

8th February - 6th March 2024

Edition No.20

# EYEONLONDON

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# Plans for Regent Street unveiled



Westminster City Council and The Crown Estate have unveiled their Regent Street Public Realm Vision showcasing their plans for the area. The report outlines collective ambitions for one of London’s most iconic streets after an “extensive” public engagement with residents and visitors from the UK and abroad.

Three key priorities emerged from the public’s feedback are prioritising pedestrian experience, preserving heritage, and introducing nature and greening. These priorities will be central in developing designs to enhance the look and feel of the street for the benefit of the local community and the millions of people that visit it each annually, and hope to secure Regent Street’s position as one of the leading urban destinations on the global stage long into the future.

The ultimate ambition is to design and deliver a public realm project that connects

St. James’s Park to Regent’s Park, to bring forward a new green link through the heart of the West End. This would emphasise and reimagine the famous architect – John Nash’s – ‘park-to-park’ connection, set out over 200 years ago, to help adapt it in a changing climate and give rise to a variety of flourishing activities and experiences along its 1.5 mile route.

The public engagement process was held between July and October 2023, to gather feedback from people who live, work, and visit Regent Street. Engagement was specifically designed to be inclusive of a wide range of communities and resulted in 3,500 people participating through a series of workshops, online and on-street surveys, and social media campaigns. This ensured that the report gave rich insights that reflected perspectives from those communities.

Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea residents and Councillors had the opportunity to scrutinise the ongoing NHS consultation about the future of acute mental health services in both boroughs at a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC). At the session, NHS representatives spoke about the on-going public consultation and the rationale of their proposed offer including the permanent closure of the Gordon Hospital’s pre-existing acute mental health services.

The Committee raised concerns about the number and diversity of groups who the NHS have consulted, highlighting that the consultation had not reached enough residents directly affected by acute mental health provision or the voluntary and community organisations who support these residents. The Committee emphasised the need for financial transparency and

is keen to see a detailed breakdown of the service costs referenced in the consultation documents. NHS representatives reassured those present that they will engage with residents and stakeholders that have not yet been contacted.

The Committee also considered the best way to engage effectively with people who do not want to attend community meetings or online sessions. It noted it would be more effective to meet in a setting where service users feel most comfortable.

The session also discussed how other partners, such as the police, could be impacted by the lack of acute mental health services. The Committee questioned whether the proposed changes could push demand to other sides of the health and social care sectors and to people travelling longer distances to access the care and support they need.

## Scrutiny of proposed changes to acute mental health provision in central London



## City of London ‘City Plan 2040’ moves a step closer to formal adoption

The City of London Corporation Planning and Transportation Committee has voted overwhelmingly to approve the local plan for the Square Mile, known as City Plan 2040. The Committee’s decision means that, subject to the approval of the Policy and Resources Committee and Court of Common Council, the plan would be published for public engagement, before being sent for consideration to the Secretary of State.

City Plan 2040 has been in production for several years, featuring extensive public consultation, as well as the production of a wide-ranging and detailed evidence base. It will set the planning and development policies and strategic priorities that will guide the growth of the Square Mile up to 2040. The City Plan seeks to

power a growing, vibrant and competitive economy, with over 1.2m sqm of additional office floorspace delivered by 2040.

It also hopes Transform the Square Mile into a 7-day-a-week cultural and leisure destination for everyone, and ensure the City is a highly sustainable place to do business, with a net zero Square Mile by 2040. Creating an inclusive, accessible and healthy Square Mile where everyone feels welcome and celebrating local heritage while re-shaping those parts of the City that have the most potential for growth and regeneration are also among its aims.

A public consultation on the City Plan will be launched in the Spring, providing an opportunity for all stakeholders to share their views, with an examination in public – carried out by an independent Planning Inspector – following later in 2024.



# N News

## London events “defied all expectations” in 2023



New data has found that London’s “world-beating” hospitality and music industries are leading the UK’s recovery. Figures from UKHospitality and CGA reveal London’s hospitality industry revenue grew to £46 billion last year, up from £43 billion in 2019, and sales outpaced the rest of the UK, growing on average 7.7% a month, compared to 5.6% nationally.

The capital’s pubs, bars, and restaurants are driving London’s economic recovery. The mayor said it shows the “phenomenal resilience in London hospitality.”

Separately, millions of Londoners and visitors took part in live music events in the capital’s world-renowned venues and festivals across the year as some of the industry’s biggest names performed, including Beyoncé, Harry Styles and Blur. Boxpark reported record sales in December 2023 with like-for-like sales up by 22% on December 2022, beating sales made during the 2022 World Cup

More than 250 new restaurants opened in London last year, a four per cent increase on 2022 while the O2 arena enjoyed a record-breaking year with more than 2.5m tickets sold to its events. ABBA Voyage welcomed more than 1 million visitors to its purpose-built East London venue adding £177 million to the capital. BST Hyde Park welcomed 555,000 guests across its summer of activity, selling out faster than pre-pandemic

Three of London’s biggest stadiums welcomed more than 1.2 million visitors to a number of live music events. That includes more than 225,000 experiencing Beyoncé’s show over five nights at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium, while Harry Styles recorded his highest UK attendance (320,000) over four nights at Wembley, and 160,000 enjoying The Weeknd at London Stadium

A report from TfL has highlighted the “central role” that boroughs play in important change, showcasing how TfL funding has been used to transform the capital’s streets. This includes 110 schemes to improve bus reliability, 157 km of new cycle routes and 500 school streets.

Funding will support the boroughs to deliver new cycle routes, school streets schemes, new or upgraded pedestrian crossings and bus priority schemes on borough roads.

“London’s boroughs play a key role in the planning and delivery of schemes that transform local areas and meet the aims of the Mayor’s Transport Strategy,” TfL says. “These include improved public transport, schemes that support the Mayor’s Vision Zero goal of eliminating death and serious injury from the transport network and opportunities for safe and active travel in local communities. Enabling more people to walk, cycle and access public transport is vital to a healthier and more sustainable city for all Londoners.”

TfL’s funding for the next financial year (2024/25), will initially see £41 million allocated to outer London boroughs and £25 million in funding to inner London boroughs. TfL expects to allocate a total of £80.4 million in funding. This will help deliver a range of improvements in outer London to help support more active travel and support last year’s expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone across London.

**London’s boroughs to receive funding to make streets healthier and safer for all**



Partner Content

### Maths Consultant “Mr Multiply” Empowers Adults with Mathematical Skills in Hammersmith and Fulham

Isaac Anoom, affectionately known as Mr Multiply, is leading a charge to inject excitement and practicality into adult maths education across Hammersmith and Fulham. Known affectionately as “Multiply,” this initiative, supported by the government, aims to revolutionise adult numeracy skills nationwide.

Mr. Multiply’s mission transcends proficiency levels, aiming to make maths accessible to all adults regardless of their numeracy abilities. He underscores the importance of numeracy in daily life, emphasising its relevance in managing finances, assisting children with homework, interpreting media statistics, and enhancing employability.



## Maths Consultant Isaac Anoom

In a remarkable outreach effort, Mr. Multiply has extended his services to Wormwood Scrubs prison, where he works with inmates on financial literacy and numeracy skills. This endeavour not only equips prisoners with essential life skills for their reintegration into society but also fosters a sense of self-worth and confidence in their mathematical abilities.

Despite initial doubts, many prisoners have embraced Mr. Multiply’s guidance eagerly, with some even expressing interest in pursuing GCSE mathematics exams—an achievement celebrated as a testament to

the Multiply Project’s success.

At the Macbeth Centre on Kings Street, Hammersmith, Mr. Multiply hosts diverse sessions catering to various skill levels, including “Brush Up Your Maths Skills,” “Financial Literacy for All,” and entry-level maths exams. These sessions, offered free to residents, have garnered widespread acclaim for their effectiveness in fostering a love for learning mathematics.

Encouraging community engagement, Mr. Multiply invites individuals to visit the Macbeth Centre for a friendly taster session with the Maths Team. With sessions

available throughout the day, participants leave feeling confident and motivated to embark on their mathematical journey.

Beyond in-person engagements, Mr. Multiply hosts a weekly radio show on Chalkhill Community Radio and creates educational maths comics, furthering his mission to make maths accessible and enjoyable for all.

For those interested in joining Multiply maths courses or exploring other offerings at the Macbeth Centre, inquiries can be made in person or by calling 0208 753 3600.

Mr. Multiply’s dedication to empowering adults with mathematical skills stands as a beacon of inspiration, promising a brighter, numerate future for all.

Maths Consultant Isaac Anoom, affectionately known as Mr Multiply, is a man on a mission to bring the fun, excitement and life skill of learning maths to all adults in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. Multiply is the new Government initiative to help transform the mathematical lives of adults across the country. Mr Multiply is about making maths accessible to all adults irrespective of their maths and numeracy ability. He wants all adults to understand the purpose and necessity of being numerate for everyday life. Maths is everywhere, says Isaac, whether you are wanting to improve household finances, helping children with their maths homework, making sense of stats and facts in the media or improving numeracy skills for work. Isaac, Mr Multiply, wanted to reach all sections in our society and has reached out to Prisoners in Wormwood Scrubs prison. Isaac says this is one of the most rewarding things he has done in teaching to date. Being able to work with and support Prisoners with their maths means that on release, they will be

able to manage their money and finances a lot more carefully, navigate through the cost of living crisis and as one Prisoner told Isaac, I will be able to help my daughter at home with her school work. Isaac’s work in the prison centres on financial literacy and giving the prisoners self belief and self value in their maths skills. Many of the prisoners who Isaac works with had doubts about learning maths but once Isaac showed them how good they are now they eagerly look forward to their weekly sessions and some of the inmates now want to do their GCSE maths exam. This is a triumph and legacy for the Multiply Project. Isaac runs different sessions for all abilities at the Macbeth Centre on Kings Street Hammersmith including, ‘brush up your maths skills’, Financial Literacy for all’ and entry level 1 and 2 maths exams. The multi[ply] project has allowed me to make so many people want to learn maths, enjoy learning maths and develop their own maths skills at his classes in the Macbeth Centre. Mr Multiply wants as many people as possible to come to the Macbeth Centre, meet the Maths Team and try a friendly taster session. Multiply sessions and classes are free to residents and there are classes throughout the day. With Mr Multiply, everyone leaves feeling confident and eager to start a maths course.

**Isaac has his own maths radio show every Wednesday 5.30 – 6.30pm on Chalkhill Community Radio station and also writes maths comics. Anyone interested in Multiply maths courses or any other courses on offer at the Macbeth Centre should pop into the Centre on Kings Street or call 0208 753 3600.**



# National Trust joins push for “rainforest revival” in Devon strong tree planting project

A large-scale project to “create a wilder, woodier and wetter landscape” has begun in northern Devon as the National Trust plans over 100,000 trees. This hopes to re-establish around 50 hectares or 123 acres of temperate rainforest, one of the nation’s most endangered habitats, along with other wooded habitats.

The planting is taking place across three sites. 50,000 trees are to be planted at Arlington Court, 38,000 on Exmoor and 20,000 at Woolacombe/Hartland. More planting is expected to follow over the next few years.

Temperate rainforests, also known as Atlantic or Celtic rainforests are characterised by their consistently wet climate. This makes them perfect for a unique breed of rare ferns, mosses, liverworts, lichens, and other wildlife such as pine martens, pied flycatchers, and stoats. These play a vital role in protecting the nation’s biodiversity and helping in the fight against climate change.

Over many centuries, the once expansive temperate rainforests which covered much of the UK have deteriorated due in part to air pollution and invasive species.



# Library named after first black BBC radio producer

A library has opened in South London named after a poet, playwright, and the BBC’s first black radio producer. The Una Marson Library was opened by Southwark Council. This was part of its redevelopment of the Aylesbury area, once the home of Europe’s largest housing estates.

It was “absolutely fitting” said council leader Kieron Williams, to name the library after Ms Marson who the councillor described as an “inspiration to thousands.” She arrived in the UK in 1932 from Jamaica, first staying in Peckham with black activist Dr Harold Moody. Ms Marson had already been an experienced writer as well as a journalist by the time she worked for the BBC in 1939.

Her first role was at the television studios in Alexandra Palace but when war broke out and the BBC shut down its TV services, she transferred to radio work, behind the scenes as well as on the air. Later, she joined full-time as a programme assistant in the Empire Programmes department. There, her interest in poetry led to her working to support authors from the Caribbean. She would broadcast messages from servicemen and women in England to friends and families in the Caribbean through a weekly series, Calling the West Indies.

A blue plaque was unveiled at her former home on Brunswick Square in Camberwell in 2009.

# Wales consultation asks residents on speed limits

Residents in Wales could be consulted on which roads are changed from 20 mph back to 30 mph in a public consultation. The Welsh government has reduced the default speed limit to 20 mph in Wales but councils have the right to choose which roads meet certain criteria to be made exempt.

Residents in Conwy attended a council meeting with a Conservative councillor presenting a petition. A public consultation was among the recommendations for the cabinet.

“Conwy had guidance from Welsh government to engage with the public before it (the new limit) came in, and they chose to ignore that guidance,” Gogarth councillor Louise Emery said, “and I think that’s what has made Conwy residents even more angry than other parts of north Wales.”

It was suggested that the cabinet considers a public consultation before deciding which roads in the country could go back to 30 mph. But this would not take place until the government issues new guidance to local authorities over which roads should be exempt, according to the Local Democracy Reporting Service.

The new speed limit came into force across Wales following an initial “bedding in period” last month. Ms Emery has said that she will work with cabinet member for roads Goronwy Edwards to ready proposals to put before the cabinet.

Welsh government ministers however have said that a 20 mph limit would reduce death and noise and encourage people to walk or cycle.



London Home Football Traffic Watch			Compiled & edited by Fahad Redha		
<b>Women’s</b>			<b>Men’s</b>		
February 10, Tottenham v Chelsea, 17:15	February 16, Chelsea v Manchester City, 19:15	February 10, Tottenham v Brighton, 15:00	February 25, Chelsea v Liverpool, 16:30		
February 11, Arsenal v Manchester City, 12:30	February 17, Arsenal v Manchester United, 12:30	February 17, Tottenham v Wolves, 15:00	March 2, Tottenham v Crystal Palace, 15:00		
February 11, Chelsea v Crystal Palace, 14:00	February 18, Tottenham v Aston Villa, 14:00	February 23, Chelsea v Tottenham, 20:00	March 9, Arsenal v Brentford, 15:00		
February 11, Fulham v Enfield Town, 14:00	February 25, Fulham v Dorking Wanderers, 14:30	February 24, Arsenal v Newcastle, 20:00	March 9, Chelsea v Newcastle, 15:00		
	March 3, Arsenal v Tottenham, 14:30				



## THE BOTTOM LINE *by Doug Shanks*

# NAVIGATING THE COMPLEX LANDSCAPE OF TAX INVESTIGATIONS: A CLOSER LOOK AT HMRC'S STRATEGY

In the heart of London, amidst the bustling streets and the towering skyline, the conversation around tax compliance and investigation has taken a significant turn. HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) have been at the forefront of ensuring tax compliance, yet recent developments suggest a nuanced approach to its enforcement strategies. The high-profile case involving Bernie Ecclestone and the resultant large settlement has once again thrust HMRC into the limelight, showcasing its determination to pursue tax evasion. However, beneath the surface of these headline-grabbing endeavors lies a complex landscape of tax investigations that merit a closer examination.

The Ecclestone case has provided HMRC with not just a financial windfall but also a platform to assert its presence and effectiveness in tax collection. This pursuit, broadly deemed in the public interest, raises questions about the consistency

and focus of HMRC's approach towards tax evasion. It's an inquiry that delves deep into the mechanisms of tax investigations, where the quieter, more strategic operations often yield the most substantial outcomes. The adage that "honey traps more than vinegar" seems particularly apt, suggesting that incentives and cooperative frameworks might prove more effective in ensuring tax compliance than punitive measures alone.

The landscape of tax investigations is evolving, with HMRC navigating through the challenges of cost-cutting measures and the delegation of responsibilities. Reports from the field, such as the insights shared by DSC Metropolitan tax investigations partner Andrew McKenna, highlight a status quo in the workload despite the publicised crackdowns. The figures from COP9 settlements last year, collecting a reputed £85 million from 460 cases, hint at a potential loss for the Revenue, questioning the efficacy of such inquiries in

detering tax evasion.

