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Editor's LETTER

Back to roots...

Our exclusive interview this month is with a Belgian of Italian extraction, a showman and impresario whose life course was decided when he was a little boy: his father gave him an accordion as a present. Perhaps destiny was already hard at work as he squeezed that musical box all those years ago in the family home in Cairano.

Since then Franco Dragone has had a glittering career in show business, initially with Cirque du Soleil and later on with his own company. Now in his 50s he is being talked up as the creator/director for the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, shows that will be watched by millions worldwide.

We can't always remember the moment or the person that inspired us to become who we are. If we are fortunate enough to be spared to live a long and fulfilling life, there will, no doubt, be twists and turns along the way. Franco Dragone is planning to work again with non-actors, putting the spotlight on people who are disadvantaged in our society. Perhaps, like him, we too might find the time one day to revisit our roots... ❶

ON THE COVER



Franco Dragone

PAUL MORRIS
EDITOR

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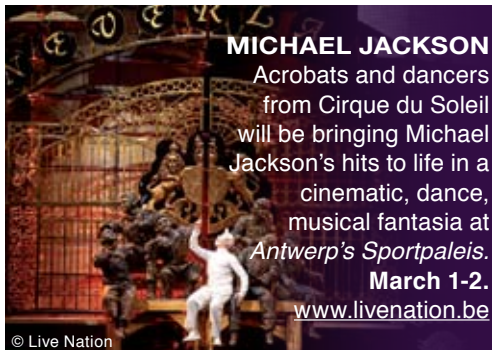
SIGUR RÓS

Icelandic post-rock band, famous for falsetto vocals and ethereal sound, will stop off in Belgium as part of their European tour to promote their latest album *Valtari*. *Forest National* on **February 26**. Tickets €41. www.livenation.be



ESBEN AND THE WITCH

Showcasing hits from their soon-to-be-released second album *Wash the Sins Not Only the Face*, Esben and the Witch, an indie rock band from Brighton, will be performing at *Botanique* on **February 15**. www.botanique.be



MICHAEL JACKSON

Acrobats and dancers from *Cirque du Soleil* will be bringing Michael Jackson's hits to life in a cinematic, dance, musical fantasia at *Antwerp's Sportpaleis*. **March 1-2**. www.livenation.be

MICK HUCKNALL

Lead singer of *Simply Red* Mick Hucknall will be performing hits from his latest album *American Soul*, which is a collection of his favourite hits rerecorded with his vocals, along with classics like *Stars* and *Holding Back The Years*. *Ancienne Belgique* on **March 2**. Tickets €49. www.livenation.be



THE WEEKND

Canadian hip hop/R'n'B artist Abel Tesfaye, who goes by the stage name *The Weeknd*, is performing in Brussels on **March 14**, showcasing hits from his latest album *Trilogy*. *Cirque Royal*. Tickets from €27. www.livenation.be




OLIVIA RUIZ

French singer Olivia Ruiz of *Femme de Chocolat* fame will be treating fans to a selection of tracks from her new album *Le Calme et La Tempête*. *Ancienne Belgique* on **February 15**. Tickets from €32. www.livenation.be



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HOW CAN I HELP YOU?

PERSONAL
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Personal trainer **Patti Bruns** give us some clues to staying motivated in your training regime

Be honest, did you make a New Year's resolution to eat better and get to the gym more often? If you did, good for you! Any time is a good time to focus on your wellbeing. So what if it came to you with a glass of bubbly in your hand and two weeks of over-indulgence under your belt!

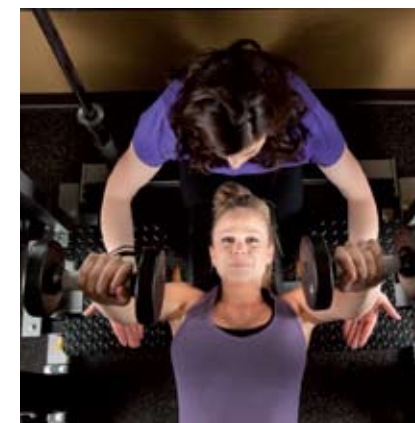
The question now is how do you stay motivated and keep healthy habits part of your life, forever? If you find yourself struggling to get to the gym and stick to your self-imposed training schedule, it might be time to seek expert advice and hire a personal trainer. Before you reach for your wallet, let's go over a few essentials, like what are the benefits of having a trainer, how do you find a good one and what are the key elements of making the most of your time together.

WHAT CAN A TRAINER DO FOR ME, REALLY?

Personal trainers (PTs) are experts in movement and exercise prescription,

educated to meet the needs of clients with any level of athletic ability. Beyond this, great PTs connect to what motivates you as an individual, creating workouts that, step-by-step, bring you closer to your ideal

state of fitness and wellbeing. Studies show that people are more likely to stick to an exercise program, and the related behavior changes, if a personal trainer is guiding them.



Personal training is just that, personal, so you are less likely to sustain an injury while training. Programs are designed to add progression gradually, ensuring that movements are done properly at lower intensities before adding more weight, speed or range of motion. Finally, one of the best reasons to hire a trainer is that you have a guide by your side as you move towards your goals. Your PT is there to cheer you on, call you on your cheats and, with any luck, make it fun along the way.

“ **GREAT PTS CONNECT TO WHAT MOTIVATES YOU** ”

OK, NOW HOW DO I FIND A GOOD

PERSONAL TRAINER?

Every fitness club should have trainers for hire and most have a public display of their profiles. Most PTs are freelance, and some are willing to come to your home or office. A great way to pick a trainer is to keep an



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eye on some of the PT sessions that are going on the next time you are in the gym. Larger clubs, like Aspria, have trainers working with clients throughout the day, so it is easy to see how different trainers work. Once you have a name and number, contact the PT and ask to have an initial consultation. Good trainers will want to meet you BEFORE booking your first workout so they can find out more about your history, goals and expectations. The questions asked during this discussion will ultimately shape your program. Be truthful so your PT can design the right program for you.

Here are a few tips to getting the most from your initial consultation:

- / Be open about your medical and exercise history, including injuries and any current conditions.
- / Answer lifestyle questions honestly. Include information on how you eat and drink, your work and family stresses, as well as things that make you excited and happy.
- / Be specific about WHAT your goals are and WHY they motivated you to get a personal trainer. For example, "I want to lose 5 kilos before Easter so I can be more active with my kids this spring."
- / Explain what your expectations are of the trainer. How often would you like to train? Do you expect a written program?
- / Ask the trainer about their current qualifications.
- / Find out what the trainer charges, how they like to be paid and if they have any special offers.

If you are happy at the end of the conversation and feel like you could work with the trainer, you are ready to book your first session!

NOW, THE FUN BEGINS!

As with all new relationships, it is wise to put your best foot forward. Make sure you arrive on time for your sessions, with a towel and water bottle to hand. Leave your mobile phone in your locker. This is "you" time!

The same goes for your trainer, you do not have to put up with a PT that is always late and spends your session taking calls and sending texts.

The trainer will introduce each exercise by explaining why it is in the program and then demonstrate the exercise with good form. If you don't understand the exercise, or feel that it is unsafe for you, stop and ask questions. Your PT will encourage you to work as hard as you can, providing you with ample rest time between exercises. Great trainers will come to learn what motivates you best – be sure to help them out with feedback during and after each session. It is normal for PT sessions to last an hour with the last 10 minutes reserved for stretching.

“ **PROGRAMS
ARE DESIGNED
TO ADD
PROGRESSION
GRADUALLY** ”

To make the most of your time with your trainer, be sure to report how you feel after each workout. This will help your trainer progress your program in a safe yet challenging manner. Reassessment of your program in relation to your goals should be carried out every 4-6 weeks to ensure that you are on track!

THE BOTTOM LINE

Personal training is a powerful tool in your quest to achieve greater fitness and well-being. The key is to find a trainer that understands what makes you tick. So don't forget that resolution you made at midnight – embrace it and make it happen! 🏆



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Martin Banks trawls the world of self-help books

FROM GREEN GODDESS TO 'HARMONIC WEALTH'

Remember Green Goddess Diana Moran?

Older, British, readers may recall she was the 'pioneering' lifestyle coach who appeared in her trademark green leotard on the fitness segment of the BBC's revolutionary morning programme *Breakfast Time* which has just celebrated its 30th

birthday. In the US, it was those fitness videos by actress Jane Fonda that aimed to send out pretty much the same message.

