsen was not going to defend his title. As the next highest ranked player to Nepo, he was parachuted in to challenge the winner of the Candidates cycle for the coveted World Championship Crown! Nervous tension amongst chess players, as in other sports, runs high. However, perhaps in chess, a mind sport, the mind is everything, and anything that interferes or blocks mental concentration is a giant handicap. Kasparov, when playing World Championships at different world venues, would always go for a morning run before the action across the board got underway. He cited the physical bodily exertion of run-

The Challenge

ning, which allowed him to think better

and sharper, enabling his mind to shake off

any debilitating effects of defeat and focus

on the job in hand. Liren's shaky start was,

however, rectified following game 2, and

both players won alternate games since, with games 8, 9, 10, and 11 being drawn.

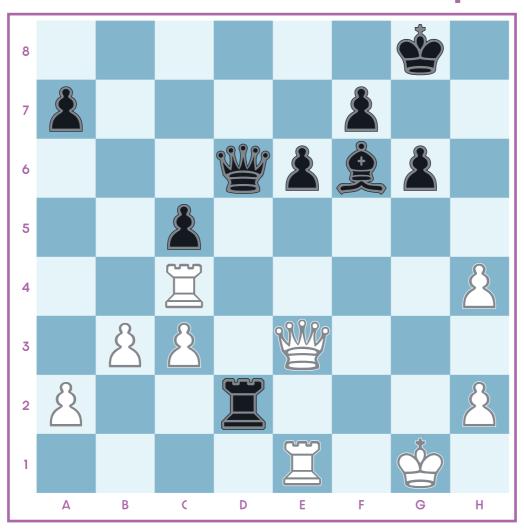
Game 7 of the World Chess Championship took place in Astana, Kazakhstan between Ian Nepomniachtchi playing as White and Ding Liren playing as Black. This setting provides the context for the chess puzzle shown in the diagram. Black played 32... Rd2, an inaccurate move.

Can you see a better move and continuation?

The answer is opposite.

From Full Blossom

to Aspiring Shoots



During the tournament, Ding found himself again, with many commentators lauding Game 6, which he won in fine style. Some have gone further, even as far as stating, "... This game is one of the most beautiful ever played at this level, and will certainly find itself placed in the top echelons of the history books on chess".

As White, Ding has been switching his openings for each game and keeping Nepo guessing about what to play as Black in defence. Ding played the London System, uniquely played on this occasion, when it is usually seen at club levels. It was commented on as being the first time it had ever been played at this championship level. Its continuation, 3... c5. 4.e3, Nc6. 5.Nbd2, cxd4. 6.exd4, Bf5. 7.c3, e6. 8.Bb5, Bd6. 9.Bxd6, Qxd6. 10.0-0, 0-0. 11.Re1, h6. 12.Ne5, Ne7. 13.a4, a6. 14.Bf1, Nd7, which was a positional weakness allowing White a dark square pressure. Possibly for Black, 14... a5 maintaining Queenside control would have been better. The game went to 44 moves with move 44.Qf7, and Black resigned with White's final move denuding Black of any escape routes preventing checkmate. This game in its entirety can be found on chess. com and is well worth playing through.

The 9th round resulted in a long, drawnout draw, 82 moves, with Nepo on 5pts to Ding's 4pts. The former at this point was 2.5pts away from claiming the world title. The king and pawn end game arose from Ding's Ruby Lopez Opening; Berlin Defence, and he was seemingly happy to take the .5pt and show too that his emotional state had subsided, keeping his score within striking distance of his opponent. A curious entourage watching the 9th game raised interest about Nepo's shirt and his claim not to be superstitious. It was the 3rd time in a row that he had worn the same red shirt, but it may be explained that playing under a neutral flag as a Russian, he couldn't fly the Russian flag due to Russia's banishment from world sports. However, it could be argued, that wearing the colour red is still significant. The game ended after 82 moves in a draw. Game 10 would be the most important for Ding as White at this point in the championship since its loss would put him in an insurmountable position of being 2pts adrift from his opponent.

On his side, however, Ding's unpredictable opening repertoire has seen Nepo in trouble several times. Ding, 30 years old, 2788, has Richard Rapport GM as his second, while Nepo, 2795, is 32 years old and has Nikita Vitiugov as his second. There was a palpable dawning on the assembled Grandmasters, past world champions and chess cognoscenti at the St. Regis Hotel, Astana, Kazakhstan, on Sunday 23rd April that 'was to be the big one', and as several have quoted, 'Chess is not for the faint-hearted!' Wilhelm Steinitz, the first official World Champion. The championship has a €2 million prize fund, split 60% / 40% between the winner and the runnerup. Magnus Carlsen, the former champion, has not been seen at Astana and appears to have spent the past few weeks making appearances at poker games. Meanwhile, his nemesis. Hans Niemann - the person who is

suing him for \$100 million for stating that Niemann cheated in chess tournaments - has entered the Kazakhstan Chess Cup, a FIDE open tournament, which is a side event to the World Championship tournament. Watch this space!

At the other end of the spectrum, where new shoots emerge, flowering hopefully to their full blooms in later years to become the likes of Nepo, Liren, or Magnus Carlsen, is the FIDE-recognised World School Chess Championship 2023. It is co-organised with the Greek Chess Federation, Chess Club 'Ippotis Rodou,' Southern Aegean Prefecture, and the Municipality of Rhodes and DOPAR. Mr Giorgos Hatzimarkos, the Regional Governor of the Southern Aegean, thanked the local chess club and its contributors, "who, with their passion and love, have put Rhodes on the world chess map." He further stated that the local government invests in actions and initiatives, such as chess events, to promote creativity, competitiveness, and noble competition in children's education. "Well said, sir!"

Players will be competing for the title of 'World School Chess Champion' against some of the best young players from around the world. I will give the results of this event in my next month's column.

Barry Martin

STOP PRESS! GM DING LIREN wins the World Chess Championship after tie breaks! With thanks to *Indian Express* and *Chess.com*.

The Solution

1-0, White victorious. Maurice Ashley GM, USA, tweeted, 'The emotional roll-ercoaster ride continues as Nepo once again takes the lead after an epic time pressure collapse by Ding. No one could an entire half remaining, the nail biting an entire half remaining, the nail biting an entire half remaining, the most fun matches ever!

57.Rcf4,Qxc5, (Qb1,...was best!).

35.Kg2,Qd3. 36.Rf2,Kg7? (mistake, **36...Qb1. 37.Qe3...).**

34.Qxc5,Rd1+?! (Inaccuracy, Qxc5+ was best. 34..Qxc5+. 35.Rxc5,Bxc5. 36.Rc7,Bd4+. 37.Kg2,e5. 38.Rec2,Rd1. 59.Rd7,Rg1+. 40.kh3,Re1.

35.Re2,Rd3?? (Blunder, Rd5 was best. 35...Rd5. 34.Rf2,Be5. 35.Kg2,Bxh2. 36.Rg4,Re5. 37.Qd2,Rd5).

32...Be5! and play could have continued, (**35.0e2,**Kg7. **34.Kh1,Bf4. 35.0f5,Rd5. 36.0g4,f5. 38.0h7+,Kh6. 39.0a8,.)**.



for the less retiring

Luxury apartments for sale within vibrant communities in Kensington and Fulham, for residents over 65



Call us today 020 3839 8555
Visit riverstoneliving.com
Apartments at Riverstone start from £810,000*
Ts & Cs apply /*Other fees apply. Prices correct at time of publication.