The discourse around tax investigations is also marked by the specter of facilitating criminal activities. Despite the significant chatter, the absence of charges against accountants or lawyers points towards a cautious approach by HMRC. The emphasis seems to be on ensuring compliance through stringent quality assurance requirements rather than direct legal confrontations. This strategy, underscored by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW), leans towards prevention and collaboration rather than prosecution.

Yet, the message from HMRC appears mixed. The success of initiatives like the Liechtenstein Disclosure Facility suggests that a more nuanced, incentive-based approach could be more fruitful in enhancing tax compliance. The shadow of the Post Office scandal, paralleled by the distressing narratives surrounding the loan charge, underscores the need for

sensitivity and judiciousness in handling tax investigations.

As HMRC continues to navigate the intricate domain of tax compliance, the focus perhaps should shift towards a balanced approach that values cooperation and compliance over punitive measures. The exploration of areas like the Principal Private Residence Relief could offer new avenues for ensuring tax compliance while maintaining public trust and goodwill.

The road ahead for HMRC is fraught with challenges, yet it also offers opportunities to redefine tax enforcement in a manner that is both effective and equitable. The key lies in striking the right balance between firmness and flexibility, ensuring that while the high-profile cases may grab the headlines, it's the comprehensive, strategic approach to tax investigations that will ultimately yield the most significant benefits for the public treasury and society at large.





## DIGITAL ASSETS

# GOOGLE TO INVEST \$1 BILLION IN UK DATA CENTRE AS IT FALLS BEHIND RIVALS IN AI

Google has announced plans to build a \$1 billion data centre near London. This is part of the firm's ongoing expansion into the UK. The new data centre will support its services including Google Cloud, Search, Maps and YouTube, with the company adding that the 33-acre site will bring jobs to the area.

"We've set out our ambitious goal," Google said in a blog post, "to run all of our data centres and campuses on carbon-free energy (CFE), every hour of every day by 2030."

However, as reported by Cointelegraph, the company recently laid off hundreds of employees at the start of 2024 and are expected to continue layoffs throughout the year. Downsizing, says CEO Sundar Pichai, would be needed to ensure that the company is able to create the capacity it needs to invest in priority technologies including AI. More than 12,000 workers were laid off in 2023 following a commitment to reduce its global workforce by 6%. Pichai said that it hopes to lay off fewer workers this year.

Analysts have noted over the past year that Google seems to be falling behind its chief artificial intelligence rival, Microsoft. While Google was seen to have performed well enough in 2023, Microsoft has started off 2024 by overtaking Apple in becoming the most valuable company in the world. This is thanks to the popularity of AI products built

in partnership with ChatGPT creator OpenAI.

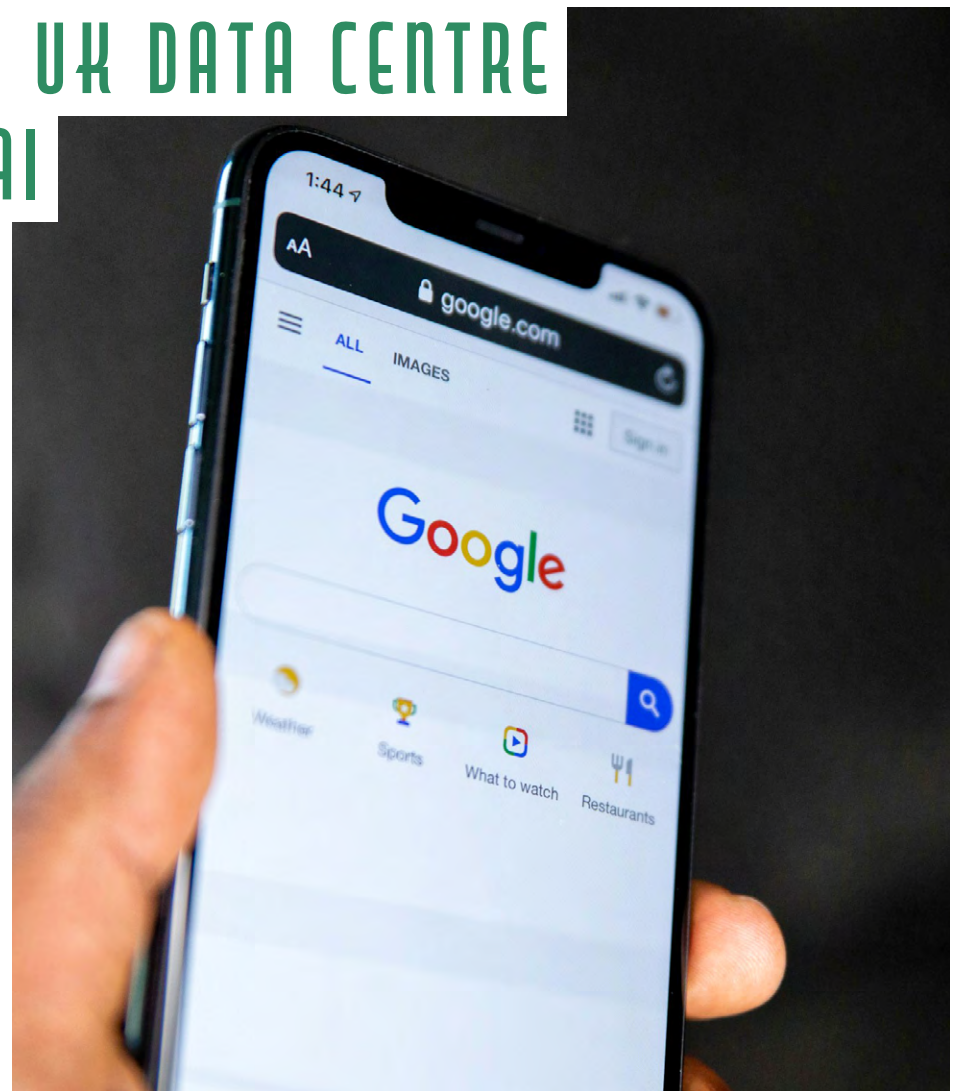
Google's expansion therefore could be seen as an internal shift. The company has long called itself an "AI-first" company but many analysts think that its lagging performance is self-inflicted. Head of thematic intelligence at GlobalData, Cyrus Mewawalla said last year in an interview with CNBC that Google could be reticent to bring its own generative AI products to market ahead of rivals such as Microsoft out of fears of cannibalising "its core business" of Google Search.

However, its current ambitious approach towards expansion could be a signal that it plans to make aggressive moves in order to make up ground.

The UK government has been pushing for investment from businesses and will help fund new infrastructure which is particularly in growth industries including AI. It called Google's investment a "huge vote of confidence" in the UK.

"Google's \$1 billion investment" said Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, "is testament to the fact that the UK is a centre of excellence in technology and has huge potential for growth."

This investment comes after the company purchased a central London office building in 2022 for \$1 billion near to Covent Garden, along with another site in King's Cross where a new office is being built and where its AI company DeepMind is based.



## BITCOIN TOO INEFFICIENT TO USE, BANK OF ENGLAND TELLS PARLIAMENT



Bitcoin is "not taking off" and losing momentum due to its inefficiency. That's what Bank of England (BOE) Governor Andrew Bailey told the Parliamentary Treasury Committee. Bailey and BOE Deputy Governor Sarah Breeden appeared in front of the committee as they discussed the BOE's latest Financial Stability Report.

"My own sense is that it's not taking off as what I might call a core financial service," said Bailey. "For instance, using Bitcoin as a payment method is pretty inefficient." He reasserted his point that unbacked cryptocurrencies had no intrinsic value. Breeden added that a lack of regulatory framework hinders the progress of cryptocurrencies in traditional finance but added that the situation was changing.

Stablecoins presented challenges to regulators and were not stable enough, Bailey added, describing them as "opaque."

Despite the government's aspirations to be an innovation leader in this space, the nation has faced setbacks in that goal. Strict tests imposed by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) that requires investors to demonstrate awareness of any risks with digital asset investing. Anyone who fails the test could be barred from buying cryptocurrencies. This has been criticised as an example of overreach by the authority.

Another barrier to mass adoption of cryptocurrencies is what has been described as a hostile banking landscape. As many as half of British banks do not support digital asset transactions. Many of them cite inadequate security checks from crypto exchanges as among the

reasons for this.

While Bailey's statement about cryptocurrencies having little momentum may be up for debate, there are many who say that the UK government is not doing enough to help support the growth of the cryptocurrency industry.

A report from CryptoUK, the self-regulatory trade association for the industry, highlighted a "concerning lack of knowledge" among MPs. Released in December 2023, it analysed sentiments of MPs and mentions of crypto and blockchain between 2022 and 2023, finding that just 5.7% of the 650 MPs had publicly spoken about it.

This suggests a limited engagement with cryptocurrencies and blockchain among MPs as only 37 are found to have specifically mentioned it in that time-frame. Industry advocates consider this a matter of concern. It does however highlight some notable voices within Parliament who have shown interest as well as support including MP Andrew Griffith, a former Economic Secretary, and Lisa Cameron, a well-known crypto proponent.

A CryptoUK spokesperson emphasised a need for MPs from all parties and regions to have a better understanding of cryptocurrencies and the industry, highlighting that as many as five million people in the UK are exposed to crypto assets and tens of thousands are working in the industry.

Under Sunak, the UK government aims to turn the country into a major crypto hub. It is also taking steps to ensure that there is a regulatory framework as FCA officials have been imposing restrictions on crypto firms promoting projects to UK residents.





# Storm damage responsible for a quarter of property insurance claims

Storm damage to property was the culprit in over one in four claims for residential property clients in 2023, with the average cost per claim for Lansdown Insurance Brokers, coming in around £3,000. Of the 94 claims made, 27 were because of storms.

This was a record number for the firm with the most frequent claims being for repairs to roofs, flat as well as tiled, and damage to outside structures including sheds and garages.

“Regular property maintenance checks can ensure homes are weather-proof and protected from the effects of high winds, heavy rain and hail or snow,” Darren Bee, associate director at Lansdown said. “Simple tasks such as making sure gutters and drains are checked and clear of leaves, or debris, can make a significant difference.”

It can also help, before cold weather, to lag external water pipes to prevent frozen burst pipes. Regular inspections of the roof will help spot any slipped or loose tiles and help keep the house secure and watertight. Regular servicing to the boiler and heating systems will ensure that they are in good working order.

These are among the few “proactive steps” that can “prevent disasters.” Regular maintenance is also crucial to safeguard homes and reduce the risk created by adverse weather events. These steps can ensure that property owners not only protect their investment but “also contribute to the overall resilience of



our communities” by reducing the frequency of insurance claims and ensuring a safer and more secure living environment.

Storm damage to property includes roof damage from high winds or water ingress as a result of flooding. Only claims caused by burst pipes and water leaks were more common within houses and flats in 2023.

In the wake of storm damage, tenants, homeowners as well as business owners should know their responsibilities and their rights in terms of liability, repairs, and insurance claims. It can be useful to seek advice from a property solicitor. Fences, walls, and trees are among the first casualties in a storm and are a common cause for

arguments between neighbours and may escalate to legal dispute.

Insurers also often define what is and isn’t a storm. If the weather event doesn’t meet certain criteria, any damages may not qualify as storm damage. It is therefore vital to understand any policy you have and its conditions and requirements.

It took an average of 16 property viewings for homes to be sold according to research from Quick Move Now. In London, that number rises to 27 while in the West Midlands it took an average of just nine viewings. The data also showed

that a higher number of average viewings for a successful sale does not always mean a longer time on the market.

“A highly desirable property may have five or more viewings booked in for its first weekend on market,” Danny Luke,

managing director of Quick Move Now, said, “whereas a less desirable property may only have one or two viewings in its first week. The longer the time between viewings, the longer your property is likely to sit on the market.”

A property, he added, will likely attract the most attention when it’s new on the market and it’s “important to capitalise on that opportunity.” This means choosing an estate agent who is “proactive” and knows and understands the target market and local area.

“You’ll also need to ensure you have great property images. Many prospective buyers have online property alerts set up to notify them when new listings go live. Your property photography is your first and best opportunity to attract attention and get potential buyers to book a viewing.”

Throughout England and Wales, properties remained on the market for an average of 115 days. In 2022, it took 17 viewings to sell a property while in the previous two years it took 18 viewings. Before the pandemic it was similar with the 2019 figure being 17 viewings before a property is sold.

“Pricing is also key,” Luke added, “especially in the current market. Higher interest rates have squeezed buyer affordability. If you’re keen to attract a large number of viewings, and therefore increase your chances of finding a buyer, you’ll need to ensure your property is priced competitively.”

There can be a temptation to test the market with an ambitious price tag but that could damage your long term property sale. Last August saw price reductions reaching their highest level in at least nine years.

“Having to reduce your asking price means your property is likely to sit on the market longer than a property that has been priced competitively from the start. The longer your property is on the market, the more likely it is to become ‘stale’ and achieve a lower sale price.”

## Houses took 16 viewings to sell





# SCIENCE & ENVIRONMENT

## The Dark Side of the Sun

Eclipse 2017 - Horizon Colours

Image courtesy of Christopher SkeltKenrick

## The 2024 Solar Eclipse

**On the 8th April 2024, one of the most spectacular solar eclipses of our time will cross North America. Nothing like it will be seen again for another 20 years! The moon's orbit at this time puts it relatively close to Earth, meaning that it will appear larger, block out the sun's light for longer and create a darker eclipse than has been seen in decades. Totality - when the moon completely blocks out the sun's disc - will last nearly four and a half minutes. At this point observers can see the outermost layer of the sun's atmosphere – the corona – with the naked eye. This is great news for scientists aiming to uncover the inner workings of our star.**

The very fact we get to see eclipses at all is incredibly fortunate. We happen to have a Moon that's just the right size and distance from Earth, and to be in precisely the right orbit around the Sun at this moment in history (considering that these factors change over millions of years), enabling us to witness eclipses! However, in the future, as the Moon moves farther away from Earth, it will gradually cease to fully eclipse the sun.

The sun is often thought of as a celestial giver of life, which of course it is, however there is a darker, more sinister side to its powers. Every 11 years the Sun goes through a cycle of activity driven by its magnetic field. The peak of this, known as the solar maximum, is indicated by increased frequency and intensity of visible sunspots on the surface. Sunspots are dark, planet-size regions of strong magnetic fields on the surface of the sun, that can cause solar flares and coronal mass ejections (CMEs). 2024 is set to be the most intense maximum in two decades. What this means for the eclipse is that we get to see an incredible show of bright, petal-like streamers of plasma extending out from the sun's outer atmosphere. There will also be a higher chance of a CME, a large explosion

of hot gas trapped in a loop of magnetic field that is blasted away from the sun's surface. When these solar eruptions head in the direction of the Earth, the fast solar winds accompanying them can potentially disrupt communications, power grids, satellites and even astronauts in orbit around Earth. These winds seem to be accelerated by kinks that develop in magnetic field near the surface of the sun. This eclipse is a fantastic opportunity for scientists to gain a deeper insight into this phenomena. An accurate prediction of solar wind conditions will be essential in protecting Earth's technology from any harmful effects and in the development of more robust technology that can better withstand any CME. Luckily for us, Earth's atmosphere protects us from most of the Sun's harmful rays. This can be seen in the aurora borealis or australis (in the southern hemisphere). These lights in the sky are high energy particles of solar wind being deflected by our magnetic field. During the solar maximum there is a higher chance of seeing the Northern or Southern Lights further away from the Poles than normal. You can find out more on space weather and aurora forecasts at the Met Office <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/specialist-forecasts/space-weather>.

We can use Mars as a comparative of what could have happened to Earth without our atmosphere. There is geological evidence that Mars once had liquid water, in fact the Mars Trace Gas Orbiter has identified sub surface iced water, which is the main reason why the Perseverance Rover has been sent to collect samples to look for signs of extinct life, which will indicate a life-sustaining atmosphere at some point in the early history of Mars. It is possible that Mars was too small to keep the dynamo going at its core, as Earth does, and so lost its magnetic field. This meant the atmosphere and liquid water were gradually

stripped away, the temperature plummeted and the planet was exposed to the ravaging solar winds.