It has to be said, however, that self-help and 'life coaching' has come an awful long way since the Green Goddess and Jane Fonda.

Visit the self-help section on Amazon or browse the shelves of your local bookshop

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nowadays and you will find hundreds of books that promise to improve your life in any number of ways.

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Little wonder, then, that such books sell in huge numbers – and sell fast, particularly during an economic downturn. While UK book sales were down recently by 1 per cent overall, sales of self-help books for the same period soared by 25 per cent. In Britain alone, it's estimated that the cult of self-help has earned publishers some 72 million euros in the past five years. In the US, the self-help market is worth more than 12 billion euros a year.

But just how honourable is the self-help industry? It demands you buy book after book while arguably leaving you more restless and dissatisfied than you were before.

It could be said that all those bookshelves heaving with self-help tomes promise the earth but deliver rather less.

Brussels-based psychologist Dirk Van Cutsem says, “It is hard not to compare the modern-day self-help cult with the pathology of drug addiction: the constant need for

more, with a diminishing sense of return. “Thanks to the internet, there's never been more self-help out there, but we still don't appear greatly helped by it. As we pay out yet again for the ‘next great thing’ in popular psychology, are we simply more credulous these days, hopelessly immune to the genuine truths we're being offered - or just missing the point?”

As Van Cutsem points out, it's certainly a profitable business, worth billions globally, and one untouched by the recession. Indeed, recession is grist to its mill. For just as some reach for chocolate when times are hard, others reach for the latest self-help gurus like James Arthur Ray.

He wants to bring you wealth beyond your wildest dreams. Not just any kind of wealth, either - ‘harmonic wealth’. So you get gold-plated relationships, 24-carat sex, a richer mind, a priceless glow of spiritual wellbeing... and yes, pots of money, too.

‘Get ready!’ says Ray in his slick promotional video. ‘Because everything in your life is about to change.’ Really? I mean, it all sounds wonderful, but should we believe him? Or are we better marking him and his kind down as yet another false prophet in a self-help industry populated by chancers who over-promise and under-deliver?

If so, what will really make us happy? Research reveals there are three key



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Scrambled eggs and bacon

“ **IT'S
CERTAINLY
A PROFITABLE
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ingredients to human happiness: meaning, hope, and purpose. For us to feel truly content we need a spiritual and ethical framework – be it religious or otherwise – that gives us an understanding of our place in the world, in a way that allows us to make sense of why bad things sometimes occur. Second, it helps to be optimistic – not because positive thoughts magically attract things to us, but because optimistic people cope better with adversity.

Third, it helps to view ourselves as strong protagonists who set our own goals and make progress toward them. In other words, to have a sense of purpose.

The good news is that there are still relatively simple exercises any of us can do to shape our views in these directions. One such exercise is Bikram yoga which is a complete system of wellness, restoration and rejuvenation.

Brussels-based fitness fan Ruth Marsden said, “Bringing Bikram yoga into your life cleanses the body and calms the mind. The studio is HOT (over 100 °F) but this is to facilitate deeper stretching, prevent injury, relieve stress and tension and to detoxify the body.”

Liverpudlian Ruth, aged 27, adds, “Bikram yoga was designed to systematically stimulate and restore health to every muscle, joint and organ of the body. Participants are guided through a series of 26 postures, each increasing in physical

“ IT OPENS WINDOWS ON OUR PARTICULAR GENIUS ”

challenge. The body is flushed of toxins, leaving a deep sense of relaxation and well-being.”

Like any industry, self-help has its poor products and its good ones. Poor self-help material plays on greed, laziness and vanity: ‘Instant everything now!’

Good self-help, on the other hand, tells us not what we want to hear, but what we need to hear – that is, the truth of who we are. Like the best doctors, it gives us a correct diagnosis; it opens windows on our particular genius, but also frees us to accept failure - for only the cracked let in light.

Preachy healthy lifestyle advice often seems to take the joy out of living, but there are still

some simple steps that will help keep you on track without feeling guilty. British author Hilly Janes has written, yes another, self help book called *Latte or Cappuccino? 125 Decisions That Will Change Your Life* which proposes a number of simple steps that will help keep you on track without feeling guilty.

For those who, like me, remain rather baffled by the massive growth in the self-help industry, you will be glad to hear that the good old British breakfast is on her list. Janes says that a rasher of back bacon, a tomato, some mushrooms and egg (scrambled or poached) is a more nutritious, more filling option than fat and sugar-laden “Continental” pastries, juice and lattes.

Wonder what the Green Goddess would make of that! 🍷



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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

BEATING the winter blues

Unlocking the mystery of the winter blues is no easy feat. **Suzette Reid** explains

“ A LUNCH TIME
WALK IS AN
EXCELLENT WAY TO
COMBAT THE BLUES

The long nights and short days of winter are still with us and Christmas is a faint memory. Many people report feeling low and lacking energy during January and February. NHS estimates say that one in fifteen British people has some level of winter depression and that for some people this can be given the diagnosis of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD). Other symptoms include overeating, a reluctance to go out and join in social events, disturbed sleep patterns and reduced libido.

There are a number of theories about why we get winter blues. Lower levels of natural daylight during the winter months have an effect on our hormone levels, particularly serotonin and melatonin and this affects our body clock and can lead to low mood and lethargy. SAD has some clear links to geography – in our hemisphere the further north we live the less light we have in winter and the further north the country is the higher the likelihood of depression. Studies show younger people, 18-30 year olds, are more likely to get the winter blues and women are three times more likely than men, although some doctors believe that men are less likely to admit to the condition. However, there are things we can do to support ourselves through the winter blues.

Make the most of the daylight and try to get out on bright sunny days. Exercise is also important and a lunch time walk is an excellent way to combat the blues. Most people have to wake up at the same time throughout the year and in winter are waking up in darkness and leaving work in darkness so this may be easier said than done for those with busy jobs and long working hours but finding time for light and exercise in the winter is as important as healthy eating and sleeping well.

Light therapy has been shown to be effective for many SAD sufferers. Exposure to intense

light for a period of time each day can help regulate the body clock. However, there are many different specialist light box models and each individual needs to check what they might need. Sunlamps or boxes aren't suitable.

There is some evidence that indicates that supplements that boost vitamin D intake can be helpful. Talking therapies such as counselling can help and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy models can provide support.

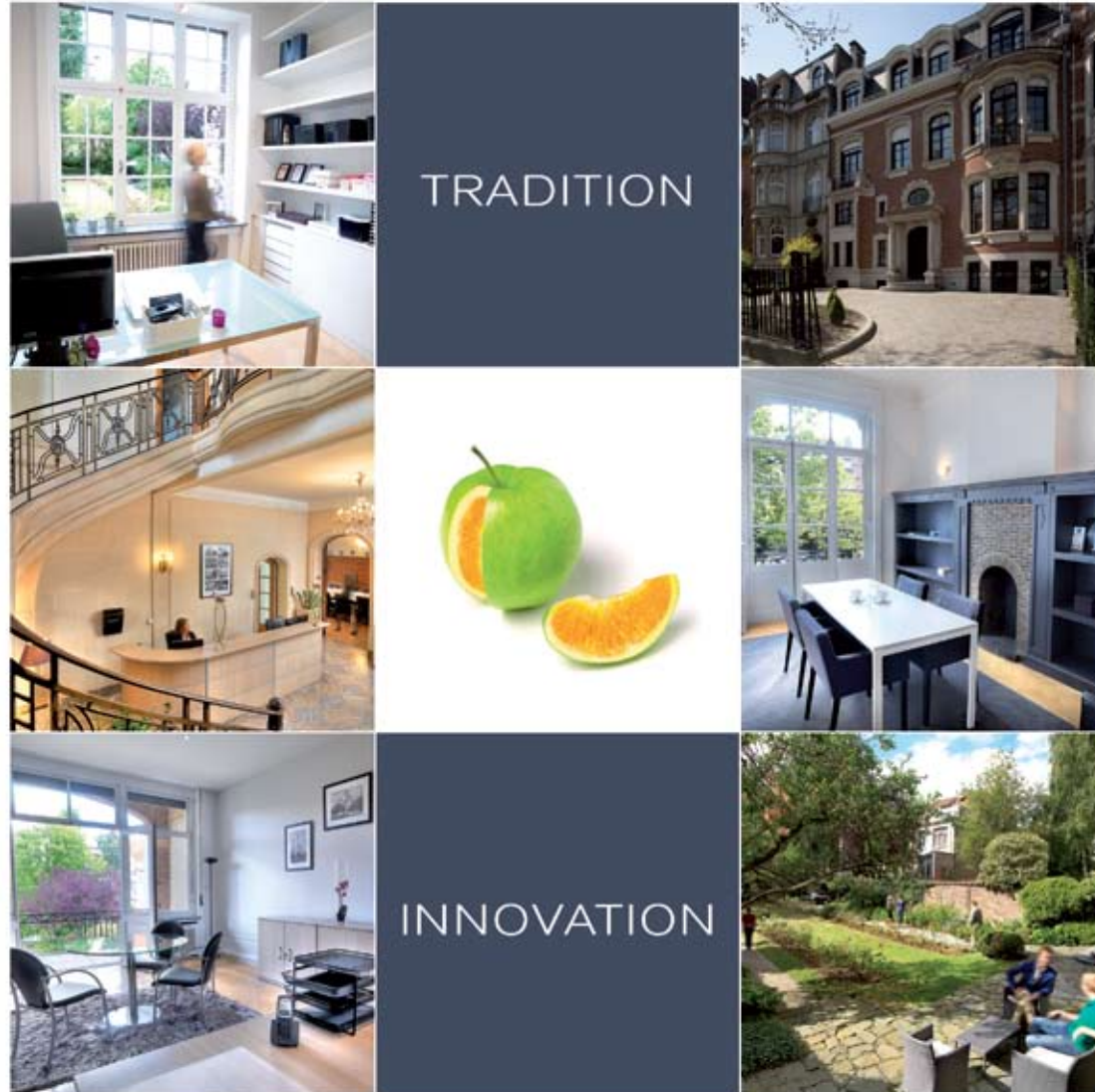
It is part of human nature to hunker down in winter, but it is only in recent generations that we have expected ourselves to continue to work at full stretch throughout the year. Working long hours isn't the same as being productive, so take stock of how well you work as well as how long you are working for.

Winter brings lessons for us on how to slow down and to be patient. The light is coming back and as the days lengthen most people start to feel better. Those who have suffered from SAD may experience a sudden short period of hyperactivity before they stabilize, but for others there is a gradual return to feeling normal. ❶

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PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT



With the meteoric rise of consumers buying smartphones and tablets, internet banking is getting ever more widespread. Modern active adults do almost everything with their smartphone and they use many banking services online.

In order to have full access to all the services of your bank online, often a computer or tablet is still required. For making money transfers or doing other transactions online, typically an extra security device is needed: most common is the card reader plus your bank card or the digipass. Online savings banks may content themselves with an identification number and a password, whilst sending you an extra security code on your mobile phone when you do a money transfer.

YOUR BANK in YOUR POCKET

Dave Deruytter praises internet banking but with a few caveats

However, internet banking is not limited to computers anymore; the number of banking apps on smartphones and tablets is rising fast. Those apps typically do not yet give you full access to all the online banking services of your bank, but they already allow you to see detailed information of the transactions and the balances on your various bank accounts and credit cards. Most banking apps also allow you to do transactions between your own bank accounts or transfers to predefined accounts of other people or companies.

For example, you will be able to put some of your excess cash on your savings

account with the same bank and you may be able to pay your utility bills if you have predefined the bank accounts numbers of those utility companies in your full internet banking system with the same bank.

Some banks, particularly new banks, have 'internet only' services: no brick and mortar branches, everything online, partly supported by e-mail or phone services in a call centre.

Great stuff! You basically have your bank in your pocket even when traveling the globe.

Cash stays a point of attention though. Credit and debit cards are still a 'must have' for payments in shops or when traveling. Yet technology is developing fast: soon you will be able to sweep your smartphone before a scanner, key in a certain code, and your purchase is paid for or cash comes out of the ATM. It is all a

“ MAKE SURE THAT YOU HAVE UP-TO-DATE ANTIVIRUS SOFTWARE

question of getting your bank or credit card details onto your phone's (micro) SIM card in a secure manner.

The internet is cheap and belongs to 'everybody'. That is essentially good, but 'everybody' also means the 'bad guys'. Indeed, with the astronomic rise of internet use comes the increase in the abuse of other people's data: viruses of all



SIM card

“ YOU BASICALLY HAVE YOUR BANK IN YOUR POCKET

sorts, but there are also more advanced scams designed to find your banking details and passwords. Hackers copy the internet websites of banks to get access to your private details including passwords and the security codes from your internet security devices. They also send misleading e-mails, seemingly from your bank, to check or confirm your security details (known as phishing). Other crooks try the same by calling you on the phone.

Do not be fooled, your bank will never ask you for your (security) details. Essentially, banks will not ask you things they already know about you. Furthermore, if the screen you see on your computer, or on another internet enabled device, looks suspicious or asks you to sign a money transfer you did not key in, do not continue. Last but not least, always make sure that you have up-to-date antivirus software on your computer. Dealing with money requires precaution, and it is no different now that we are living in the smartphone era.

In the future, online banking services can only increase. Be ready to embrace that evolution, but always be cautious whilst being exposed via the internet to the whole world and its more than seven billion people.

Banking is getting ever easier in the online era, but with it comes the risk that users would become too sure of themselves, losing the necessary precautionary reflexes that will always be needed when your money is involved.❶

Dave Deruytter

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I'd never have guessed it would be France. Given that this was the country in which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was inaugurated in Paris, 1948, and which had as its obvious precursor the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen, the fundamental document of the French Revolution that was approved by the National Constituent Assembly of France in 1789, the news that around 70,000 protesters mobilized in November 2012 against French President Francois Hollande's plan to legalize gay marriage, came as a complete revelation (and an unhappy one, at that) to this commentator.

Ideally, state and church should be a 'never-the-twin' set-up but, on the other hand, it is perhaps not surprising that certain religious leaders in France have once again jumped onto the anti-gay bandwagon. Hollande's proposal (approved by his Socialist government, but facing opposition from more than 1,000 French mayors and the Catholic Church (now there's a shock!)) would guarantee the rights of same-sex married couples to adopt, which has issued a clear invitation to ill-informed anti-gays to cite their favourite chestnuts, namely 'it's against God!' or 'it's against nature!'. While



several European nations, including Sweden and the UK, allow gay adoption, at present only married couples – not civil union partners – can adopt in France.

One protestor, Marthe Vignault, told the BBC: “A child needs a father and a mother, he needs the paternal and the maternal side, and with this bill that might not be possible any more. That’s the way it is and we can’t go against nature.” And, displaying a similar level of understanding and humanity that we have of course now come to expect from the Roman Catholic Church, the head of the French Council of Catholic Bishops, Cardinal Andre Vingt-Trois, described gay marriage as “the ultimate deceit”. But, then again, can he really be blamed for following the example of his spiritual leader, Pope Benedict XVI, who has

pressed his opposition to gay marriage in his Christmas address, saying that no less than the future of mankind was at stake. The Pope denounced what he described as people manipulating their God-given identities to suit their sexual choices – and destroying the very “essence of the human creature in the process”.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Seriously, could these people maybe get real and join the right-thinking denizens of the 21st century? For myself, I will happily accept any accusations of jumping on the pro-gay bandwagon, being right-on or perhaps just wanting to really irritate Daily Mail readers. I care not; similarly, I absolutely care not as to what consenting adults do in the privacy of their own homes and their own emotional lives, so long as it is consensual and no-one is hurt.

Happy, stable heterosexual parenting is obviously to be encouraged but, given that western society has only recently even granted the same-sex couples the right to be recognized as parents, how can any serious research have been undertaken as to whether gay parents are any worse or, for that matter, better than straight couples?

And, quite frankly, no purpose whatsoever is served by fear-mongering over the issue, of the kind recently expounded by Serge Dassault, an opposition senator in France’s conservative UMP, who said: “It’s the end of the family, the end of children’s development, the end of education – it’s an enormous danger to the nation.”