Knowing the speeds of these winds can help scientists predict when they will reach Earth and develop technology to mitigate some of the potential damage. In the 2020 BBC TV series, COBRA, A massive solar flare strikes Europe, blowing the electric grid and navigational systems, leaving much of Great Britain without power and creating social and political chaos. Although these exact circumstances are fantastical, it does highlight the need to ensure future technology can withstand these flares. The Solar Orbiter, the most complex scientific laboratory ever to have been sent to the Sun and built by Airbus Defence and Space in the UK - [https://www.esa.int/Science\\_Exploration/Space\\_Science/Solar\\_Orbiter](https://www.esa.int/Science_Exploration/Space_Science/Solar_Orbiter) is giving us greater insights into the Sun's atmosphere, which you can only see from Earth during eclipses.

Understanding space weather will be essential in terms of our ambitions to return to the Moon via the Artemis missions and eventually to send humans to Mars. Such space travellers will be outside Earth's protective magnetic field, therefore receive much higher doses of ionising radiation from the sun. Over time that could lead to devastating medical conditions, including cancer. Working out how to protect them and how to get early warnings of possible additional solar activity is crucial.

Ingmar Kamalaghara of the UK Space Agency says

"Solar eclipses are an incredible, natural phenomenon that shows in one moment how lucky we are on Earth. We happen to be just in the right time in history and happen to have all the right size objects in the right place to see total solar eclipses. The eclipse itself then reveals the atmosphere of the Sun and the high energy matter that it ejects towards us, which would have destroyed all

life on Earth long ago if it wasn't for our protective magnetic field. Just look at Mars if you want to see how Earth might have ended up! They have shaped our cultures and ideas and have even helped to prove Einstein's theories, and having seen one in person, you cannot help being affected by the experience."

The eclipse will begin over the South Pacific and pass over Mexico, the US and Canada, making it accessible to over 50 million people. Varying degrees of the eclipse will be seen across all US states as well as large portions of northwestern Mexico and southeastern Canada.

The promise of a longer, darker, more dramatic eclipse has significantly driven tourism along the 115-mile-wide (185 kilometres) path of totality. According to the Great American Eclipse, up to 4 million people are predicted to descend along this path, making it the biggest travel event of the year.

Major tour operators, museums and local science groups will be offering events, seminars and a host of other fun activities centred around the eclipse. There are even a number of festivals to suit all tastes. Kerrville Eclipse Festival is a free event hosted by NASA. As well as music there will be a number of presentations by scientists to peak your interest. Ground Zero Musicfest is set in a rodeo arena, expect stunt shows, cowboy rodeo, truck shows as well as lots of good music. The Fredericksburg Hot Air Balloon Solar Eclipse Festival gives you a chance to get even closer to the eclipse by viewing it from a hot air balloon. You can even tie the knot at the Total Eclipse of the Heart Festival in Arkansas!

To ensure you will get a front row seat, check the path of totality with Nasa's official eclipses map: <https://science.nasa.gov/eclipses/future-eclipses/eclipse-2024/where-when/>

By Natalie Shanahan



# Top Tips for Capturing the 2024 Total Solar Eclipse on Camera

Images courtesy of Christopher SkeltKenrick

Eclipse 2023 - Best Ring

The sun and the moon are about the same apparent size of half a degree of arc, and solar eclipses occur when the new moon passes in front of the sun, casting a shadow over the narrow path across the earth where the two align. The shadow is always there, but because the earth's orbit around the sun, and the moon's around the earth are not precisely in the

same plane, the shadow usually passes above or below the earth, so eclipses don't happen every new moon, only about once a year. The moon's orbit around the earth and the earth's around the sun are elliptical, so the relative size of the sun and moon vary somewhat. When the moon appears smaller than the solar disc, which happened last October, the moon's shadow doesn't reach the earth and the result is an annular or "ring of fire" eclipse. When the moon appears larger, as it will on the 8th of April, the eclipse is total. The duration of totality at the centre of the eclipse's path on the 8th of April will be about four minutes. As the moon moves relative to the sun, the point on the earth where the sun is hidden moves eastward at hundreds of miles per hour. The April eclipse path starts in the early morning in the South Pacific, makes landfall near Mazatlán, Mexico, and passes over Newfoundland to the Atlantic Ocean but doesn't reach London, although a partial eclipse will be visible from the west coast of Ireland just before sunset.

It's never too early to start preparing—deciding where to go and what equipment to take. Websites like [timeanddate.com](http://timeanddate.com) give you the eclipse path and timings, as well as the likelihood of clear skies. First-timers should head for the centre of the path of totality to experience the longest total eclipse duration.

There is no "correct" list of equipment to take other than eclipse glasses. They're cheap so buy more than you need and expect to lend them to others who left it too late or thought they could do without them. Sunglasses are not a substitute!!

If you're a serious wildlife or sports photographer, you already have most of the gear you need to take high-quality photos of all stages of the eclipse. Two additional necessities are a right-angle eyepiece so you can comfortably centre the sun in the viewfinder without damaging your eyes, and a solar filter so you don't destroy your camera sensor before the main event. A typical solar filter passes only about 0.001% of the sun's light and can be obtained from specialist

astronomy and photo equipment suppliers. Buy one now and practice using it at home. Get to know what settings give good colour and focus and resolve sunspots, and use these during the partial eclipse period.

If you're a casual photographer with a modest DSLR or mirrorless camera, or a high-end point-and-shoot with manual exposure control, you can still get results worth keeping and sharing. When my tripod and long telephoto lens went astray on the way to the 2017 eclipse, I used a half-frame DSLR with the lens zoomed to 135 mm to take this photo showing solar prominences and the inner corona at 1/200 second, F16, and ISO 1600. There is no optimum setting as longer exposures show more corona but wash out the prominences. If your equipment is up to it, plan to take a range of exposures and stack them using HDR processing. Record raw format photos to maximise your post-processing options.

Don't underestimate your smartphone's abilities, particularly for wide-angle shots showing the sky during totality. If you're comfortable controlling a camera's exposure settings, use an app like NightCap Camera to control your smartphone's camera exposure, ISO setting, and white balance.

Look through your eclipse glasses for "first contact" when the moon starts to encroach on the solar disc at precisely the expected time, and watch it slowly progress towards totality about an hour and fifteen minutes later. If you don't have a solar filter, don't try to photograph any of this. As the eclipse nears totality, the light dims, colours desaturate, and shadows sharpen. If you're near trees, look for crescents of light on the ground where the sun shines through the gaps in the foliage. If you're at a high vantage point, you may be able to see the moon's shadow approaching.

The last few seconds before the solar disc disappears behind the moon and the corona appears is known as the diamond ring—a transient flash of light on the edge of the solar disc in the centre of the emerging corona. It's the signal that you can safely remove your eclipse glasses. You'll see that the lunar disc (the "dark side of the moon") isn't black like most photos but a shimmering

grey. You're seeing earthshine—the reflection of the earth's light on the lunar surface. This is the effect that accompanies the lunar crescent for a few days on either side of the new moon. Totality typically lasts a few minutes so relax and look around. Observe the sky's colours near the horizon—like sunrise and sunset, but not quite. Capture this with wide-angle smartphone photos.

A second diamond ring marks the end of totality and, because you're expecting it and your eyes are accustomed to the light, a chance to capture the elusive Bailey's beads where the sun's light shines between the mountains on the periphery of the lunar disc as it emerges. Put your eclipse glasses back on to watch the very narrow crescent widen and sunlight and life return to normal, knowing that you've just experienced one of nature's greatest performances.

## Useful resources

**10 Pack of Solar Eclipse Glasses.**  
[amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B00SH0VE4G/ref=ppx\\_yo\\_dt\\_b\\_asin\\_title\\_o08\\_s00](https://amazon.co.uk/gp/product/B00SH0VE4G/ref=ppx_yo_dt_b_asin_title_o08_s00)

**Eclipse path, timing, and much more.**  
[timeanddate.com/eclipse/solar/2024-april-8](http://timeanddate.com/eclipse/solar/2024-april-8)

**Guidance for equipment, exposures etc.**  
[photographingspace.com/photograph-total-solar-eclipse/](http://photographingspace.com/photograph-total-solar-eclipse/)

**The best tripod head for serious eclipse chasers, that enables micro adjustments to follow the eclipse across the sky.**  
[manfrotto.com/uk-en/405-geared-tripod-head-strong-and-lightweight-aluminium-405/](http://manfrotto.com/uk-en/405-geared-tripod-head-strong-and-lightweight-aluminium-405/)

**Right angle viewfinders.**  
[photographers-resource.co.uk/photography/Accessories/Right-Angled\\_Viewfinder.htm](http://photographers-resource.co.uk/photography/Accessories/Right-Angled_Viewfinder.htm)

**Optical class solar filter.**  
**Mylar sheet is cheaper but make sure you don't puncture it.**  
[rothervalleyoptics.co.uk/thousand-oaks-8375-type-2-glass-solar-filter.html](http://rothervalleyoptics.co.uk/thousand-oaks-8375-type-2-glass-solar-filter.html)

by Christopher Skelt



Eclipse 1999 - Inner Corona n Prominences



Eclipse 2017 - Handheld Camera



Eclipse 2023 - Bailey's Beads





# Enquiring Minds

Compiled & edited by Fahad Redha

## Adult Education Courses



### Arts

#### Developing Photography Skills

Already know the basics of photography but want to take things further? Refresh your knowledge, learn more advanced skills and develop your creative ideas, with an established professional photographer on hand for technical guidance and creative inspiration. This course is an ideal follow-up to the Beginner's photography course, or for anyone with a basic technical grounding. As well as revising and refreshing existing knowledge, you will learn new, more advanced skills - from exposure use to selecting the right lens - and practise how to apply them across different themes and styles of photography.

citylit.ac.uk

[See website for dates](#)

#### Welding and Light Metalwork

Learn how to join metals together using gas and electricity. In this five-week Saturday course, you will be taught how to confidently and safely apply welding techniques to a personal project. No previous experience necessary.

hfals.ac.uk

**March 2**

#### Sculpture Course

Whilst it is not required that students complete the Foundation Course before joining the class, it will prove beneficial if they have done so as it provides a strong understanding of proportion and gesture. Depending on their level, students will work from plaster casts and/or life models. They will build armatures and learn how to handle the clay. They will learn how to judge proportions both with the eye and with callipers, progressing from simple shapes to more complex life forms. New students are admitted each term, those wishing to enrol on the figure/portrait courses must have completed the introduction to sculpture course first.

londonfineartstudios.com

[See website for dates](#)

### Business & Law

#### The Business of AI

Light up the real business value of Artificial Intelligence. Discover how you can create significant new value and solve your biggest business challenges by using AI technologies. Gain a solid understanding of the advantages and limitations of AI and machine learning (ML) in business settings to communicate effectively with stakeholders. Increase your professional value and become an in-demand leader with the rare ability to connect this powerful technology to business value and results. Explore real-life examples of how the global nature of the economy has allowed AI to connect businesses around the world and deliver value across diverse applications. Determine how you can leverage AI and ML to create value for your business. Develop your AI expertise through the process of creating, refining and presenting your AI implementation plan.

london.edu

**February 12 – April 28**

#### Regulating the Digitisation of the Financial Services Market (Fintech)

This one week executive short course considers the re-shaping and re-conceptualisation of significant parts of financial regulation and supervision, necessary to enable and control contemporary and future ways to provide and use financial services and products. It will enable participants to chart the extended boundaries of regulation and supervision affecting financial services, put relevant legislative projects into context and develop strategies on how to implement changes to the regulatory framework of financial services in practice.

lse.ac.uk

**April 8-12**

### Culinary

#### Dim Sum Cooking Class

Love Dim Sum? Learn how to make these beautiful authentic Dim Sum in this sociable and engaging three-hour London cooking class and get to enjoy your own hand-made Dim Sum afterwards! You'll follow step-by-step instructions guiding you on the art of dim sum creation. From rolling the dough, preparing and mixing the fillings, to forming the dumplings and cooking them, your local expert chef will be there to give you all the tips and tricks you need. This Dim Sum class has been designed with complete beginners in mind. Explore different ingredients, fillings and equipment and pick up some new skills in this delicious Chinese delicacy. If you're looking for things to do in London that will feed your brain and your belly, this workshop is ideal.

classbento.co.uk

[Ongoing, see website to pick a date](#)

#### Mediterranean & Latin Cookery Course

Serious about expanding your culinary repertoire? Take three of the most loved courses and travel from Spain to Italy to Morocco with us as you explore the techniques and flavours that make this cuisine among the healthiest and most loved in the world. Fresh ingredients and bold preparations are the cornerstones of eating across the Mediterranean. Use the very best authentic ingredients and guide you through new styles and old traditions of each region, creating a series of traditional and delicious menus.

foodat52.co.uk

### Science, Technology, Engineering, & Maths

#### Make A Coffee Table Day Class

Make a coffee table to take away. The standard material used for this project is Pine. An upgrade to hardwood is possible if you are trying to match the table to your existing furniture. You will cut materials to size from the drawing, learn marking out techniques to create mortise and tenons for the side rails of the table and machine up the pieces for the table top. Use the Jointer to machine the edges for a perfect fit and the router to create the perfect mortise.

greatbritishwoodshop.co.uk

**February 14**

#### Free Maths Courses for Adults

West Thames College now offers Multiply courses which are FREE fully-funded programmes to help adults improve their confidence with numbers and brush up their maths skills. If you're aged 19 or over, live in London, and do not already have a GCSE at grade C (or equivalent) in maths, Multiply is available to you at no charge. Are you moving into your own home for the first time or struggling with the rising cost of living? You will learn how to manage your money and how to have more control over your finances. You will develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes you need to manage your money. You learn how to make a budget, monitor your bank account and cut back on your spending.

west-thames.ac.uk

[See website for dates](#)



Image: Turajski

### Sport & Fitness

#### Climbing Course

Climbing is a fantastic way to get fit, build strength and stamina, meet people and make new friends. Whether you are looking to learn the essential skills of rope work and belaying, boulder in the centre with confidence, take the next step into lead climbing or brush up on your skills & techniques, there is a course for you. All instructors and coaches are passionate indoor and outdoor climbers. They are qualified and experienced in teaching climbing at all levels from beginners to more advanced climbers, and will be keen to pass on their knowledge to you.

castle-climbing.co.uk

[See website for dates](#)

#### Travel to France for Tennis

An exceptional setting in the French Riviera with over 320 days of sunshine a year and 12 hectares of state-of-the-art sports facilities, the Mouratoglou Academy is one of the most visited destinations in the world for intensive outdoor tennis throughout the year. This academy offers a variety of training programs that will allow you to quickly obtain significant results, giving you all the keys to achieve your goals. Joining the Mouratoglou Academy for a course means joining a family of enthusiasts led by a team of teachers using the Mouratoglou methodology has proven its efficiency for 25 years.

mouratoglou.com

[See website for dates](#)





# The Winter Cumbrian Mountain Express

Saturday 17th February and 16th March 2024

This trip provides a wonderful opportunity to get out and about during the winter months, with the added bonus of steam haulage over the Northern Fells, including the spectacular Settle & Carlisle Railway. We have a high speed journey down the West Coast Main Line to Carnforth, hauled by a blue Class 86 electric locomotive. We then enjoy a circular steam tour outwards via Shap to Carlisle and back via the Settle and Carlisle line.

Join us from London Euston, Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby, Nuneaton, Crewe and Preston to visit Carlisle.

- There are three classes available:**
- Premier Dining** includes a full English breakfast and a four course dinner freshly prepared on board and silver served at your seat.
- First Class** includes morning tea or coffee with a bacon/breakfast roll and a muffin and an afternoon service of tea or coffee with a savoury of the day followed by a scone with butter and jam.
- Standard Class** includes a reserved seat usually at a table for four.

Fares	Adult	Junior	Family	<b>Have a great day – The Safe Way</b> – your welfare is our priority. Our travel procedures are available on our website. Refreshments available to purchase on board. Tables for two can be guaranteed in First/Premier for a £30pp supplement subject to availability. Organised by The Railway Touring Company.
Premier	£295	£205	£898	
First	£195	£135	£593	
Standard	£115	£85	£358	

## The Railway Touring Company

### UK Day Trips 2024

- The White Rose**  
Saturday 24th February

Join us from London Kings Cross, Stevenage, Huntingdon and Peterborough to visit York.
- The Cheshireman**  
Saturday 2nd March

Join us from London Euston, Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby and Nuneaton to visit Chester.
- The Whitby Flyer**  
Wednesday 20th March

Join us from London Kings Cross, Stevenage, Huntingdon, Peterborough and York to visit Whitby.