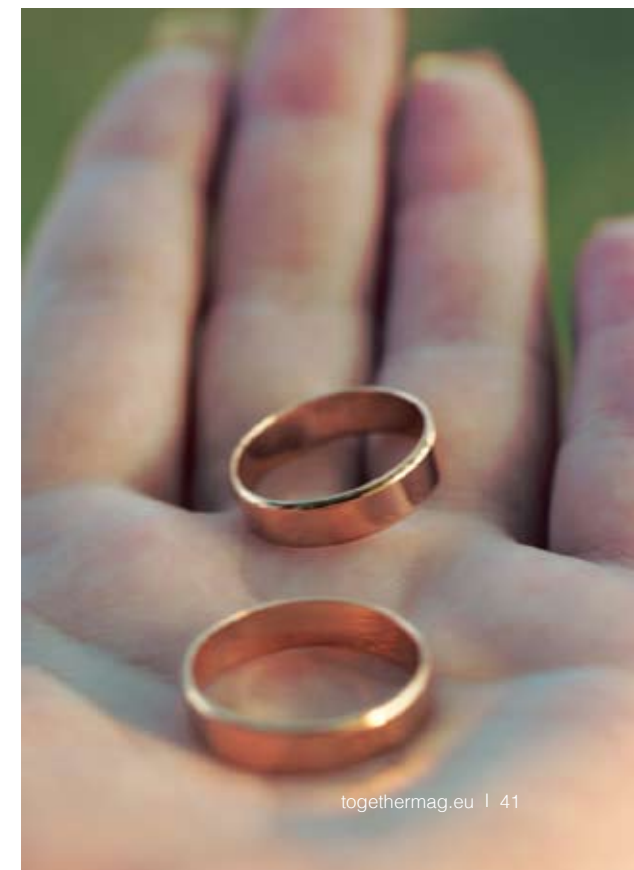
I beg to differ, Monsieur Dassault – first, I would draw your attention to Article 4 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen Liberty, which your citizens of yore had the good sense to enshrine, namely:

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

4. Liberty consists in the freedom to do everything which injures no one else; hence the exercise of the natural rights of each man has no limits except those which assure to the other members of the society the enjoyment of the same rights. These limits can only be determined by law.

And in conclusion, sir, you may well find that the legislation will come to mean the end of ignorance, the end of exclusion and the end of injustice as far as the acceptance of human relationships is concerned in your country. ●

James Drew



FOOD OF LOVE

Love doesn't grow
on trees - Joyce Cary



IT'S FOOD, STUPID

Paul Morris and **Emma Portier Davis** find themselves on opposite sides of the divide. Firstly, Emma explains why food is the greatest aphrodisiac of all...



If music be the food of love, play on."
Duke Orsino, Twelfth Night by William Shakespeare

Pfff to Shakespeare with his Bohemian notions of wooing with music. Give me oysters, fine wine (technically a foodstuff, right?) and chocolates any day of the week for the way to the heart may be thronged with singing minstrels but it's paved with nourishment for the body and soul: food.

For centuries, certain foods have been famed as aphrodisiacs not least of which oysters. And while sceptics say it's psychosomatic, recent research shows that they contain a potent cocktail of amino acids that boost sex hormones as well as high levels of zinc which aids sperm production.

Chocolate meanwhile increases serotonin – the happy hormone – and 2007 research by the University of Sussex found that couples who melted chocolate in their mouths and then kissed passionately experienced a longer lasting buzz. Sustained higher heart rates were seen in both women and men.

And if science has yet to convince you, the ultimate guide to love, the *Kama Sutra*,

devoted a whole chapter to foods that stimulate attraction. This ancient Indian text, which means a treatise on pleasure, was, after all, all about couples leading the good life.

PRIMEVAL INSTINCT

Aside from the chemical effects of food on our libido, we quite simply need food and a wooer would be wise to show his or her ability to provide it. As sex bomb Marilyn Monroe put it: "When you don't have any money, food is the problem. When you have money, it's sex."

Mercenary she may be but even Jane Austen's Elizabeth Bennet, famed for her simplicity and lofty ideals, would surely not have fallen quite so ardently for Fitzwilliam Darcy had he not owned half of Derbyshire. Even his rival Wickham was hardly a penniless busker.

One's early forays into the world of dating were probably characterised by cinema trips and a trip to a certain fast-food joint for fries and a burger if you were lucky. Many such young suitors have been passed over by an older, more affluent rival who could provide more lavish culinary treats.



“ A ROMANTIC
DINNER ALLOWS
YOU TO SHOW OFF
A BIT.



As adults, while many succumb to the charm of the artist who shuns materialism in favour of finer goals, when it comes to choosing a partner, the ability to provide goes a long way. Music may thrill the soul but it won't put shoes on your children's feet.

This primeval desire for food is core to our being. Without food to sustain us, we cannot achieve any other desires in life. In the words of Tanner in George Bernard Shaw's *Man and Superman*: "There is no love sincerer than the love of food."

THE PERFECT DATE

On to a more romantic note, savouring a fine meal is a luxury these days. Smartphones and social networking sites have all but killed the art of communication. A dinner for two is the perfect setting for lovers to enjoy a real connection without the buzz of our increasingly digital environment.

There's just something about gazing at your lover across a beautifully laid table, perhaps

The humble strawberry has hidden powers



with candles flickering while you linger over a feast, that speaks volumes in a way all the music in the world cannot. Perhaps it's just because you have a chance to talk without all that background noise.

"Eating together is hugely important. It's the whole ritual and an experience that you can share. It's also a polite and charming way to show your interest," says Belgian-based chef Alex Weston, owner of catering company LaBritannique.

"A romantic dinner allows you to show off a bit. It also gives you the chance for more intimacy and time with someone to really get to know them. Food can also be suggestive – although it shouldn't be crude – and a few drinks always helps," he adds.

Music may provide some of the trappings of romance but did it ease the heartache of the woebegone Duke Orsino in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night*? His eventual wife, the pragmatic Viola would probably have told him to tuck into the banquet and enjoy the music at the same time.

See Alex Weston's culinary suggestions for *St Valentine's* on page 90 and win a meal for two. ❶

“ THE KAMA
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DEVOTED A
WHOLE
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“
IT TUGS AT THE
HEART STRINGS,
PLUCKED BY
SOME UNKNOWN
FORCE
———”

LOVE THE MUSIC

Paul Morris agrees wholeheartedly
with the Bard: the music has it



Ole blue eyes Gottlieb collection

“ ALL EYES AND
EARS WERE ON
THE WANDERING
MINSTREL
———”



A Midsummer Night's Dream by Henry Fuseli

How can one argue with the Bard: the food of love is, of course, music. The aphrodisiac is no more than an urban myth, passed down through the centuries by peddlers of dubious food stuffs they couldn't shift at market. Take the oyster, it's nothing more than an over-rated bivalve mollusc – and slithery to boot. As for chocolates they soon melt in the mouth and are gone, like gossamer. And that's what I am on about: these aphrodisiacs have no staying power.

The effects of aphrodisiacal foods are based on the principle of 'sympathetic magic' – it has been claimed that the shape of it is key to its so-called source of power, not the substance of it. It has no substance. It's all smoke and mirrors, reminding us of the rude shapes that forced a nervous giggle in our adolescence. This hocus pocus is no match for the gentle strains of a violin or a piano played by a prodigy.

Although fish and chips might well be some folks' idea of the perfect meal and a culinary trigger for a romantic evening, it's entirely natural that on St Valentine's night couples flock to the corners of candle-lit restaurants to stick their noses in the trough and knock back copious amounts of red wine. But it doesn't start to get intimate without music playing – albeit softly – in the background. It tugs at the heart strings, plucked by some unknown force, especially when the radio or an orchestra is playing 'our song' – somewhat more romantic than 'Oooo, our favourite vegetable curry, lass'.

Offer your Valentine partner all the red wine you like but music has it over a barrel. In *Some Like It Hot* Jack Lemmon's character (disguised as Daphne the bull fiddle player) was so affected by the blindfolded orchestra's performance of a nifty rumba that he agreed to marry his millionaire dancing partner on the spot.

Songs and tunes stick in our heads and in our hearts long after a three-course meal

(even with a free grappa on the house) has made its way through the digestive system and been flushed out to sea. Whereas, music can soothe the soul of even the most savage of beasts and excite it in equal measure.

It's a powerful weapon. In courts of old young ladies and gentlemen were not drawn inexorably towards the portly chef standing at a table heaving with victuals. No, all eyes and ears were on the wandering minstrel, the mysterious troubadour with his fiddle tucked under his chin. There were times when the minstrel had barely struck up the opening chords than some young couple were booking a function room and informing their families that nuptials would have to be announced by the town crier at once.

In more recent times, women have been known to faint on hearing the dulcet tones of a Caruso, a Sinatra or even a Robbie Williams. Frank offered them a chance to come fly with him, Enrico serenaded them with *Vesti la giubba* (and no, Emma Portier Davis, that is not a pasta you can add to your list of aphrodisiacs) and Robbie... well, he sang while he was winning. Rare are the women who have had to be revived by smelling salts having come face to face with a baked Alaska.