- The Bath & Gloucester Steam Express**  
Saturday 27th April

Join us from London Paddington, Slough, Reading, Newbury to visit Bath or Gloucester.
- The Cumbrian Mountain Express**  
Saturday 11th May and 22nd June

Join us from London Euston, Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby, Nuneaton, Crewe and Preston to visit Carlisle.
- The Cumbrian Coast Express**  
Saturday 1st June

Join us from London Euston, Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby, Nuneaton, Crewe and Preston to visit Carlisle.

- The Tynesider**  
Saturday 8th June

Join us from London Kings Cross, Stevenage, Huntingdon, Peterborough and York to visit Morpeth.
- The Swanage Belle**  
Wednesday 26th June

Join us from London Victoria, Staines, Woking and Basingstoke to visit Swanage.
- The North Wales Coast Express**  
Saturday 6th July

Join us from London Euston, Watford Junction, Milton Keynes, Northampton, Rugby, Nuneaton and Crewe to visit Llandudno Junction or Holyhead.



For more information please visit [railwaytouring.net](http://railwaytouring.net) or phone 01553 661 500

The Railway Touring Company  
The Old Stables, Estuary Road, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 2HL





## DANCE & OPERA

### The Barber of Seville

London Coliseum  
Jonathan Miller's classic production of The Barber of Seville is a feast of frivolous fun. Enjoy Figaro's mischievous escapades as he assists Count Almaviva in prising the beautiful Rosina away from her lecherous guardian, Dr Bartolo. Be prepared for ridiculous disguises, elaborate deceptions, mistaken identities and the closest of shaves as barber Figaro helps the young lovers find a way to be together. Gioachino Rossini's comic masterpiece fizzles with memorable melodies in an entertaining opera that unites the theatrical worlds of Italian commedia dell'arte and Whitehall farce.

**St Martin's Lane WC2N 4ES**

**eno.org**

**February 12-29**

### Tanztheater Wuppertal Pina Bausch + Terrain Boris Charmatz: Nelken

Sadler's Wells

A signature work by Pina Bausch, Nelken (Carnations) is a pinnacle in Tanztheater Wuppertal's repertoire. Amplified by a new generation of performers, this bouquet of dance is an ode to the beauty of dancing bodies. In the history of dance, few creations bear the stamp of genius. Nelken, premiered in 1982, is one of them. In a huge field of 8000 carnations, the ensemble deploys the seasons, moves from chair to chair, displaying its virtuosity with a nod to classical forms. The work conveys a worldview that is tragic and cruel, but also tender and overflowing with a humanity that has touched audiences all over the world. Certain passages, such as the "Nelken Line," have become iconic. Beauty blossoms here at every moment.

**Rosebery Avenue EC1R 4TN**

**sadlerswells.com**

**February 14-22**

### Manon

Royal Opera House

Manon's brother Lescaut is offering her to the highest bidder when she meets Des Grieux and falls in love. They elope to Paris, but when Monsieur G.M. offers Manon a life of luxury as his mistress she can't resist. With the Lescaut's encouragement Des Grieux cheats at cards in an attempt to win Monsieur G.M.'s fortune. They are caught. Manon is arrested as a prostitute and deported to New Orleans, followed by Des Grieux. On the run, Manon dies from exhaustion.

**Bow Street WC2E 9DD**

**roh.org.uk**

**Until March 8**

## EXHIBITIONS

### Legion life in the Roman army

British Museum

The Roman empire spanned more than a million square miles and owed its existence to its military might. By promising citizenship to those without it, the Roman army – the West's first modern, professional fighting force – also became an engine for creating citizens, offering a better life for soldiers who survived their service. Expansive yet deeply personal, this exhibition transports you across the empire, as well as through the life and service of a real Roman soldier, Claudius Terentianus, from enlistment and campaigns to enforcing occupation then finally, in Terentianus' case, retirement.

**Great Russell Street WC1B 3DG**

**britishmuseum.org**

**Ongoing**

# What, When, Where

## February - March

### When Forms Come Alive

Hayward Gallery

Inspired by sources ranging from a dancer's gesture to the breaking of a wave, from a flow of molten metal to the interlacing of a spider's web, the artworks in When Forms Come Alive conjure fluid and shifting realms of experience. Undulating, drooping, erupting, cascading and promiscuously proliferating, these sculptures invite a tactile gaze, and trigger physical responses. In an era when our encounters are increasingly digitised and disembodied, these artworks call to mind the pleasures of gesture and movement, the poetics of gravity and the experience of sensation itself. Palpably dynamic, they proclaim that nothing in the world stays the same, that everything is moving, seething, changing and transforming.

**Southbank Centre, Belvedere Road**

**SE1 8XX**

**southbankcentre.co.uk**

**Ongoing**

## FAIRS & FESTIVALS

### The Baby Show with Lidl GB

Excel

The Baby Show with Lidl GB, the UK's largest and best-loved parenting event for new and

expectant parents, is back on the 1-3 March 2024. They have an incredible ticket offer if you buy your ticket in advance! This highly anticipated event has everything for bump, baby and you, all under one roof. With over 350 leading baby and boutique baby brands and 1000s of products, it's the UK's largest marketplace for all things baby, selling everything from buggies to bouncers to cribs to car seats.

**Royal Victoria Dock,**

**1 Western Gateway E16 1XL**

**excel.london**

**March 1-3**

### London Comic Con Spring

Olympia

Who says you have to travel to a galaxy far, far away to find your favourite heroes? Where imagination knows no bounds, transport yourself to the magical world of film and TV at London Comic Con Spring. Grab your cape and swing into action, as some of the biggest stars from the big screen are set to fly in from every supernatural dimension.

**Hammersmith Road W14 8UX**

**olympia.london**

**March 2-3**

### The London Book Fair

Olympia

From engaging keynotes by bestselling authors, to inspiring talks at the sustainability hub, you'll find plenty to do at The London Book Fair. The London Book Fair (LBF) is where the global publishing community unites to develop relationships, gain insights, and define the future of creative content. From publishers, dealmakers, copyright pros, commissioners and global licensors – the entire publishing industry is represented at LBF. Visit the first international event of the publishing year at Olympia London.

**Hammersmith Road W14 8UX**

**londonbookfair.co.uk**

**March 12-14**

## FAMILY & CHILDREN

### Wizard Afternoon Tea London

The Wands & Wizard Exploratorium

A bewitching afternoon tea experience where you use working magic wands to brew interactive teas and taste fantastical treats. It's a feast for all the senses! After selecting your magic wand, you are led to an interactive work station where you cast spells with your wand to control your tea stand and open your locked puzzle chest, which contains your ingredients. You will brew two different types of interactive teas, the first of which focuses on transfiguration and second of which has been designed to encourage experimentation and iteration for finding the perfect blend for your palette. You can expect to be hands-on with your tea and use all of your senses.

**26 Greek St, London W1D 5DE**

**wizardexploratorium.io/tea**

**See website to book**

## FILM & PHOTOGRAPHY

### Siân Davey: The Garden

The Photographers' Gallery

Discover works from Siân Davey's The Garden in a free outdoor exhibition in the Soho Photography Quarter just outside the Gallery. Starting in 2020, British photographer Siân Davey transformed her abandoned garden over three summers into a vibrant space, filled with wildflowers, birdsong and people. Together with her son, Luke, Davey cultivated a space rooted in love. They researched native flowers and encouraged biodiversity, sourcing seeds and plants locally. When the flowers bloomed, they called in the community. Everyone had a place in The Garden; the mothers and daughters, the lonely, the marginalised, lovers, the traumatised and heartbroken and those that had concealed a lifetime of shame. The space became an expression of yearning, defiance, joy and interconnectedness.

**16-18 Ramillies St, London W1F 7LW**

**thephotographersgallery.org.uk**

**Ongoing**

## FAMILY & CHILDREN



### Behind the Scenes: Making The Secret Life of Reptiles and Amphibians

London Zoo

The nights may be drawing in, but work isn't slowing down on London Zoo's main lawn. If you've visited recently, you may have noticed the building work going on next to the Diana monkeys and mangabeys. By spring next year the Terrace Restaurant, Zoo Shop and Giants of the Galápagos will share Barclay Court with London Zoo's newest major exhibit: The Secret Life of Reptiles and Amphibians. The new exhibit will house 26 species and

use the latest technology to bring to life eight different habitats – from the steamy forests of South America to the mountain jungles of Asia. For now though, the building is a jungle of wires, step ladders and spotlights, populated by hard-hatted builders, zookeepers and horticulturalists intent on building the perfect home for some of the world's most threatened reptiles and amphibians.

**Outer Circle NW1 4RY**

**londonzoo.org**

**March 29 – April 30**



# Where? March 2024

## MUSIC

**Alina Ibragimova** violin; **Nils Mönkemeyer** viola; **Basel Chamber Orchestra**; **Kristian Bezuidenhout** fortepiano, director  
Wigmore Hall

Mozart's miraculous concertante work for violin and viola forms the centrepiece of a programme that contrasts the Austrian genius with one of his most interesting contemporaries. The Czech Johann Baptist Vanhal (1739-1813) was born into serfdom, enjoyed an international career and left behind some 130 symphonies and much other music highly regarded by his colleagues.

**36 Wigmore Street W1U 2BP**  
**wigmore-hall.org.uk**  
**February 23**

**Hera Hyesang Park and Bretton Brown**  
Milton Concert Hall

In weaving together western classical music and Korean art songs and folk-song arrangements, Park and Brown find the common threads that unite different cultures. A

Korean Boat Song and Caplet's boat bob alongside Rossini and Hahn's gondolas, and there are floral tributes from Alma Mahler and Samuel Barber, as well as spiritual reflections from Errollyn Wallen and Thomas Frederick Dunhill. Hera Hyesang Park shows real integrity in her programming: 'Instead of making myself perform a list of songs that might impress others' she opts to 'take a chance on myself and perform songs that resonate with my core values'. Known for his sensitive and responsive musicianship, Japanese American pianist Bretton Brown is in great demand as a song accompanist and chamber musician.

**1 Milton Street EC2Y 9BH**  
**barbican.org.uk**  
**March 1**

## TALKS, TOURS, & WALKS

**Women and Medicine in Euston and Fitzrovia Walk**

This enlightening walking tour through Euston and Fitzrovia sees the stories of courageous women intertwine with the fascinating history of medicine. Explore their struggles, triumphs, and enduring legacies, all while immersing yourself in the captivating architecture and ambience of this remarkable London neighbourhood. The journey begins at the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Hospital on Euston Road, where you will learn about Elizabeth Garrett Anderson herself. As the first qualified and practising female doctor in England, her story is truly awe-inspiring, showcasing her journey from a society resistant to change

to becoming a trailblazer in medicine. Pay tribute to Louisa Aldrich-Blake, the first woman to qualify as a surgeon. Explore the challenges she faced and the triumphs she achieved in a profession historically dominated by men.

**londonguidedwalks.co.uk**  
**See website for more information**

**Women in Science Tour: Space**  
Natural History Museum

Discover the fascinating work of female scientists whose research has contributed to our understanding of space, meteorites and planetary materials. Take a guided tour of the first-floor Hintze Hall balconies and Minerals Gallery and hear the gripping stories of the female scientists whose contributions changed our understanding of space. Encounter numerous treasures, including rare meteorites, as you learn about the research of female space scientists past and present, including some who've worked at the Museum. Join us and discover more about our displays and the cutting-edge science and space research being done.

**Cromwell Road, South Kensington SW7 5BD**  
**nhm.ac.uk**  
**Ongoing**

## THEATRE

**ABC**

The London Palladium  
To mark their new Sky Arts concert and to celebrate 15 years performing the iconic and timeless debut album "The Lexicon

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## Antiques & Art by Anthony J. Lester, FRSA

lesterartcritic@eyeonlondon.online



In Edition 18 of *Eye on London* I wrote about 'sleepers' – works of art that turn up mis-catalogued at auction and are later found to be important and valuable. As an example, I penned:

"On 6th December, 2023, Sotheby's evening auction of 'Old Masters & 19th Century Paintings' includes 'The Adoration of the Kings', oil on oak panel by Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669)." This painting was purchased in 2021 at Christie's, Amsterdam for £731,605 (including premium). It was then catalogued as 'circle of Rembrandt', in other words merely of the period and in the style of the artist. However, following the picture's cleaning and detailed scrutiny via infra-red imaging, experts now concede the small Biblical scene is an indisputable work by Rembrandt. This

resulted in it selling for £10,965,300 at the Sotheby's December auction. An impressive yield for somebody!

Undiscovered treasure is still to be found and age is not always the criteria! Last year a hardback first edition of 'Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone' sold at auction for £10,500. In poor condition, it had been purchased for 30p at a Wolverhampton Library sale. Harry Potter first editions are rare because when Bloomsbury published it on 30th June, 1997 they only printed 500, 300 of which went to libraries. In 2021 a pristine first edition sold at auction in Texas for £356,000.

Think you might have one of these early hardbacks – here are a few pointers to look for. On the copyright page the print line needs to read 10987654321, on page 53 "1 wand" appears twice in list of five school supplies Harry should bring to Hogwarts and on the back cover the second "o" in 'Philosopher's Stone' is missing.

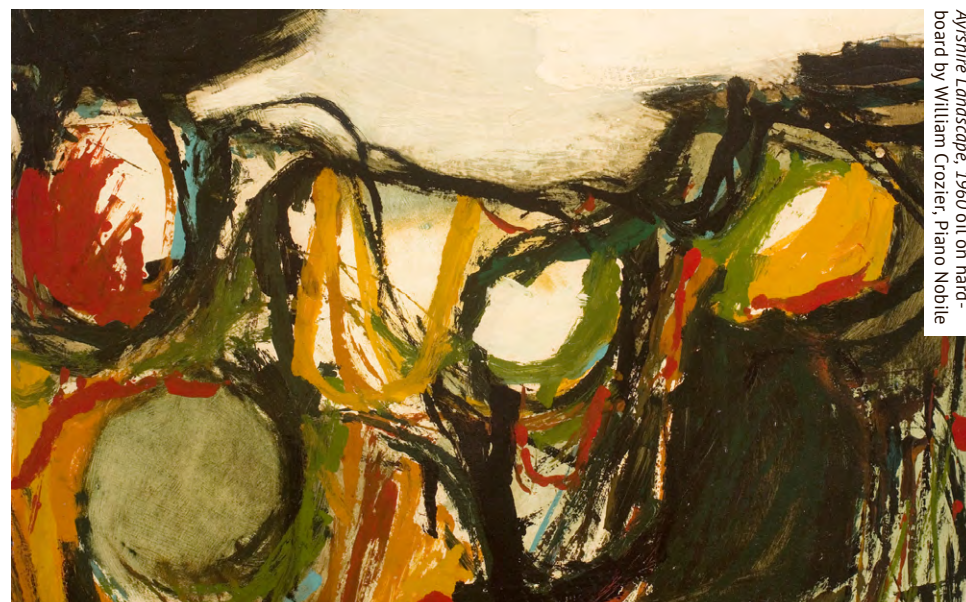
At the Paris Salon in 1884 a painting entitled *Madame X* triggered controversy – many deeming it provocatively erotic. The artist was so distraught he moved to London where he soon established himself as the most successful portrait painter of his generation. His name was John Singer Sargent (1856-1925), who was born in Italy to American parents. Ironically, *Madame X* is now hailed a masterpiece and is in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Depicting Madame Pierre Gautreau, a twenty-four-year-old American socialite, dressed in a long black gown, her shoulders exposed, with the right jewelled dress-strap hanging cheekily off her shoulder. Critics lashed out, calling it an immoral composition (after the exhibition, Sargent repainted the strap in its proper position). The iconic painting will be one of the highlights at *Sargent and Fashion*, taking place between 22nd February and 7th July, at **Tate Britain**, Millbank, SW1P 4RG. It might be a cliché, but, in my opinion, this is the 'must see show' of the year.