While Rome was burning, Nero did not seek out the nearest canapé, he reached for his lyre and played a tune dedicated to the city he so loved (the fact that he may have set fire to it is neither here nor there). And Chopin did not offer his beloved George Sand a string of Polish sausages but rather took to the ivories and knocked off a sonata.

On a more serious note, in his TV series *Alan Yentob* investigated the emotional power of music. In one scene Alzheimer's cases were encouraged to move for the first time in a long time and even dance a little when played or sung music from their past, their feet tapping gently to the kind of memory that just won't go away. ❶

SPRING LOVER

| PHOTOGRAPHER
Aylen Torres

| STYLIST
Nicholas Sirot

| MAKE UP ARTIST
David Bettga
for Yves Saint Laurent
And l'Oréal professional Paris

| MODELS
Hanna:
agency:
BE model management



LEFT / Shirt **Diane von Fürstenberg** / Trousers **Christian Wijnants** / Shoes **Sam Edelman** / Bracelet **Nicoocin**





LEFT / Dress **Sonia Rykiel** / Platform shoes **Mellow Yellow**





LEFT / Top **Comptoir des cotonniers** / Shorts **Marc by Marc Jacobs** / Vest **Pinko** / HandBag **Marc by Marc Jacobs** / Watch **Nicoocin**







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by Delphine Stefens

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Located on a large lake plateau it is also famous as a place car manufacturers put their

latest models through intensive tests during the winter months. It's not uncommon to spot a few prying paparazzi out there to get a peek at the latest models and perhaps get a scoop on manufacturers' best-kept car secrets.

7 km is the length of the circuits on the municipality's frozen lakes. During your stay in bitterly cold weather, the Audi team drivers will teach you how to skid, steer, counter steer, stabilize, drift, control your skids and 'catch' the car when it does go into an uncontrolled slide. The training experience


provides you with a wide range of classic driving and safety training courses, from the Compact to the Executive Driver Pro training.

A fleet of carefully valeted and maintained training vehicles is provided by a skilled service team to guarantee a high degree of safety. And you get to try out the very latest models in the Audi range, including the Audi S5 Sportback and the Audi A8 4.2 TDI quattro.

If you take this exhilarating trip in at times awe-inspiring landscapes you will wonder if all those new driving skills will actually be useful when you get back to Belgium's icy roads. You may well attempt to send the car into a drift again just to relive the pleasure you felt during your trip. The only problem is that you will no longer have the snow walls to catch you if you over-steer.

During the trip you might need a break from the nausea of the constant sliding. Take a trek with the sledge pulled by huskies or put a dent in your carbon footprint by taking to the snowmobiles. Of course, Arjeplog is also a ski resort but there are so many more exceptional things to do than just ski.

It's not everyone's idea of a holiday but for lovers of four wheels it's an opportunity to hone your potential as a driver by improving your personal driving technique and get a kick out of it at the same time.

You can find all the information you need to book your trip by going to the Audi website and use the search box for the Audi Driving experience section. 

www.audi.com

LIFE OF LEISURE

The House of Dancing
Water. Dragone
designed this
permanent
show in Macau





on thursdays

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Franco Dragone

© Franco Dragone Entertainment Group

LIFE OF LEISURE

1952:

Franco Dragone was born in the town of Cairano in the sparsely populated province of Avellino, in southern Italy.

1959:

Family moves to La Louvière in French-speaking Belgium.

1970s:

Studied theatre at the Belgian Royal Conservatory of Mons. His early work interpreted true stories of the disadvantaged, with non-actors sharing in the shows.

1980s:

Came to Montreal, Canada, where Guy Caron, director of the National Circus School, invited him to conduct workshops with the students and teachers at his school. Asked to join Cirque du Soleil's team as creator.

1985 - 1998:

Directed almost all of Cirque du Soleil's most prestigious shows and played a significant role in developing Cirque du Soleil's distinctive merging of theatre and circus performance. Reputation grew with the production of trance-like non-traditional circus productions such as *Nouvelle Expérience* and *Saltimbanco*.

TIMELINE FRANCO DRAGONE

Directed and introduced the cutting-edge Cirque du Soleil production *Mystère* at the Treasure Island Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. *Mystère* helped to change the nature of production shows in Las Vegas. Around the world, more than 40 million people have now seen Dragone's creations. Directed Cirque du Soleil's first motion picture, *Alegría - An Enchanting Fable*.

1999:

Post Cirque du Soleil, directed the music video for Lara Fabian's song "Adagio".

2000:

Formed Dragone Entertainment Group, based in his hometown of La Louvière in Belgium.

2003:

Created a new live show, *A New Day* starring Céline Dion at Caesars Palace, Las Vegas.

2005:

His fourth Las Vegas Strip production, *Le Rêve* at the Wynn Las Vegas.

2010:

In charge of the opening ceremony for the 2010 South American Games in Medellín, Colombia, drawing on Medellín's culture, business and geography.

2010-2011:

Directed Macau-based show *The House of Dancing Water*, with over 70 artists from around the globe, including many he had worked with at Cirque du Soleil.

2012:

Awarded the doctor honoris causa degree for general merits by the University



Contortion, Cirque du Soleil

© OSA Images

of Antwerp, in recognition of his body of theatre work.

2013:

Lately, he has been tipped to stage the opening and closing ceremonies of the 2014 World Cup in Brazil... 1

The art of FRANCO DRAGONE

Federico Grandesso speaks exclusively to prolific Belgian show director Franco Dragone

MR. DRAGONE, YOU WERE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF CIRQUE DU SOLEIL FROM 1985 TO 1998 AND HAVE CREATED SO MANY AMAZING SHOWS. WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR INSPIRATION?

It all started when I was a young boy who just wanted to have fun but I did everything in such a way that I learned something and I quickly found out knowledge equals pleasure. I still like to play like a child because it's only through the eyes of a child that you get to see the world in another way – then I like to transform it and find the beauty in it.

I have always found it amazing to mix the live performance of a huge number of actors with the incredible possibilities technology can offer now, especially in terms of light and sound.

IN WHAT WAYS DO BELGIUM AND ITALY INSPIRE YOU?

Belgium gave me the possibility to add nuances to my colours – I like the sadness of Belgium, you know, the way Jacques Brel talks about the sky in Belgium in his books, for example. Another interesting element for me is a kind of modesty and humility you can find in Belgium. I love this time of the year here when the sky is very low and you feel the fog and you imagine

all manner of things, stories come out of the darkness, from the forests, and all those shadows fire the imagination.

I was born in Italy then I moved to Belgium when I was only seven years old so Italy was quickly no more than a vague memory for me. I didn't really know anything about Italy and I got to know this beautiful country (Belgium) thanks to my parents.

I learned to speak Italian by reading magazines, and I learned Italian songs from my mother and father but I didn't have the burden of its history on me – this allowed me to revisit the history of Italy in my own way. Sometimes Italians are scarred by this massive history and heavy cultural past. In the end, Italy is inside me, in my heart and in my music.

WHAT WAS THE TURNING POINT

“ I LIKE THE SADNESS OF BELGIUM, YOU KNOW ”

“ I LEARNED
ITALIAN SONGS
FROM MY
MOTHER AND
FATHER



OF YOUR LONG CAREER?

It was when I was ten years old and my father gave me an accordion as a present, or maybe when I decided to leave the traditional work I was doing and try a new adventure – that's when I left Belgium for Montreal. Then I came back and went to China. All these travel moments are turning points but if somebody asks me what is your favourite show? I always answer, “It's the next one.”

DURING YOUR CAREER YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK WITH CELINE DION. WHAT WAS THAT LIKE?

With Celine, I didn't really expect to meet an artist at such a high level – she helped me a lot because she came to my office in La Louvière and it made it easier for me to do something that would normally have taken years. So bringing her to Belgium made my job easier. I will always be grateful to her, our collaboration was fantastic. We launched a new kind of show entitled *A New Day*, which was presented at the Caesar's Palace, and it's now very popular in Las Vegas.

CAN YOU TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR FUTURE PROJECTS?

At the moment we are doing both small and big shows. For the big shows I always need large venues because I need a lot of space. To give you some idea, for my show in Macao entitled *The House of Dancing Water* I was working with 70 artists from all over the world, and the central stage had a diameter of almost 25 metres.