A lifelong friend of Singer Sargent was Wilfrid Gabriel de Glehn, RA (1870-1951), a display of whose work is on view until 1st March at **David Messum Fine Art**, 12 Bury Street, St. James's, SW1Y 6AB. It's likely that it was through Sargent that de Glehn met the beguiling artist Jane Emmet (1873-1961), who he married in

1904. The couple became frequent travelling companions abroad with Sargent and this exhibition brings together sixty works (priced between £1,250 and £65,000) from the Artists' Studio Estate, including compositions captured in Venice, Tuscany and Spain. There is also *Brittany – Evening*, 1893, a rare oil painting (£14,850) dating back to de Glehn's student days at the École des Beaux Arts in Paris. A painter of great versatility, the show features several of de Glehn's stunning portraits, including *Youth*, a charming oil painting (£26,500), which was displayed at The British Empire Exhibition in 1925. As expected from David Messum, the event is accompanied by a fully illustrated and highly informative catalogue.

## There is no

In 1935 Picasso declared: "There is no abstract art. You must always start with something. Afterwards you can remove all traces of reality." So, with that in mind, make your way to the **Portland Gallery**, 3 Bennet Street, SW1A 1RP, between 14th February and 1st March. On the gallery's ground floor there are thirty striking works by Martyn Brewster (b. 1952), who



Ayrshire Landscape, 1960 oil on hardboard by William Crozier, Piano Nobile

encapsulates abstraction elements of the Dorset coast near his home and studio. Using oil on canvas or acrylics and collage, they range from his jewel-toned reflections captured in *Ocean Light* painted in 2016, to the recent *Turquoise Sky*, an opulent sunset of blue and red. Make your way down to the Lower Gallery and be beguiled by over thirty paintings (prices range from £1,250 to £6,600) by Liam Hanley (1933-2019), who is best known for his abstracted compositions of the English expansive countryside. Although he studied briefly at the Central School of Art, Hanley was largely self-taught. When he had one his solo shows at the Thackeray Gallery, London in 1979 he said: "Landscape from the purely pectoral point of view is not what I seek. I am concerned with the land and what man does to it."

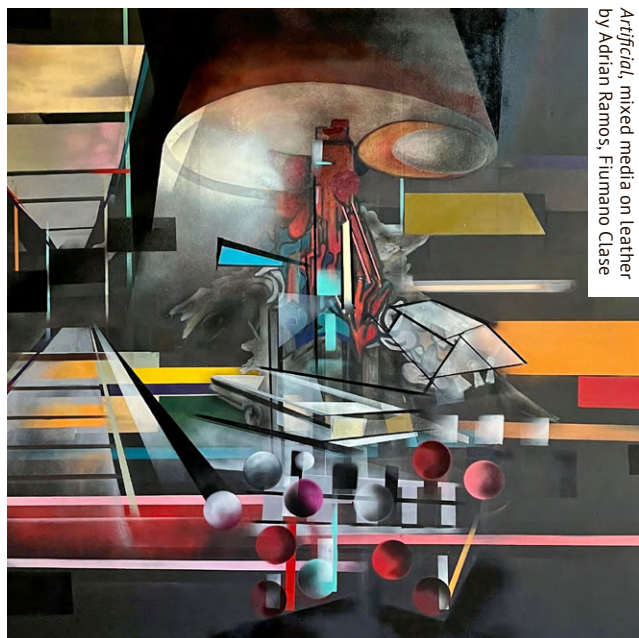
## abstract art

Continuing the abstract theme, *Counterpoint*, taking place until 2nd March at the **Cristea Roberts Gallery**, 43 Pall Mall, SW1Y 5JG, surveys, via fifteen artists, abstract art spanning over seventy years. Among the diverse mix are woodcuts by Naum Gabo (1890-1977), screenprints by Patrick Heron (1920-1999), aquatints by Donald Judd (1928-1994), while representing contemporary works are Rana Begum (b. 1977), Julian Opie (b. 1958), Bridget Riley (b. 1931), Sean

Scully (b. 1945), Cornelia Thomsen (b. 1970), and the brightly coloured woodcuts of Richard Woods (b. 1966).

Just a few meters away Francesca Fiumano and Andrés Clase are two dealers on a mission to support and showcase fresh, exciting talent and until 2nd March they present their fifth *Discoveries* exhibition at **Fiumano Clase**, First Floor, 40-41 Pall Mall, St. James's, SW1Y 5JG. This event showcases four international artists – KV Duong, Nicole Morris, Constanza Pulit and Adrian Ramos – whose intriguing and eclectic creations cover painting, textiles, latex, video and print making. Prices range between £700 and £10,000.

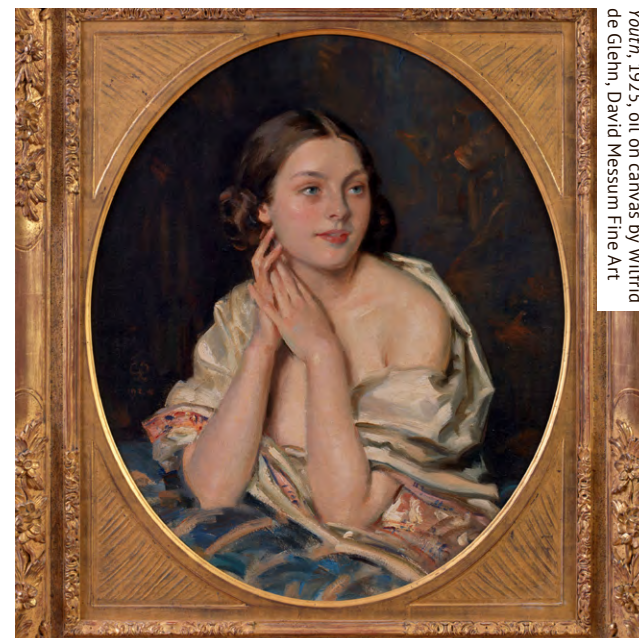
Having completed his studies at Glasgow School of Art in 1953, William Crozier (1930-2011) took off to Paris and Dublin for a year before settling in London. Having mounted his first solo show in 1957 the Parton Gallery, he caused some debate in September, 1958 when London's Drian Gallery tendered his large collage formed of streaks of paint and pieces of paper stuck on the canvas. Entitled *Princess Margaret*, Crozier claimed it was "meant to be complimentary." *William Crozier: Nature into Abstraction* taking place from 14th February to 22nd March at **Piano Nobile**, 96/129 Portland Road, W11 4LW, proffers over thirty of Crozier's less controversial works generated between 1958 and 1961. Painted when he was temporarily living in rural north Essex, these daring landscapes express how Crozier walked a tightrope between representation and abstraction.



Artificial, mixed media on leather by Adrian Ramos, Fiumano Clase



Moonpath over Hertfordshire, gouache by Liam Hanley, Portland Gallery, © Hanley estate



Youth, 1925, oil on canvas by Wilfrid de Glehn, David Messum Fine Art



# Single-owner collection goes under the hammer

In January, well-known auctioneers, Bellmans ([www.bellmans.co.uk](http://www.bellmans.co.uk)), kindly invited me to a Victorian "Lion" house in Perrymead Street, Fulham. The property had been the home of Anthony Gardner (1938-2023), the notable London-based jewellery dealer and collector, and his civil partner of 50-years, Michael Becker. I was at the property to admire Gardner's private collection, which focuses primarily on the Art Nouveau and Arts & Crafts periods. Bellmans will preview the contents of the house at 4 Cromwell Place, South Kensington, SW7 2JE (020 45484738), on 12th and 13th March, with the auction taking place on 16th April at Newpound, Wisborough Green, West Sussex, RH14 0AZ.

In the 1960s the couple started selling fur coats and belts on the Portobello Road market, then, in the 1970s, trading under the name 'The Purple Shop', they had stall J9 at Antiquarius, 131-141 King's Road, Chelsea. This large, Grade II listed former Temperance Hall was built around 1912-14 and converted into one of London's trendiest and stylish antique centres. Initially, it had around 200 stalls

and attracted regular visitors such as Mick Jagger, Elton John and Barbra Streisand. I can remember Gardner's impressive display of exquisite pieces delicately placed on velvet cushions. Over the years the centre lost its allure and is now the home of American fashion chain Anthropologie.

Having trained at RADA, Gardner made cameo appearances in various TV dramas, including 'Alvis' in 'Dr. Who' (1967), 'Rumpole of the Bailey', 'Crossroads' and 'Emergency Ward 10', but his most memorable performance was as 'The Haberdasher' with Elizabeth Taylor, in Franco Zeffirelli's film, 'The Taming of the Shrew' (1967). Originally from Hamburg, Becker trained as a graphic designer and honed his skills with jewellery making. Together they developed

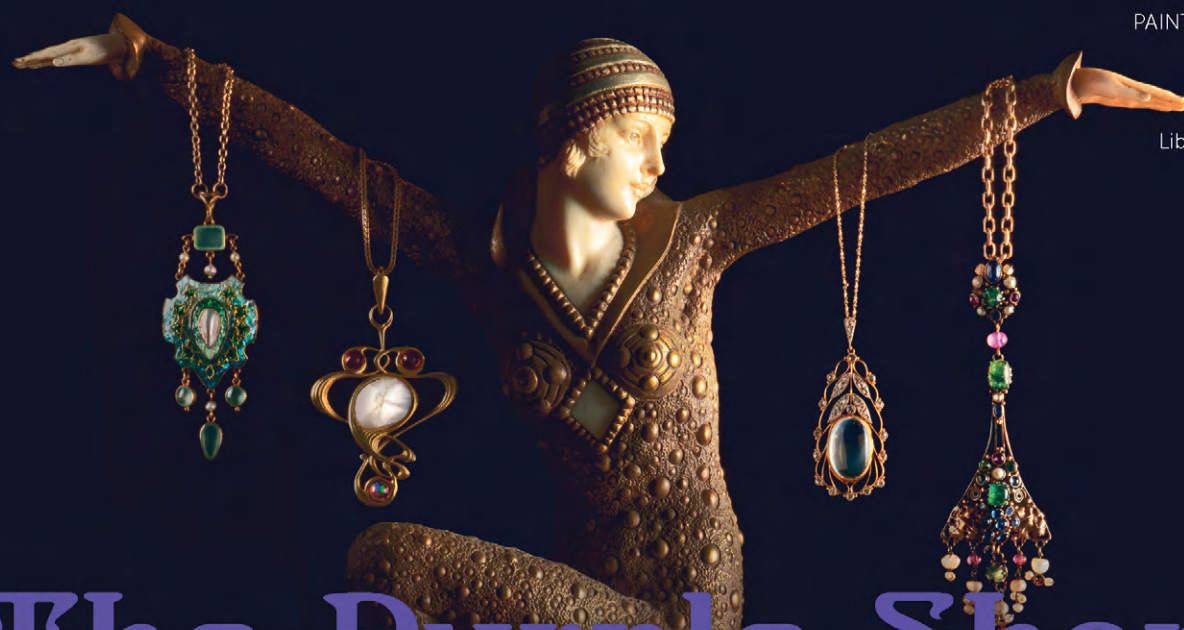
a great passion for the fluid, sensual designs of Art Nouveau and they became highly respected on the London antiques scene. 'The Purple Shop' designs and jewellery were regularly seen on catwalks across Europe and in fashion magazines. This love of beautiful things is well in evidence with the collection that adorned their home. Although the auction in April will include some typical, sinuous Art Nouveau glass inspired by natural forms, paintings, furniture and books, it is the jewellery that is most striking. All the premier names are represented – Cartier, Liberty & Co, Faberge and Boucheron. Among my favourite pieces are a collection of late 19th and early 20th century elegant belt buckles, most crafted in silver, some, in the form of butterflies, are decorated with peacock

blue enamels. With each emphasising high craftsmanship, they are inimitable miniature works of art.

I am also a devotee of sculpture and there are a number of fine bronzes, but my eye was taken by a stone carving by the little-known artist Winifred Godbold Leveritt, née Hulbert (London, 16th February, 1879 - London, 15th May, 1969). In her twenties she was a piano teacher but following her marriage in 1906 she began to paint and sculpt. Her stone figure of Saint Francis of Assisi is in the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum, Bournemouth, and in 1931 'Spring' (£28-18-0), a lead figure by her, was included in the Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society show at the Royal Academy. Leveritt also exhibited at the Glasgow Institute of the Fine Arts; the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool ('The Holy Family' in 1936) and between 1930 and 1940 showed eleven sculptures at the Royal Academy. Although she carved using marble, red Woolton and Ancaster stone, her preference was Portland. With the art market's burgeoning interest in female artists, the stone carving at Bellmans is likely to surpass expectations!

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## Arts & Culture by Simon Tait



Beside the entrance to the Horniman Museum in Horniman Gardens, Forest Hill, South London, there is a drinking fountain. Next to the drinking fountain is a small, silver bowl filled with clean water. The fountain is for the refreshment of passersby, heading either for a walk in the gardens or a visit to the museum. And as an afterthought by the museum managers, the thirsty passerby might have a thirsty pet...

Very Horniman, and the thoughtfulness as well as the after thoughtfulness of the museum makers here is what has made the Horniman such a favourite for young and old alike, especially the young. However, it is changing subtly, as part of its own evolution.

Five years ago, the museum gained its latest director, Nick Merriman, and two years ago it was named the Art Fund Museum of the Year, reflecting some of the changes he has made. In February, Merriman moved on to run English Heritage, leaving his mark in SE23.

Inspired by the 1851 Great Exhibition, the tea magnate Frederick Horniman developed a passion for collecting objects, specimens, and artefacts, "illustrating natural history and the arts and handicrafts of various peoples of the world", which accounts for the 35,000 items (now 350,000) in the permanent holdings. In 1890, he began exhibiting them in the Surrey House Museum, which was also his family home, but soon there was no room for the living Hornimans, and

in 1901, he opened a permanent brand-new museum. Even then, it was not conventional, designed as it was by the then avant-garde architect Charles Harrison Townsend in the art nouveau style to make one of the most beautiful museums in the world.

Horniman was also a social reformer who campaigned for the creation of a British welfare state, and his mission was to "bring the world to Forest Hill", and educate and enrich the lives of the local community. He always intended the gardens to be part of the museum, and in 2012, they had a major redevelopment, including a pavilion for school groups, to bring the outside even more in tune with what you'll find inside.

And it continues to attract, educate, and entertain, with growing numbers coming every year, 862,000 at the last count. The Horniman won the 2022 Art Fund Museum of the Year Award because, said the Fund's director Jenny Waldman who chaired the judges, it had taken lessons from Covid and the death of George Floyd to rethink its place and role in society. "The Horniman team used these events as points of departure for thinking about what a museum is there for, and what it can do", she said.

And it does it subtly, using the online teaching tools that came to the fore during the pandemic, and acknowledging the responsibilities of former colonialism by exploring the lives, religions, and cultures of all people around the globe in the spirit of discovery. One of the judges for the Museum of the Year was Dame Diane Lees,

former director-general of the Imperial War Museums, who said the Horniman was "championing the natural environment, commissioning artists and music festivals, to bring the eclectic collections of Frederick Horniman new relevance with diverse communities."

"They are setting the agenda for how a traditional museum can reinvent itself through powerful ideas".

The £100,000 Art Fund prize money was spent on a program of musicians in residence, bringing to life the instruments in the collection, one of the largest and most comprehensive in the world; and a school holiday club.

Like all good museums, the Horniman is full of fascinating things you didn't know you wanted to know about.