Les Cons, Cirque du Soleil

© Cirque du Soleil

theatres in China over the next five years, then one show in Indonesia, one theatre show in Dubai but the most urgent one, and I'm now working hard on it, will take place in Abu Dhabi in February.

I have also launched a casting call in Belgium for people who want to be in my shows and we have created an internet site. I would like to work with non-actors and normal people from the street. I come from the theatre with non-professional actors – I'm going back to my roots. ❶

“ FOR THE BIG
SHOWS I ALWAYS
NEED LARGE
VENUES



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INDONESIA: BATAM and BINTAN

Federico Grandesso offers some practical tips for visiting two very different islands

If you are tired of Bali, try the Indonesian islands of Batam and Bintan – they are two faces of the same coin, offering either a quiet luxury beach or a more vibrant night spot. They are easily reachable from Singapore by the frequent ferry boat, with a journey time of 45 minutes.

Batam is popular among Singaporean and Chinese tourists. So if you want to avoid Westerners this is the perfect spot to rub shoulders with the locals. Batam offers luxury but is still affordable. In Harbour Bay you can choose the stunning ship-shaped Pacific Hotel or the modern and comfortable Novotel. There are various shopping malls but if you want a more local flavour, smell the fine spices of Indonesia at the traditional old market which is not far from the Pacific Hotel.

If seafood's your thing, try the award-winning Golden Prawn Restaurant which was built on the waterside. But the dining options are endless in Batam because Indonesian people love to eat out – a dish of typical Nasi Goreng



Traditional Nasi goreng



or Mie Goreng with a delicious mango juice will set you back around three euros.

If you've had enough of the local fare, Restaurant Bella Italia in harbour bay offers an excellent western alternative. It boasts the only wood oven in Batam and the pizza is fantastic, but they also serve up pasta, meat and marvellous fish dishes. After a good dinner, you will be ready for Batam's exciting nightlife in the various karaoke bars, pubs and discos, again all at reasonable prices.

Leave the noise of the city behind and head for the seaside village of Nongsa, which has

some of the best beaches on the island. Kick back and enjoy the relaxing atmosphere in a typical wooden bungalow in luxurious sea resorts such as Turi Beach, Nongsa Point Marina and Nongsa Village. And if you're the golfing type, the Tamarin Santana Golf Club is the perfect spot.

On the other hand, if a very exclusive, romantic haven is what's called for then look no further than the Lagoi Resort in the northern part of Bintan Island. Bintan was conceived as the luxury alternative to Bali, and you will find the best beaches in the Riau Islands. There's plenty of choice when it comes to resorts, among them Bintan Spa Villa Beach, Club Med and Angsana. Active folks can sample the water sports: jet skiing, wind and kite surfing, snorkeling and diving.

Away from the resorts there is a beach alternative on the east coast, the isolated pearl called Trikora. You can get there by taxi or the occasional bus from Tanjung Pinang. The island's main town is the charming Tanjung Pinang, offering a taste of the fisherman's life in a paradise rich in marine life. A large section of part of town was built in traditional manner, on stilts above the water. Another important little town to discover is Tanjung Uban, with its beautiful boardwalk called "Pelantar" and its houses, hotels and restaurants perched over the sea.

To really appreciate the stunning flora of the



island, take a night mangrove tour and ride into a mesmerizing cloud of glowing fireflies. And good seafood can be found too in the village of Sebung, again with restaurants also built in the 'Kelong' style (wooden platforms above the water). Get up close and personal with Indonesian culture by exploring the traditional 'Kampung' (local villages) of Sri Bintan and get a glimpse of the daily lives of the friendly villagers.

Climate wise, the period between October to March is northern monsoon season with more rainfall and stronger winds, but the weather is generally sunny all year around. Life is still simpler and slower here and it can't fail to help you leave all that stress behind. Enjoy! 🌟

“ BINTAN WAS
CONCEIVED AS
THE LUXURY
ALTERNATIVE TO
BALI



“ THE DINING
OPTIONS ARE
ENDLESS IN
BATAM



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LIFE OF
LEISURE

SOME DAY MY PRINTS WILL COME

Colin Moors embraces a revolutionary new technology

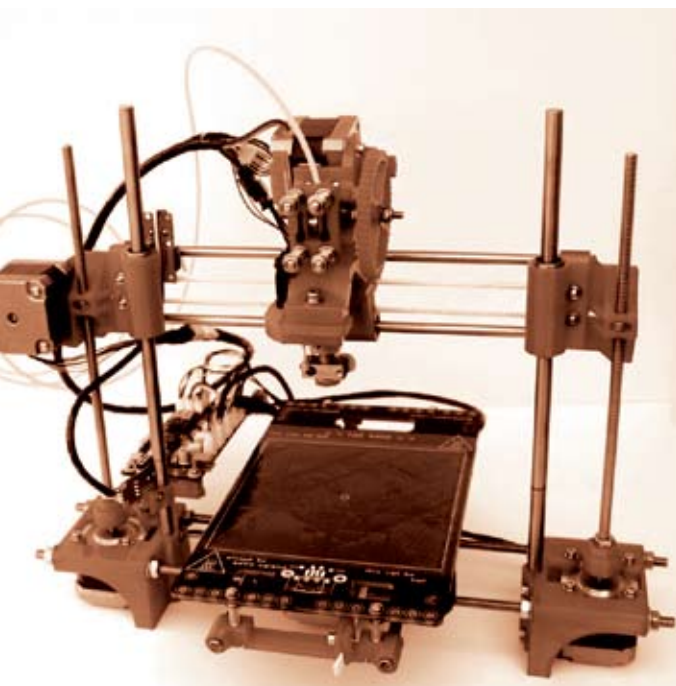
The implications of its rise in popularity may not appear obvious when taken at face value but it really could turn the entire manufacturing world upside down. Additive Manufacturing is also known as 'printing' because the process of taking a concept on a computer screen and making it a reality could be similar in execution to something as simple as printing the monthly accounts from a spreadsheet. Of course, the technology behind it is a little more complicated,



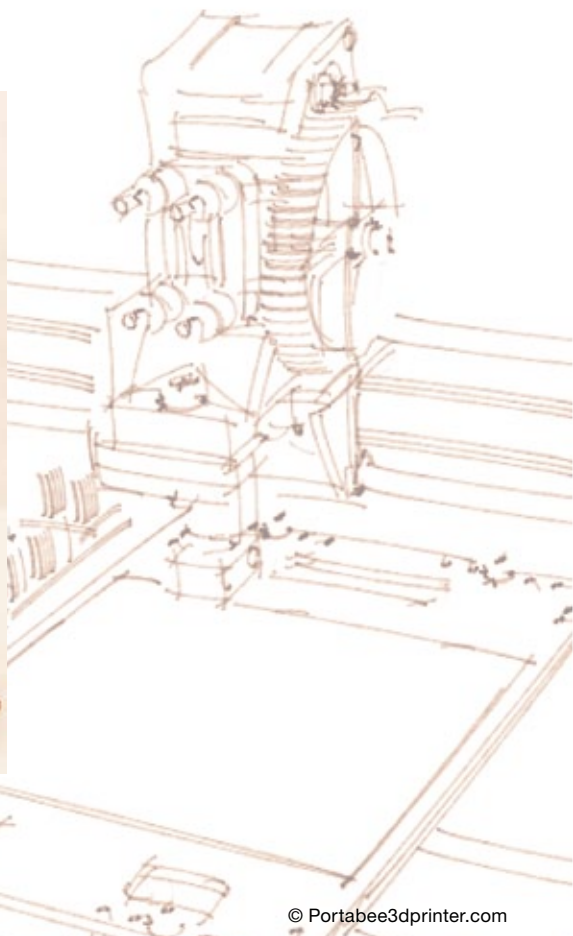
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“ SOME MORE
EXPENSIVE
MACHINES CAN
USE MULTIPLE
MATERIALS



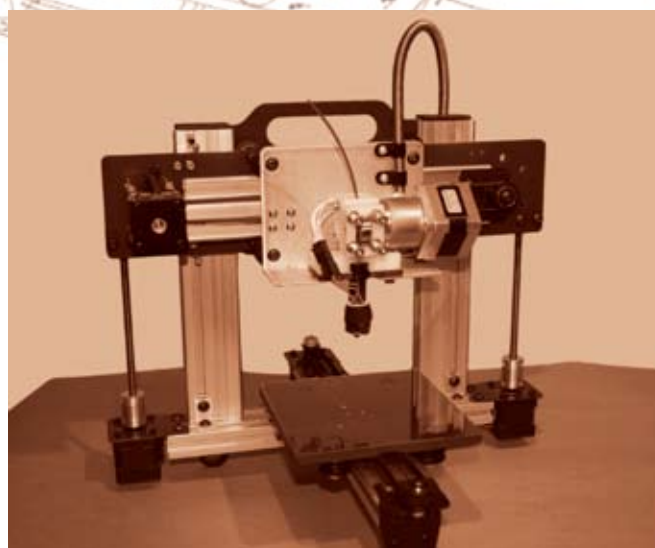
© Portabee3dprinter.com



© Portabee3dprinter.com

but for the end user, it's just a case of pressing a button and awaiting the output. The one difference is that instead of a picture of, say, a replacement gear assembly for a vacuum cleaner, you end up with the object itself. The output of these machines is not simply a model but a functional item.