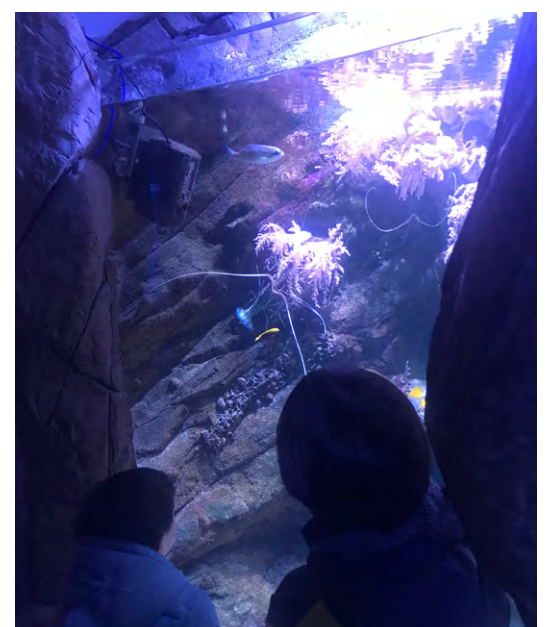
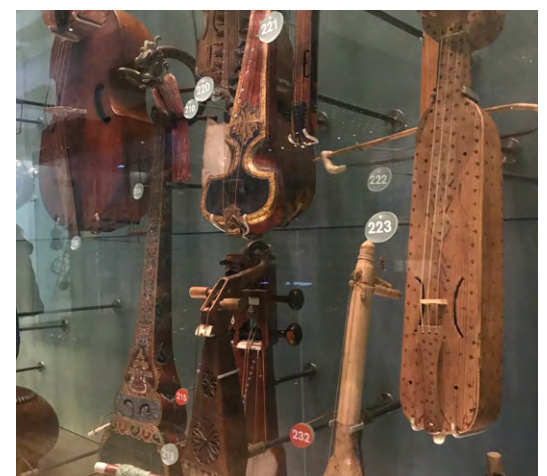
You'll find that you need to know, for instance, that Lagos in Nigeria is one of the fastest-growing cities in the world, but as its people plan for its future they reflect on the past – old kingdoms, religions, objects, and stories. You have to know about the evolution of the horse's hoof, what local fungi it is and is not safe to eat, how the Navajo people of Arizona make their inimitable sand paintings, that the zampogna is a bagpipe played by Southern Italian shepherds who come down to the towns to play it at Christmas. The aquarium on the lower ground is a water wonderland.

Central to the Horniman is its natural history gallery, the floor level a maze of large glass cases containing the story of the natural world's evolution, and at its centre is a cynosure that draws all the eyes of all kids as they enter. The Horniman Walrus dominates the gallery, being about five times the size it should be – because, legend has it, the taxidermists that first stuffed it had never seen one before and filled out all the wrinkles and fatty folds that are its natural state. And so it has remained, on its make-believe iceberg, for over a century.

But now the walrus is leaving the gallery – temporarily – to be restored, properly stuffed, and remounted, just as imposingly but more realistically on a new "iceberg", an emblem of the historic Horniman but also of the new museum's thinking. The general look approved by Frederick Horniman and loved by generations will remain – the gallery is listed – and as many of the old showcases as possible will remain, with the desk galleries on the first floor still festooning the balcony overlooking the floor display.

Reborn in the £10m Nature + Love project, the natural history gallery will use the existing collections, add new acquisitions along with references to the human impact on our planet, so that you can explore and marvel at the natural world and our need for it. Work began at the start of 2024 with parts of the gallery closing gradually, to be completed by the spring of 2026.

And so, with free admission and open seven days a week, the Horniman is alive with fascinated humanity drawn into its galleries. "Those who use their eyes obtain the most enjoyment and knowledge" Frederick Horniman said, presciently, in 1898. "Those who look but do not see, go away no wiser than they came."





## Classical Music by Simon Mundy

# Strasbourg Comes to London

When Strasbourg is in the British news these days, it is usually about the endless fight within the Conservative Party regarding the idea of political Europe, whether Britain is a part of it, or whether the sliver of sea that separates the island from the continent should actually be an electric fence. Strasbourg (thanks to a Conservative Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden) is the home of the 46-nation Council of Europe and, once a month, to the plenary session of the 27-nation European Parliament. Sitting on the West bank of the River Rhine, and having changed hands between France and Germany at least three times in the last 150 years, it has its own dissatisfaction with either, mixing both cultures as the capital of Alsace, which has its own distinctive linguistic, food, and wine traditions. In a very individual way, it is a pivotal city in the story of Europe - as well as being quite beautiful, despite all the invasions.

There is another side to Strasbourg, though. At the Opera du Rhin, a gem of an old theatre, there is a tradition of innovative but not outrageous productions that have given it an excellent reputation. And the city's orchestra, which has its own modern

hall slightly out of the town centre but also plays for the opera (just as the Vienna Philharmonic does), is one of the best on either side of the river for many miles in both directions. In the last century, both Mahler and Richard Strauss conducted it in their works. The Strasbourg Philharmonic is the largest orchestra in France outside Paris and the only one that can take on the full range of big late Romantic works, like Mahler's symphonies, without having to bring in extra resources. And on Tuesday, 13 February, L'Orchestre Philharmonique de Strasbourg (to give it the full title) comes to London for the first time most can remember, to play at Cadogan Hall.

"We were supposed to come last season," says the orchestra's Chief Executive, Marie Linden, "but our conductor John Nelsons was too ill." Nelsons is the veteran American conductor who has become something of a legend in the big works of Wagner and Berlioz. He is conducting again (and led the orchestra in a sumptuous program last month) but is still too frail to take on major tours. Instead, they are coming with their previous music director, Marko Letonja, a couple of decades younger than Nelsons but a conductor of impeccable reputation. Although from Slovenia originally,

he has become a fine exponent of French music and that is what will dominate the second half of the London concert, which also opens with Berlioz' Roman Carnival Overture.

"Marko always likes to bring mainstream pieces but he also likes to develop the repertoire." So two famous Ravel works, the Suite from Mother Goose, and his iconic representation of the breakdown of order in World War I, La Valse, are preceded by César Franck's symphonic poem Le Chasseur Maudit (The Cursed Huntsman), "a work that is almost never played, even in France, which Marko has picked especially for this tour." In between, Nikolai Lugansky plays the Second Piano Concerto by Rachmaninov, a composer in whose works he specialises and was last heard playing them in November at Wigmore Hall.

"This is a big occasion for us," Marie Linden asserts. "We do not play outside our home region as often as I would like and the five concerts we are playing in Britain will be our only tour this season." They can also be heard that week in The Beacon Bristol, The Anvil Basingstoke, Symphony Hall Birmingham, and Llandaff Cathedral. It is also a chance to show off

what she regards as the orchestra's special characteristic. "We reflect our geography between two big cultures in that we have the best of the French tradition - flexibility - with the precision of the German. We are not a typical French orchestra; we are just as at home in the Teutonic repertoire."

The most difficult obstacle to overcome in arranging the tour has not been musical but the irksome process of dealing with post-Brexit regulations. As well as making sure the players all have passports and the right visas (since French ID cards are no longer valid for travel to the UK), there is the nonsense of needing to change trucks at the border and getting customs clearance for all the instruments. It is, of course, the same for British ensembles travelling in the opposite direction. Nonetheless, at a time when the finances of music organisations are seriously stretched, these impediments are a completely pointless addition to everyone's problems.

Despite them, Marie Linden was determined the tour should go ahead. "It is important for us to be heard in the big halls throughout Europe - like London and Birmingham: to show the real quality of the orchestra in places that are used to hearing the best."



Strasbourg with Letonja © Nicolas Rosès





Ferrari, despite receiving critical praise internationally, has been snubbed by the Academy Awards due to take place on 10th March 2024, receiving not one single Oscar nomination. The scenario was replicated at the Golden Globes where the film was also overlooked. The upcoming BAFTAs on 18th February see the film nominated in one category, only, for Best Sound. Director Michael Mann and star Penelope Cruz, however, both picked up awards at the Gotham Awards in December 2023.

#### FERRARI - The Review

*Ferrari* is based upon on the 1991 biography 'Enzo Ferrari: The Man, The Cars, The Races, The Machine' by motorsport journalist Brock Yates. The movie follows both the personal and professional struggles of Enzo Ferrari, the Italian founder of the car manufacturer of Ferrari S.P.A., in the summer of 1957. The film stars Adam

# Ferrari is snubbed at major film awards

Driver in a measured, yet brilliant performance, next to Penelope Cruz as his forlorn partner. The wealthy cheque-writing founder of his car racing and motor manufacturing empire.

The film weaves a behind-the-scenes narrative that sheds light on Enzo's duplicitous lifestyle with a former 'secret' flame with whom he had had a love child. A woman whom he secretly still professed to love in 1957. All amid an implied on-going lifestyle of amorous infidelity. This neat personal and professional combination of storytelling is fused with action packed GT racing and Formula 1 trials. This visual cross referencing sets the tone for a truly magnificent film.

*Ferrari* has been described as a

'soap opera' by some of its detractors. Even the Hollywood organ of influence that is *Variety* described *Ferrari* as being like a cross between John Frankenheimer's *Grand Prix* (1966) and Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather* (1972). *Variety* alludes to the shallow off-track shenanigans of Formula 1 drivers in *Grand Prix* as having a modern day cousin in *Ferrari*. This particular parallel is as glib in its assessment as it is inaccurate. *Grand Prix*'s characters were seen as playboy stereotypes with trophy girlfriends in the shape of French siren-chanteuse Francois Hardy, and screen legend Eva Marie Saint. One of *Ferrari*'s drivers certainly echoes this particular ethos, but he is the only character in *Ferrari* to do so. Enzo Ferrari's lifestyle

is, however, far more complex. Therein lies the strength of the screenwriting by Troy Kennedy Martin. I'd venture that this post-humous work is surely his finest?

Martin had a dual screenwriting career in both Cinema and TV. Most notably in TV at the BBC in the 1960's with *Z-Cars* the police series set in Merseyside's Kirby 'Newtown'. Here he began the technique of merging personal lives with on-going crime solving plots. In the 1970's, in a more liberal era of neo-realism, he took this technique a step further with ITV's series *The Sweeney*, noted for its 'no punches pulled', gritty, action packed dramatisations. He was the right man to craft this screenplay adaptation of Yates's book. The tone chosen by *Miami Vice*'s creator, the Hollywood director of *Heat*, Michael Mann, creates an appropriate European tone, owing more to French and Italian 'existentialist cinema' of the 1960's and 1970's via *Ferrari*'s interpersonal relationships

#### ACTION V DRAMA?

All you action hungry petrol heads need not be disappointed. Every car in this film is real. Period Formula 1 and GT cars race along twisting mountain roads, through the streets of Turin, and into stunning ancient towns. The visual homage to Frankenheimer's *Grand Prix* has point-of-view cameras strapped to cars at a driver's eye line. Modern day camera technology also enables this wholly cinematic experience to go much further. *Ferrari*'s audience-in-the-race experience is seen from every conceivable angle. The cars are actually raced through Italian city streets, and around the hairpin bends of Italian racing circuits. Exhilarating? You betcha!

Nevertheless, Mann is no spectacle loving slouch. There is a morality play at work here too. Both in terms of a historical racing perspective, and a personal one.

This coupling of personal and professional regret is expertly set-up. All judged within Enzo Ferrari's desire to win. In Michael Mann's *Ferrari* the chances of Enzo losing-out both professionally, and personally, exist at every twist and turn in this masterful movie.

Just watch the one trailer. The official one. It's big screen time. Leave the sofa. Watch *Ferrari* in London's West End. Be prepared for a treat, plus a few genuine surprises.

#### FERRARI'S SCREENWRITER, TROY KENNEDY MARTIN

Scottish screenplay writer Troy Kennedy Martin was not a

prolific man in the movies. In TV he co-created and wrote many scripts for BBC TV's *Z-Cars*. He did the same for Euston Films and ITV's *The Sweeney*, a decade later. A hitmaker once again in the 1980's. He returned to BBC TV with the 1985 award winning political thriller series *The Edge of Darkness*, which also became a 2010 movie remake, starring Mel Gibson. Movies came in the shape of *The Italian Job* (1969), *Kelly's Heroes* (1970), and *Red Dust* (2004) to name but three. Now we have the long-awaited posthumous *Ferrari*.

Martin died aged 77 in 2009 in Ditchling, Sussex.

#### FERRARI'S DIRECTOR, MICHAEL MANN

The late Troy Kennedy Martin's screenplay had been decades in the works. The late Sydney Pollack was originally slated to direct. *Ferrari* has at least twelve producers cited in the on-screen credits. It is directed by *Miami Vice*'s creator, the American filmmaker Michael Mann. Director of *The Last of The Mohicans* (1992) and *Heat* (1995). He is also famed for his debut made-for-TV prison movie *The Jericho Mile* (1979). Mann also directed *Thief* (1981) with James Caan. *Thief* UK premiered at the Edinburgh International Film Festival in August 1980 at Edinburgh's Odeon. Screened in its original director's cut under the earlier moniker of *Violent Streets*. A cut that remained unissued till 1995 as 'The Director's Cut', which was later extended into 'The Director's Special Cut' in 2014. The esteemed American film critic Roger Ebert described it as, "One of the most intelligent thrillers I've seen". 43 years later it remains one of the greatest Crime movies ever made. Mann never looked back. He went on to further acclaim with his epic 'Neo Noir' Tom Cruise thriller *Collateral* (2004), which grossed over \$220 million with two Oscar nominations. A huge journey forwards from the mid-1970's when Mann studied for an M.A at The London International Film School in Shelton Street, Covent Garden. London. Just a few streets away from the new Garden Cinema in Covent Garden's Parker Street.

Mann recently directed the opening episode of the TV series *Tokyo Vice*.





# Tom Kerridge's Butcher's Tap & Grill Chelsea



Chelsea, once home to many local pubs, has transformed into a haven of stylish bars and glamorous restaurants, leaving behind the raw appeal of traditional pubs like the Queens Head on Tyron Street. It's this lost local pub ambiance that Chef Tom Kerridge sought to revive when he discovered the site of the old Queens Head and reimagined it as The Butcher's Tap & Grill, an unpretentious yet exceptional pub that stands out from the ordinary. Rumour has it that Kerridge went all-in, through remortgaging and securing a bank loan. Just goes to show how dead-set he is on making his mark with this pub in SW3 and his faith in its success.

Step inside, and you'll feel the warmth of the Butcher's Tap & Grill. A sturdy hardwood bar, vintage floors, cosy booths, and an open kitchen on the bottom floor, set the scene. The exposed brick walls give a nod to both style and comfort—perfect for friends catching up or couples on an easy-going date night. Kerridge's idea of a genuine local's pub shines through, a breath of fresh air amidst Chelsea's trendier spots.

We all associate Tom Kerridge, with celebrity chef appearances, numerous

cookbooks and most recently the voice of reason behind why we should buy from M&S as opposed to Lidl. He's the working-class lad from Gloucestershire who worked his way to the top through hard work and graft. His story is one of grit and self-discovery and the pub reflects his personality and dedication to quality, much like the butcher's meat proudly displayed in ageing fridges; 'this isn't just meat this is H G Walter meat' - one of the country's most respected butchers.

The menu, offering Butcher's burgers, steaks, hotdogs, and kebabs, are skilfully prepared by Kerridge's trained chefs. The T-Bone Steak, a generous 1.2 KG cut priced at £125, exemplifies the commitment to excellence here. Cooked to perfection, the succulent meat mirrors the high standards set by the hanging joints on display. Kerridge's kebabs, featuring options like mint lamb or treacle beef, pass as substantial snacks, and are served best with one of the special sauces on offer. Options include Chimichurri Sauce, Peppercorn Sauce and Red Wine Jus Sauce at £4.5. Or, the Smoked Garlic Mayonnaise, Jalapeño Mayonnaise, Spicy Sriracha Mayonnaise, priced at £2 each. The Red Wine Jus Sauce, slightly

sweet and acidic, is a standout, lifting the flavours of any meat dish on the menu. The Old Fashioned Hot Dog, priced at £16, is a shout-out to the classic American hot dog, but it's a far cry from the usual bland ones you find at a local fair or event. What sets this hot dog apart is the exceptional quality of its sausage, and the robust, spicy and meaty texture; add the tangy punch of American mustard and ketchup, and throw in some sweet caramelised onions for good measure, and this is the best hot dog you will taste outside Chicago.

For burger enthusiasts, the Classic Burger with roasted onions, dill pickle, and BT & G burger sauce (£15) is a solid choice. Vegetarians won't be disappointed by the Grilled Portobello Mushroom & Blue Cheese Burger, a well thought out twist on the classic, topped with roasted onions, marmalade, and blue cheese mayonnaise (£14.50). True to the Butcher's Tap & Grill's ethos, presentation is paramount, particularly with the Truffle and Parmesan Fries (£8). Crisp and infused with the earthy taste of truffle and served in a tasteful take-away cardboard box, showcasing that



yet again good food and presentation wins the day.

To cap off your meal, indulge in decadent desserts—Sticky Toffee Pudding, with Ice Cream and warm Chocolate & Malt Brownie, with Hazelnut cream, each priced at £8.50. Both desserts, though unbelievably sweet, round off the meal with a touch of indulgence.