The printing analogy is useful in explaining the process to non-scientists and it is surprisingly simple in execution. In much the same way as an ink-jet printer will build



© Portabee3dprinter.com

“ INFRINGEMENTS WOULD NEED TO BE FOUGHT USING PATENT LAW ”

up a picture by passing across a page thousands of times, a 3D printer will split a 3D drawing into layers and recreate them using very thin layers of material (around 0.1mm thick) which are then burned solid with a laser. The materials used can vary widely although plastics, resin and metals are the most common. Some more expensive machines can use multiple materials, creating complex functional components in a single pass.

“Surely, this is a good thing” is what most would think. They would for the most part be correct. The process can speed up manufacturing and cut costs for manufacturers. The real issue is not necessarily what it can do and for whom but the simplicity of the process. Once it becomes commonplace, it could quickly become problematic.

Any of you who bought a flat screen monitor in the 1990s would have noticed the supply-and-demand principle at work by now. An LCD display costing €15,000 in 1996 could be replaced today by something five times bigger for less than a tenth of the price. 3D printers have come down in price on a similarly exponential level and in less time. The Portabee (portabee3dprinter.com) is currently on sale for around \$500 retail, a significant saving compared to the slightly less economical 20 or 30 thousand dollars the average mid-range 3D machine cost around three years ago.

With low-end machines available for less than the price of a decent laptop, making yourself a bird table, a coffee jug or a new

centre console for your car could be as simple as loading the machine with raw materials and downloading a 3D diagram from the internet. This last part may seem fairly innocuous, simply downloading a plan of an object but it's this that has got lawyers and manufacturers hot under the collar.

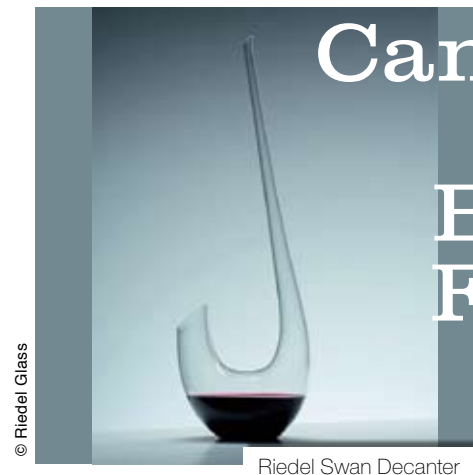
Industry as a whole is slow to react to emerging technology as we have seen in the efforts of the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA) and the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) in their efforts to prevent the illegal copy, downloading and distribution of music and films. If you can't find illegal music and video files on the internet, you probably aren't really trying, as this method of discovering new music is like the old-time record shops used to be, only free. At odds with their failure to embrace technology until it was too late, the RIAA and MPAA find themselves fighting against what is now a social norm.

The problem, or advantage, with 3D printing is that it is going to be very difficult to legislate against without a raft of new laws. Copyright law would be brought to bear on those copying films and music, whereas 3D printing infringements would need to be fought using patent law. Copyright usually lasts for the life of the work's author plus 70 years (US and Belgium) whereas patents only last for 20 years. This means that Lego, Airfix many other childhood favourites could all be legally copied. Worse still for manufacturers, patents usually only apply to completed objects or machines, so if you wanted to make that centre console for your car you could technically do so without fear of prosecution. There's a new genie about to emerge from the bottle and industry is yet again lagging behind the bedroom hobbyists in embracing the next big thing. ❶



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www.gmt-chronographs.com



© Riedel Glass

Riedel Swan Decanter

Can you pass me your BUTLER'S FRIEND?

Alex Hewetson risks life and limb on behalf of Together with various sharp objects

OPEN SESAME

Let's start with getting at the stuff, via a plastic or high-class natural cork (unless you unscrew it, and that is another chapter). The important thing, what kind of corkscrew? First and foremost the classics, which have two kinds of snake (the screwy part of the device that bites into the cork) that are either rounded or machined. Avoid the machined snake as it has very sharp edges, which are OK for plastic or compound corks, but murder, my dear, for older and more delicate 'bouchons'. I would



© Haragayato/wikipedia

Sommelier knife

always go for a waiter's corkscrew, which has a little blade for taking off the top of the capsule, a two-stage lever and a rounded snake that doesn't slice. Alternatively, you might try a classic Screwpull, which is very gentle on older corks. Ruining a cork because of the screw is a crying shame, especially if you have just laid out €800 for a bottle of Chateau Margaux 1982.

“ TRY A
CLASSIC
SCREWPULL,
WHICH IS VERY
GENTLE ON
OLDER CORKS

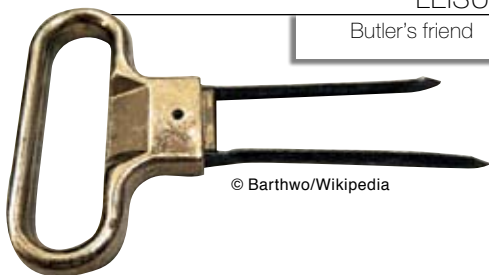


If these still aren't your cup of tea, then might I suggest the dual prong, known in the trade as the butler's friend. It has two flat parallel prongs that can remove the cork without a blemish. If you can get the capsule off without any damage, you can of course polish the wine off, refill the bottle with something vastly inferior, then replace cork and capsule without anyone being the wiser. Butlers were fond of this trick, apparently, hence the nickname.

LIFE OF LEISURE

Butler's friend

© Barthwo/Wikipedia



ROCK-A-BYE BABY

Some people like putting the bottle in cradles that tilt it so that the sediment stays away from the top, and these come in all shapes and sizes, from artisan baskets to high-tech bits of stainless steel that resemble a NASA launch site. The best that I ever saw was one that works with a crank and turn by turn pours the wine, thus avoiding any muck getting into the glass of an honoured guest. I recently saw one on e-bay going for \$210, so they aren't cheap. Another accessory for pouring is the ring that prevents wine from dripping and fits around the bottle neck. These are useful and can prevent embarrassing moments... imagine you have just been introduced to your better half's parents, poured them a glass of something very impressive, then left a horrendous red stain on their cream tablecloth. Not good.

FLAT WIDE BOTTOM

Let's forget the 'decant or not' debate and assume you want to 'wow' people with a beautiful vessel to serve the wine. I always feel that decanters should be fairly heavy and wide bottomed, like a ship's decanter, which was designed to avoid the port going over in a storm. There are of course some wonderful creations, Riedel have a swan-neck, which is a jug with a long, tapering, narrow pipe, supremely elegant, but meant that my friend serving the wine had to be in Dieppe while we were drinking it in Dover. Tall narrow decanters are lovely, but can be a bit unstable. There are of course flasks and jugs that some prefer, which can be very graceful.



© candescent/Flickr

Wine decanter

You might point out that I have omitted glasses and wine storage, but to me these are not accessories so much as the main items of clothing, without which the various accoutrements I have discussed would be like standing naked wearing a necklace, earrings and bangles. Delightful, perhaps, but what would their purpose be? ●

“ ALMOST
AS POPULAR
AS WINE ITSELF,
WINE ACCESSORIES
ESSENTIALLY
FALL INTO THREE
CATEGORIES:

- THINGS TO GET
AT THE WINE
- THINGS TO POUR IT
- THINGS TO SERVE IT

”



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Britxos café

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(Opulent and an aphrodisiac)

SAFFRON RISOTTO

(Bright colours with a little bit
of spice but not too much)

LOBSTER OR CRAB

*Served with mayonnaise and
a herb salad*
(A dish to linger over and
savour rather than wolfing down)

or

DUCK CONFIT

Served with a cherry sauce and herb salad
(Everybody likes duck after all)

TRIPLE CHOCOLATE MOUSSE

*White chocolate, milk chocolate, and a dark
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really)

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tea or as a nibble whenever the fancy takes
you - to eat in, take away or offer as a tasty
gift.