Emma Trehane







## Travel by Emma Trehane

The silver screen has a profound power to transport us to new worlds, firing up our imaginations and leaving us with a yearning to explore. However, what if you could step out of the cinema and into the scenes themselves? Here, EyeOnLondon, takes you on a cinematic adventure, inspired by legendary films that will have you packing your bags and booking your next trip.

# Reel Escapes: Visit the best movie destinations on the planet

## Sicily:

### Cinema Paradiso (1988) and The Talented Mr. Ripley (1999)

“Whatever you end up doing, love it. The way you loved the projection booth when you were a little squirt.” - Alfredo

Picture yourself in the sun-drenched beauty of Sicily, where the warmth of the Mediterranean Sea mingles with the culture of its ancient towns. Stroll through the charming streets of Cefalù, the Sicilian backdrop for Cinema Paradiso’s nostalgic tale of friendship and film. Let yourself be captivated by the bustling markets and historical landmarks, just like Salvatore chasing after Alfredo. Then, follow in the footsteps of Tom Ripley, traversing the chic piazzas and glamorous villas of Mongibello, channelling your inner thrill-seeker as you explore the island’s hidden coves and dramatic landscapes.

#### Fun Fact:

The iconic Cinema Paradiso theatre is actually a composite of two structures: the exterior is the Teatro griego in Taormina, while the interior shots were filmed at Palermo’s Teatro Politeama Garibaldi.

#### Accommodation:

##### Cefalù:

**Hotel La Kalce,**  
website: raphaelkc.com.  
Tel: +39 0921 422629

##### Taormina:

**Grand Hotel Timeo,**  
website: belmond.com/hotels/europe/italy/taormina/belmond-grand-hotel-timeo.  
Tel: +39 0942 627 0200

#### Practical Tips:

##### Best time to visit:

April-June or September-October for pleasant weather and clear skies.

##### Getting there:

Fly into Palermo or Catania and take local transport (train, bus) or rent a car for flexibility.

## Wadi Rum, Jordan:

### Lawrence of Arabia (1962)

“The desert is an ocean in which no oar is dipped, and on this ocean the Bedu go where they please and strike where they please.” - T.E. Lawrence

Journey into the vast and awe-inspiring desert of Wadi Rum, where the echoes of T.E. Lawrence’s daring adventures still resonate. Hike amidst the sandstone cliffs that rise up from the red sand, their shapeshifting beauty mirroring the ever-changing tides of the Arabian Peninsula. Imagine yourself riding through the dunes on camelback, retracing

Lawrence’s footsteps and feeling the desert wind whip through your hair. At night, gaze up at the star-studded sky, a canopy mirroring the one that guided Lawrence across the sands. During the day hire a jeep, go sandboarding, rock climbing, or even take a hot air balloon ride for breath-taking views

#### Fun Fact:

Despite being set in Arabia, the film was

primarily shot in Wadi Rum, Jordan, and southern Spain due to political restrictions in Saudi Arabia at the time.

#### Practical Tips:

##### Best time to visit:

March-May and September-November for pleasant temperatures and clear skies. Avoid peak summer heat.

##### Getting there:

Fly into Amman and take a taxi, bus, or join a tour to Wadi Rum.

#### Accommodation:

**Memories Wadi Rum Camp,**  
website: mlc.jo.  
Tel: +962 7 7733 3372

**Bedouin Oasis Camp,**  
website: bedouinoasis.org.  
Tel: +962 7 7771 8881

## Valletta, Malta:

### Gladiator (2000)

“What we do in life echoes in eternity.” - Maximus

Step into the captivating world of Malta, an island nation brimming with history and dramatic scenery. This is the very same land that served as a stunning backdrop for the epic film ‘Gladiator,’ transporting audiences to ancient Rome. Relive iconic scenes as you explore Valletta’s Grand Harbour, where Maximus Decimus Meridius triumphantly returned, and wander through the ancient streets of Mdina, transformed into the Roman city of Aequitas.

Gozo, Malta’s sister island, reveals a different side of the story. Here, dramatic cliffs and serene beaches provided the setting for unforgettable moments in the film. Stand where Maximus battled in the iconic Azure Window (though sadly, no longer standing) or relax on the shores of Ramla Bay, picturing him seeking solace.

However, Malta’s attraction extends far beyond the world of cinema. The country is saturated in culture, and for the history buff there is ample opportunity to explore ancient temples like Hagar Qim and Mnajdra, or marvel at the mediaeval architecture of Mdina and Valletta. Roam through picturesque villages, bask in the genuine hospitality, and uncover a fascinating culture waiting to be discovered. Whether you’re tracing the footsteps of Maximus or forging your own path, this island nation offers something for everyone, ensuring your adventure is as epic as the film that brought it to the world’s stage.

#### Fun fact:

Oliver Reed, who portrayed Proximo in the film, passed away before completing all of his

scenes. To finish his remaining scenes, the filmmakers used CGI technology to superimpose his face onto body doubles and to complete his character’s arc. This was one of the earlier instances of using CGI to recreate an actor’s performance after their death in a major motion picture.

#### Beyond the gladiatorial ring:

##### Blue Grotto:

Witness the mesmerising light show as sunlight reflects off the turquoise waters within this natural cave.

##### Mdina:

Wander through the “Silent City,” a fortified mediaeval town boasting charming streets, grand cathedrals, and panoramic views.

##### Gozo:

Take a day trip to Malta’s sister island, known for its rural charm, hidden coves, and megalithic temples.

#### Practical Tips:

##### Best time to visit:

April-June or September-October for good weather and manageable crowds.

##### Getting there:

Fly into Malta International Airport and take a bus or taxi to your destination.

#### Accommodation:

##### Floriana:

**Grand Hotel Excelsior,**  
website: excelsior.com.mt.  
Tel: +356 2125 0520

##### Valletta:

**Corinthia Palace Hotel & Spa:**  
website: corinthia.com/palace.  
Tel: +356 2144 0301

## Bruges, Belgium:

### In Bruges (2008)

“Maybe that’s what hell is, the entire rest of eternity spent in f\*\*\*ing Bruges.” - Ray

While Ray’s take on Bruges might be a tad dramatic, it’s like saying every rose has a thorn, right? But fear not, amidst the mediaeval charm and cobblestone streets, you’ll find plenty of reasons to ditch the eternal damnation narrative and embrace Bruges’ quirky character. Take a journey through the quaint canals and mediaeval charm of Bruges, a city that seems frozen in time. Follow hitman, Ray (Brenden Gleeson), and his sidekick, Ken (Colin Farrell), as they navigate the streets and picturesque squares, their dark humour juxtaposed against an idyllic backdrop. Explore the towering Belfry tower, offering panoramic views of the city, and step inside the stunning Church of Our Lady, home to Michelangelo’s, Madonna sculpture. Bruges’ melancholic beauty and hidden alleyways will leave you wanting to linger long after the credits roll.

#### Fun Fact:

The famous scene where Farrell dives into the canal was actually filmed in a replica set built on a soundstage, as the real canals were deemed too murky and potentially hazardous.

#### Accommodation:

##### Bruges:

**Hotel De Orangerie,**  
website: Hotel De Orangeriehotelorangerie.be/en.  
Tel: +32 50 34 16 49

##### Bruges:

**The Charm,**  
website: carry-on-traveler.com/exploring-bruges.  
Tel: +32 497 45 90 58

#### Practical Tips:

##### Best time to visit:

Spring (March-May) or fall (September-November) for an agreeable temperature

and moderate crowds.

#### Getting there:

Fly into Brussels Airport and take a train or bus to Bruges.

## Rorke’s Drift, South Africa: Zulu (1964)

“Because we’re here, lad. Nobody else. Just us.” - Colour Sergeant Bourne

Visit the dramatic landscapes of KwaZulu-Natal, where the epic battles of the film unfolded. Unmissable is the Isandlwana Battlefield, the site of the British defeat, and the Rorke’s Drift Museum to learn about the Zulu warriors’ resilience. Walk the scenic trails of the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg Mountains, following in the footsteps of Zulu regiments.

#### Fun Fact:

In ‘Zulu,’ the actors wore watches from the period the film was set in, adding an authentic touch to their characters. Interestingly, Michael Caine, who portrayed Lieutenant Gonville Bromhead, wore his own watch during filming, which he had received as a gift from Sean Connery.

#### Accommodation:

##### Drift Lodge,

website: fugitivesdrift.com.  
Tel: +27 34 642 1843

##### Beverly Hills, Umhlanga:

website: southernsun.com/beverly-hills.  
Tel: +27 31 561 2211

#### Practical Tips:

##### Best time to visit:

April-October for dry weather and pleasant temperatures.

##### Getting there:

Fly into Durban or Johannesburg and take a bus or car to KwaZulu-Natal.

## Huesca, Spain:

### Pan’s Labyrinth’s (2006)

“The world is filled with wonders.” - Ofelia  
Explore the Huesca region, where the film’s haunting beauty comes to life. Visit the Boltaña Castle, transformed into the film’s academy, and marvel at its mediaeval architecture. Go walking in the Hayedo de Ordesa beech forest, experiencing the otherworldly atmosphere depicted in the film. For a unique experience, join a guided tour exploring the film’s filming locations.

#### Fun fact:

During the filming of “Pan’s Labyrinth,” director Guillermo del Toro created a set environment that was both immersive and practical. The faun’s labyrinth was built as a real set, allowing actors to interact with physical elements rather than relying solely on CGI. This approach contributed to the film’s visually stunning and tactilely authentic atmosphere.

#### Accommodations:

##### Huesca:

##### Hotel Boltaña,

website: hotelboltana.com.  
Tel: +34 974 50 80 23

##### Huesca:

##### Hotel Viñas de Lárrede,

website: hotelvinasdelarrede.com.  
Tel: +34 974 35 00 02

#### Practical Tips:

##### Best time to visit:

Spring (March-May) or autumn (September-November) for comfortable temperatures and manageable crowds.

##### Getting there:

Fly into Zaragoza or Barcelona and take a train or bus to Huesca.



Machu Picchu,  
South America:

The Motorcycle Diaries' (2004)

"I knew that when the great guiding spirit cleaves humanity into two antagonistic halves, I would be with the people." - Che Guevara

Hire a motorbike and take an adventure along the iconic route Che Guevara and Alberto Granado travelled, from Argentina to Peru. Explore historical sites like the Machu Picchu ruins and cities like Buenos Aires and Cusco. Soak up the local culture, volunteering in communities or attending traditional festivals.

Fun Fact:

During the filming of "The Motorcycle Diaries," the actor Gael García Bernal, who portrayed Che Guevara, actually learned how to ride a motorcycle for the role. He underwent extensive training to ensure authenticity in his portrayal of Che's iconic journey across South America.

Accommodation:

Peru:

Inkaterra Machu Picchu Pueblo Hotel,  
website: inkaterra.com/inkaterra/  
inkaterra-machu-picchu-pueblo-hotel.  
Tel: +51 84 60 4010

Argentina:

Palacio Duhaú - Park Hyatt Buenos Aires,  
website: hyatt.com/en-US/  
hotel/argentina/palacio-duhau-  
park-hyatt-buenos-aires/  
bueph.  
Tel: +54 11 5171 1234

Practical Tips:

Best time to visit:

May-September for dry weather and agreeable temperatures.

Getting there:

Fly into major cities like Buenos Aires or Lima and connect to smaller towns by bus or train.

Planning:

Consider joining a guided motorcycle tour or planning your own itinerary with proper safety precautions.

Tokyo, Japan:

Lost in Translation (2003)

"Let's never come here again because it would never be as much fun." - Bob Harris

Lost in Translation:

Get lost in the blinding streets of Tokyo, experiencing the bustling energy and neon lights depicted in the film. Visit the Shibuya Crossing for a quintessential Tokyo moment, and explore hidden bars and alleyways in districts like Shinjuku and Ginza. Enjoy karaoke or a traditional tea ceremony for a more meaningful cultural encounter.

Fun fact:

The famous whisper at the end of the movie, where Bill Murray's character, Bob Harris, whispers something to Scarlett Johansson's character, Charlotte, was never revealed in the film. Director Sofia Coppola intentionally kept it a secret, leaving it up to the audience's interpretation.

Accommodation:

Tokyo:

Park Hyatt Tokyo,  
website: hyatt.com/en-US/hotel/japan/  
park-hyatt-tokyo/tyoph.  
Tel: +81 3-5322-1234

Tokyo:

Shinagawa Prince Hotel,  
website: princehotels.com/shinagawa.  
Tel: +81 3-5488-1111

Practical Tips:

Best time to visit:

Spring (March-May) or autumn (September-November) for comfortable weather and pleasant crowds.

Getting there:

Tokyo is a major international hub with direct flights from most cities.

Phi Phi Leh, Thailand:

The Beach (2000)

"Never refuse an invitation, never resist the unfamiliar, never fail to be polite and never outstay the welcome." - Richard

While the film's depiction of Maya Bay sparked controversy due to over-tourism, there are responsible ways to experience its beauty. Opt for sustainable tours with limited visitor numbers and prioritise eco-friendly practices. Explore alternative, less crowded islands like Koh Lanta or Koh Phi Phi Don for a perfect day out at the beach. Remember, responsible tourism ensures the long-term preservation of these idyllic destinations.

Fun Fact:

The production team built a massive set on the island of Phi Phi Leh to represent the movie's fictional paradise. This set included a pristine beachfront, lush jungle, and even a lagoon. After filming, the set was dismantled to restore the island to its natural state, but some environmental damage was reportedly caused during the construction and removal process, leading to controversy and discussions about sustainable film-making practices.

Accommodation:

Koh Lanta:

Layana Resort and Spa,  
website: layanaresort.com.  
Tel: +66 75 607 100

Koh Phi Phi:

Phi Phi Cliff Beach Resort,  
website: phiphicliffbeach.com.  
Tel: +66 75 601 102

Practical Tips:

Best time to visit:

November-April for dry weather and calmer seas.

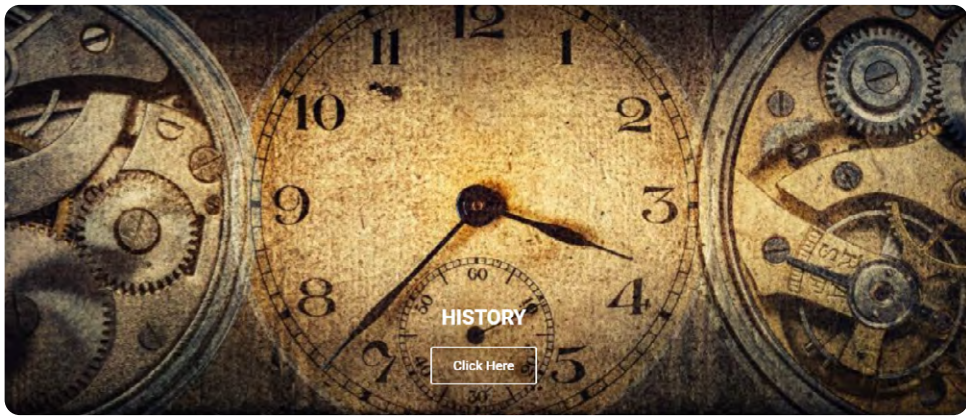
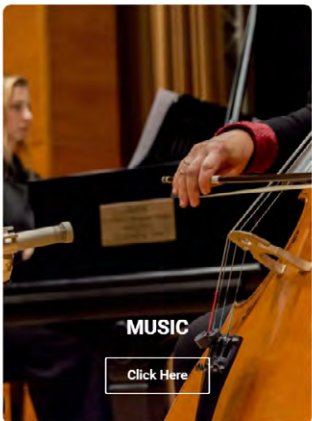
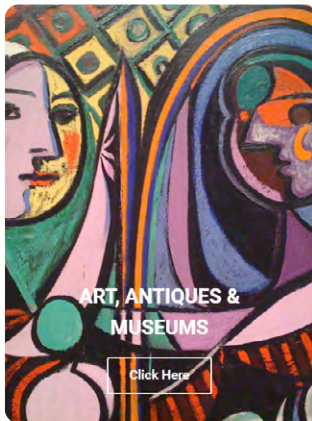
Getting there:

Fly into Phuket and take a ferry or boat to Maya Bay or your chosen island. Due to its popularity, accommodations and transportation to the island can book up quickly. Plan and book your trip well in advance to secure your preferred dates and accommodations.

Don't let these cinematic destinations remain just dreams. Start planning, research responsible travel practices, and pack your bags!

Remember, the most enriching journeys are often unplanned detours and unexpected encounters. So, grab your camera, capture your own story, and let the magic of cinema guide you to your next unforgettable adventure!

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CROSS CODE

241511222624222419

2414524719201524

3562415122218

2241452523241415

2622022222142415822

52326251225

21113231131192319224

24132410532015248

1251225162317

1451219216251221

2524515248202020

22313526112320159

ABCDEFGHIJKLMN OPQRSTUVWXYZ

12345678910111213

14151617181920212223242526

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.

MAGIC SQUARE

DEBATE TV BEER GURU

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

1. Which breed of sheep has the same name as an English variety of cheese and a Yorkshire valley?

2. The Hotel Inspectors was an episode of which famous sitcom?

3. What is the main ingredient of the Mexican dish huevos rancheros?

4. What substances form the vapour trails visible behind high-flying jet aircraft?

5. Which alphabet consists entirely of collections of dots?

6. Elisabeth Moss stars in which dystopian TV series based on a novel by Margaret Atwood?

7. Who won the 2021 British Open golf championship?

8. Who wrote the post-apocalyptic novel The Day of the Triffids?

9. Which range of mountains runs from the Arctic Sea to the Caspian Sea?

10. What H is the title of an Adele song and a word of greeting?

NONAGRAM

WORD PYRAMID

S I H

A H E

R O R

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

Guidelines:  
18 Good; 21 Very Good; 25 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 is also eligible).

Spell out a 15-letter word or phrase by moving from one chamber to another within the pyramid. You may only enter each of the chambers once and may only proceed through openings in the walls. The first letter may appear in any chamber.

P

R X R

L X O X E

A X P X T X C

S Y O N Y U O

FIVE ALIVE

VK IE PM EP TR

EA IH WA

LR UA DL LI IS

MU GO SE

AM VI XE ER TD

Here are two miniature five-square crosswords using the same grid – but the letters have been mixed up. You have to work out which letters belong to which crossword.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD

1234567

8

910

11

12

131415

16171819

20

2122

23

24

25

ACROSS

DOWN

1. Frankness of a French substitute (9)

8. Pretty good weather (4)

9. Delightful discussion of flattery (5,4)

11. Rig, it's collapsed in the river (6)

12. Grebe fluttering by northern port (6)

13. Short-term routine (3-2-3)

16. Complaint of untidiness (8)

20. Sent Liam round with Edward (6)

21. Temporary home has an inner occupant (6)

23. Taking away something that has been worked out (9)

24. Cultivate in long rows (4)

25. The devil of a cunning adversary (4-5)

2. When idle move to a place in India (3,5)

3. Combine below the point to come into view (6)

4. Stretched out at quarter to ten, having cared for the sick (8)

5. Potentially a unit opposed to a horrible lot (4)

6. Holy container, a bright colour (6)

7. Cold and unfriendly (6)

10. Fifty in the outfit worn by Scotsmen (4)

14. IOW resort – it's great on the East Coast (8)

15. Another neat space in the waiting area (8)

16. Dorothy will get on despite senility (6)

17. It detects changes in haphazard snores (6)

18. Grinding part of the bark (4)

19. Hear when it is strangely silent (6)

22. Drop of mid-afternoon liquid first (4)

SUDOKU

Easy Hard

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

53249

78953

43712

742426

69845

5718

93

89257

275

941

692

3724

239

81942

583

9181

EQUALISER

119

417

18

354

16

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

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

This puzzle page is supplied by Sirius Media Services Ltd.

To try our new puzzle, Zygolex, go to [www.zygolex.com](http://www.zygolex.com)

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SOLUTIONS

QUIZ CHALLENGE: 1 Wensleydale; 2 Fawley Towers; 3 Eggs; 4 Ice crystals or condensed water vapour; 5 Braille; 6 The Handmaid's Tale; 7 Collin Morikawa; 8 John Wynnham; 9 The Urals; 10 Hello.

CROSS CODE

NONAGRAM: ashore; hare; harsh; harsher; hoarse; hoarser; hoer; hoar; horse; horse; rasher; rehash; rhea; shah; share; shaver; shea; sheer; shire; shirt; shoe; shore; sirrah.

MAGIC SQUARE: 24 Grow; 25 Arch-enemy.

CRYPTIC CROSSWORD: Across – 1 Unreserved; 8 Fair; 9 Sweet talk; 11 Tights; 12 Bergen; 13 Day-to-day; 16 Disorder; 20 Mailed; 21 Tenant; 23 Deduction; 24 Grog; 25 Arch-enemy.

WORD PYRAMID: Counter-proposal.

EQUALISER: Frosty; 10 Kill; 14 Yarmouth; 15 Anteroom; 16 Dotage; 17 hash; hear; heir; hero; hire; hire; hoar; hoarse; hoarser; hoer; hoar; horse; horse; rasher; rehash; rhea; shah; share; shaver; shea; sheer; shire; shirt; shoe; shore; sirrah.

DOWN – 1 Karma; Midge; Twist.

DOWN – Velum; Phlox; Rased.

DOWN – Viper; Lulls; Mixed.

1. Displace (8)

5. European river (4)

9. Allows (7)

10. Book of maps (5)

11. For each (3)

12. Withdraw from (6)

15. Even (5)

17. Otherwise (4)

19. Automata (6)

22. Mediterranean island (6)

24. Lady's fingers (4)

26. Warning device (5)

27. Substitute (6)

30. Swindle (inf.) (3)

32. Mythical Greek monster (5)

33. White ant (7)

34. Soil (4)

35. Climbing plant (8)

8. Cereal (6)

13. Dove's sound (3)

14. Bureau (4)

16. Respired (8)

18. Wound mark (4)

20. Sac (7)

21. Feline (6)

23. Podded vegetable (3)

25. Hire charge (6)

28. Open weave fabric (5)

29. Tarnish (5)

31. Scottish loch (4)





As we moved from the old into the New Year, chess globally figured prominently, not least with the evolved and enhanced engagement of the electronic world's capabilities that emerged out of the pandemic and Brexit. Free chess through the Lichess platform and Chess.com's vast global network, amongst others, is now part of everyday life and seems to have been there forever. Both provide services, allowing players to analyse their games with in-depth software programs giving invaluable advice and variations on set patterns, openings, and defences.

In fact, several years ago, I suggested that a chess column regularly published in the media, perhaps under a pseudonym, electronically and in hard copy in newspapers and magazines, could be solely by an AI software program, with no human presence or input. Perhaps this is already happening?

In celebration of the triumph of chess and its participants, Chess.com's annual poll, involving over 16,000 voters, has been published, giving the names of the various award winners in its various categories. For example, to no one's surprise, Magnus Carlsen was voted 'The Player of the Year.' Carlsen's highly triumphant 2023 performance was measured against him surrendering his World Championship title, defying expectations that he would step down from world competition. He showed determination and gave wizardly performances in world tournaments against the top elite in chess, winning numerous titles, including some he had won on previous occasions and adding another world title not won before to his extensive cabinet of world triumphs.

Chess.com's award announcements carried several explanatory introductory paragraphs exhorting the explosion of all things chess in 2023. For example, "2023 was the greatest year for chess yet.

### The Challenge

Anastasia Bodnaruk emerged victorious in the FIDE Women's World Rapid Championship held from December 26th to 30th, 2023, featuring a substantial \$150,000 prize fund. This championship ran concurrently with The Open Rapid Championship, where renowned players such as Carlsen, Nepo, Duda, Vachier-Lagrave, Aronian, and Caruana competed, with Carlsen securing victory (as mentioned above). The venue for the FIDE WRC was The Silk Road Samarkand resort in Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

In the Women's World Championship (WWC), Humpy Koneru, the 2019 champion, was anticipated to secure a top-three placement, if not claiming the overall victory. Despite putting up a formidable defence against some stellar performances by the world's strongest female players, she fell short. Humpy staged an impressive comeback on the second day, specifically in rounds 9-15. However, her critical game against Gunina proved pivotal. Humpy missed a straightforward move, ultimately impacting her final point tally. What was this crucial move that Humpy overlooked, carrying such weight in determining her overall score?

The solution is opposite

## The Laaaaaargesse of Chess in the Early Part of the 21st Century

We've witnessed the biggest wave of new players picking up the game, received mass media attention, and met our new world champion." Their statement continued in celebratory mode, "Chess was at one point the most popular free game on the iOS App Store and topped three Amazon bestsellers lists with IM Levy Rozman's book!"

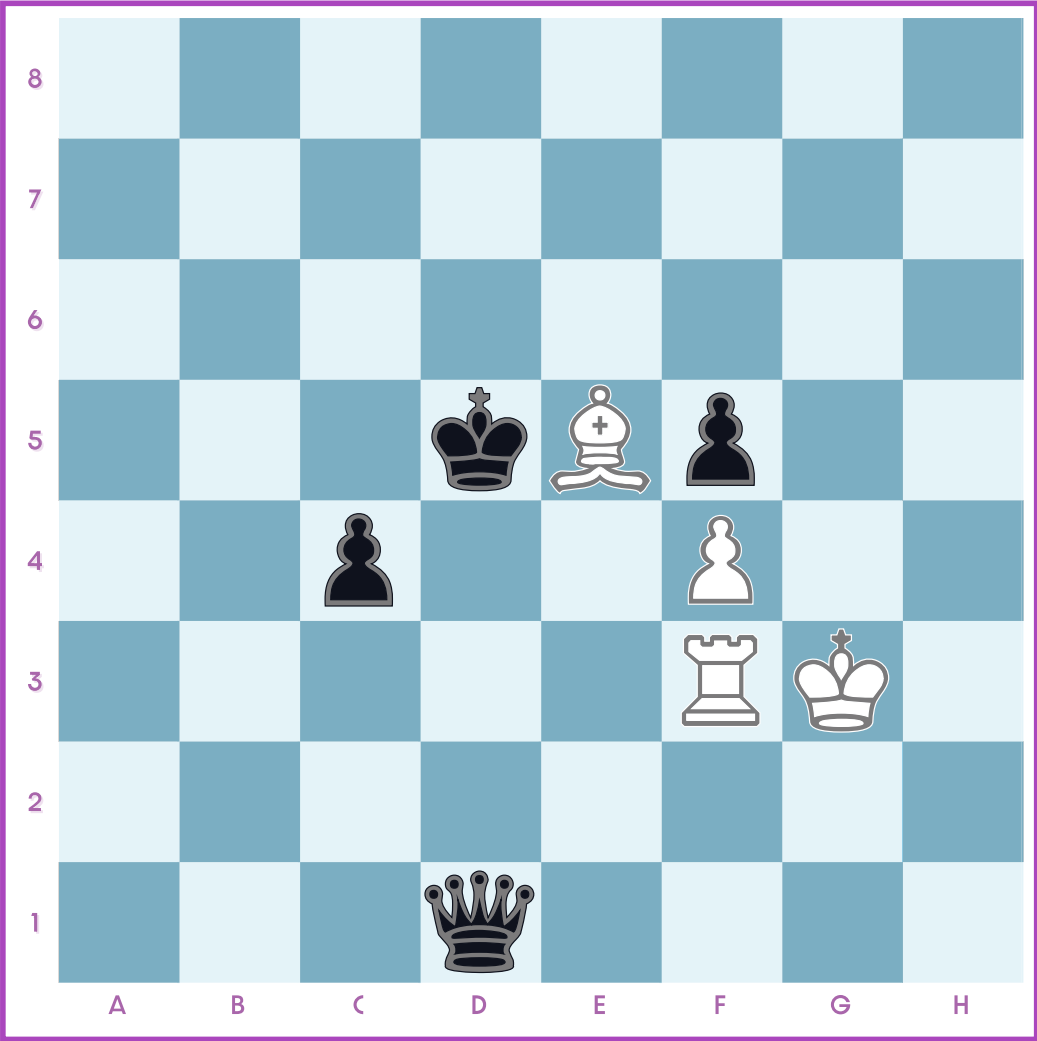
Rozman's chess book, 'The Gotham Chess 1.e4 Repertoire,' also earned him 'The Chessable Course of the Year' award. Fabiano Caruana's book, 'Caruana's Ruy Lopez: Dark Angel,' secured second place, and 'The Caro-Kahn: Simplified' by Alex Banzea took third place.

In a moment of personal reminiscence, I recall playing the Caro-Kahn defence many times myself with success during the 1990s and 2010 decades. On one memorable occasion, I drew against Anatoly Karpov in an exhibition game at Simpson's in the Strand, London. Despite knowing that this defence was one of Karpov's favourites, I felt proud at holding the ex-World Champion to a draw.

Levy Rozman's success in these awards continued, with a second award in the form of 'The Creator of the Year,' marking the third consecutive time he had been awarded the top prize in this category. Rozman is the person behind YouTube's largest chess channel, and Chess.com has described him as "spearheading chess content creation and making it to Forbes' under 30 list." A third title was in his pocket with the award of 'The Commentator of the Year Award.'

Chess.com, in explaining this award this year around, states, "Maybe it's the way he (Rozman) understands the mind of chess fans like no other commentator, or perhaps it's just the way he screams 'The roooooook.' Whatever it is, people love it, and that's why they chose Levy as 'The Commentator of the Year' in 2023." Hurrah, though, as in 2nd and 3rd places and runners-up were Daniel Naroditsky and our own David Howell, respectively! So, David just has to practice drawing out and extending his vowel sounds, and he may just be onto a winner next time around, "Kiiiiing," "Queeeeeeeen," "Paaaaaaaawwn," and so on.

'The Woman of the Year Award' went to Vaishali Rameshbabu, the Indian player who has inspired many of that country's female and male players to be proud of their country's very impressive position in the league of World Countries with a wealth of great players from the young to the old, both male and female. 2023 was 'a stellar year' for Vaishali; she gained her 3rd GM norm in the Qatar Masters, was undefeated in the FIDE Women's Grand Swiss, and gained ELO points in winning the IVEILlobregat Open, taking her over the 2500 ELO rating and securing the Grand Master title! This also qualified her for the 2024 Women's World Candidate's Tournament, allowing the winner of that tournament to challenge for the World Championship Crown. Ju Wenjun and Hou Yifan came 2nd and 3rd, respectively, in the



Woman Player of the Year Awards.

The 'Game of the Year Award' was between So and Carlsen, CCT Finals, and which So won. The presenters asked the question, "What does it take to win against the World's number one player? Two sacrifices, a 95% accuracy score, and the name Wesley So!" The game had a "devastating sacrificial attack, seemingly out of nowhere, with the endgame analysis program unimpressed!" The 59 mover was designated a brilliant win by So. There were 13 nominations in this category and 19 nominations in 'Creator of the Year Award.' Eleven nominations for 'Woman Player of the Year Award' and 13 in 'Player of the Year Award.' 'Move of the Year Award' went to Carlsen vs. Nakamura, in the last game of the Speed Chess Championships, described as "one of the most thrilling SCC finals ever."

'Rising Star of the Year Award' was Gukesh Dommaraju, who in September 2023 made his top rating of 2758, becoming the 8th strongest player in the world! In doing so, this was the first time in 37 years that any player in India had surpassed Anand as the top-rated player in India. Gukesh just a few months later went on to win the strongest classical tournament held on Indian soil, qualifying for the forthcoming 2024 Candidates tournament. This would mean that if he won the latter, he would become the youngest World Champion ever! Vincent Keymer and Denis Lazavik came second and third, respectively.

The 'Chess Kid of the Year Award' went

to Tani Adewumi, Nigeria, who had already secured a FIDE Master's title. Massive media attention followed him in playing against the tennis legend Roger Federer while winning a match against Harvard University students. He also contributes to his own foundation in playing tournaments.

The celebratory nature embedded in world chess through awards such as this creates a global jubilation that not only inspires but drives the quest for even higher performances that contribute to the chess world's consciousness of endeavours shared through a common egalitarian process of values open to all!

### The Solution

Gunina as white has played, 1.Rf3?...

Answer: 1. Rf3?...Qg1+, followed by 2...Qg4+! collecting the White Rook in passing whatever White's second move was! As it was Humpy missed it and the game went on for 14 moves and was drawn Humpy again in the 16th, penultimate round against Kosteniuk had a marathon 219 move game which she lost, forfeiting any chance of winning the championship.

simple move that would have succeeded the running for the title! What was the Humpy to cash in on this and stay in a major blunder and everyone expected





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