Send an email to paul@togethermedia.eu
with the message 'Food for love!' 📧



© ACM Photography

Britxos' oyster tartare

What's on INTERNATIONAL

A selection of events beyond Belgium's borders
chosen by **Emma Portier Davis**

ALLEN STONE

Hippy songster Allen
Stone, who hails from
Washington and started
out singing in his father's
church, will be treating
fans to a selection of his
soul influenced tracks at
La Flèche d'Or in Paris.

March 11.

Tickets €18.80.

www.livenation.fr

© Jason Tang

THE KILLERS

American rock
band The Killers
will be
performing hits
from their latest
album *Battle
Born* at the
Zénith de Paris
on **March 12.**

Tickets from
€48.80.

www.livenation.fr

© Wyatt Boswell

THE DARKNESS

British rock band The
Darkness will be performing
at *Stockholm's Tyrol* on
February 17, showcasing
hits from their third album
Hot Cakes. Tickets SEK350.

www.livenation.se

© Live Nation

**ICE HOCKEY:
LA COUPE DE FRANCE**

Ice hockey teams Les Ducs
d'Angers and Les Diablos
Rouges de Briançon will be
fighting it out for La Coupe de
France, the country's premier
cup competition, on **February
17** at *Bercy*. Tickets from €24.

www.bercy.fr

© Les Ducs d'Angers

LA BOHÈME

The Royal Opera House
in London stages
Puccini's tragic opera
La Bohème which tells
the tale of the penniless
poet Rodolfo's love for
terminally sick
seamstress Mimi.

February 16-March 12.

Tickets from 142
sterling.

www.roh.org.uk

© Johan Persson; ROH 2009

LIVING COLOUR

New Yorkers Living
Colour, famed for hit
tracks *Cult of
Personality* and *Love
Rears Its Ugly Head*,
will be performing
at Amsterdam's
Melkweg on March 11
as part of their global 25th
anniversary tour. Tickets €25.

www.melkweg.nl

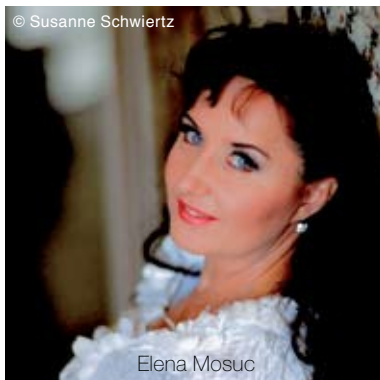
© Living Colour



What's on BELGIUM

A selection of events in Belgium,
chosen by **Emma Portier Davis**

© Susanne Schwertz



Elena Mosuc

LUCREZIA BORGIA

The infamous, intriguing poisoner inspires both fascination and rejection from the men she attracts. *Cirque Royal*. Until **8 March**. Ticket info www.lamonnaie.be.

AMY MACDONALD

Scottish singer-songwriter performing works from her new album *Life In A Beautiful Light*. AB main hall. **26 February**. Tickets €35.00.



© Copyright LNE Press

DISNEY ON ICE

See London with Peter Pan and Wendy, Hawaii with Lilo & Stitch and a host of other destinations with favourite Disney characters in this musical ice dance spectacular on **February 8-12** at *Antwerp's Sportpaleis* and **February 13-17** at *Forest National*. Tickets from €29.

www.gracialive.be

Le Bebe by OgnianZekoff



3D printing by Olivier de Cayron



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© Ron Rutten

FAULTY TOWERS THE DINING EXPERIENCE

Tribute to *Fawlty Towers* starts as the audience waits to be seated then hurtles along for two hours of fully immersive, highly improvised and site-specific comedy theatre. With only a third of the show scripted, everything stays fresh as Basil, Sybil and Manuel serve up madcap mayhem and a three-course meal – with the audience playing the part of their restaurant diners. Just don't mention the war! Internationally acclaimed by audiences and critics alike. *Stadsschouwburg Antwerp*. **February 28 to March 2**.

Tickets €99,00

INKEYE EXHIBITION

Artists Demaone and Boho share their love for urban imaginary through calligraffiti, photography and writing. Until **6 March**



www.inkeye.be

FERIA MUSICA SINUÉ

Five acrobats represent five facets of a little boy curious about growing but afraid of the unknown. *Halles de Schaerbeek*.

Ticket info www.feriamusica.org.

JAZZ MASTER SESSION

Michael Blass on piano, Baert De Nolf on double bass, Bruno Castellucci on the drums in the cosy atmosphere of the *Sounds Jazz Club in Ixelles*. **25 February**. Sounds. Ticket info: see website

www.soundsjazzclub.be



© BOZAR

"NOON CONCERTS" 2012-2013

Violinist Noé Inui and piano Itzhak Solsky perform Saint-Saëns, Chopin and Brahms in these popular lunchtime concerts. **30 February**. Tickets €8,00, €4,00 under 26. *BOZAR*.

www.bozar.be

“ THE GROUP
HAS RAISED
BETWEEN €20,000
AND €45,000
ANNUALLY
— ”



© mireyafotos/Flickr

Expats for UNICEF

A bunch of dedicated expats are raising both money and awareness for a very good cause

Many people, naturally, have a soft spot for UNICEF as a worldwide charity and in Belgium it's no different. But there is a special group working in conjunction with the organization to increase awareness among the influential expat community in Brussels, although it's by no means restricted to expats. Beatriz Irala heads up the committee. “We organize more than two events per month on average, ranging from pub quizzes, wine tastings, screenings, parties, art exhibitions, dance classes, brunches, etc. It's very interesting to ‘work’ with many people from different origins and backgrounds, all of whom are there because they believe in the cause and really, really want to be there.”

Founded in April 2004, the group has raised between €20,000 and €45,000 annually. Expats-for-UNICEF's accounts belong to a chapter of the UNICEF Belgium financial account, which means that all the money raised by the Expats-for-UNICEF appears directly on the UNICEF Belgium accounts (under the volunteers' chapter). UNICEF Belgium is committed to sending at least

75% of the total amount raised to Children Rights programmes in the field and in Belgium. According to the last annual reports, around 80% of the money raised has been sent to the field or to projects in Belgium.

“Most people in the committee work full-time and even if they are very motivated to support UNICEF, for me it's very important that everyone coming to the committee spends the time volunteering in a meaningful way. I try as much as I can to encourage people to get involved in events they like very much and that they take ownership of these projects.”

The group meets once a month to discuss ongoing events and brainstorm new ideas. If you would like to volunteer or participate in events, send an email to expats@unicef.be. Meanwhile, Beatriz is looking forward to the next twelve months. “Eight years on, I'm still there and I love it.”

Check out the group's page on Facebook.
UNICEF in Belgium: www.unicef.be



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1 Coaching Tip to Boost Self-Confidence for your work and/or your personal life.

By Florence Blaimont, creator of HERO Program, self Confidence Program on web

✓ **Coaching tip: Know exactly what you want!**

Lots of my clients know exactly what they don't want in their life and have a difficulty in knowing what they really want. They don't want to have a job like this or to experiment that feeling, to meet this kind of person or to have that kind of life... But, it's important for you to know exactly what you want and to put words on it. Your brain is like a gps. When you sit down in your car and you start your trip, you type the destination in your gps and it's extremely specific: country, province, town, street, and even, the house number. For your life and business goals, it works the same way: determine exactly what you want. Lots of people feared being too picky when expressing specific goals, they were scared that « if I'm too detailed, I'll closed some doors or I'll be too demanding ». It's better to begin by being very specific and perhaps changing your goal after, when you will have moved forward. Don't forget that: you can change your mind and adapt yours goals.

✓ **Flo's Practice:** Put your personal and business goals in writing! If you know what you don't want, start by writing that. By writing what you don't want, you already clarify what you want and are in the good direction to be specific. After that, find the contrary! If you don't want a boring job, what's the contrary for you? Is it a fascinating job? And what does a fascinating job mean to you? Determine your criteria by being as specific as a gps: what, how many, how, when... My advice: to keep a little booklet with your personal and business goals that follow you each year.

«When you are confident in your value and capacities, life is easier and things that you need to do seem more feasible. You advance and take your life in hands»

says Florence Blaimont, coach, specialized in increasing self-confidence.

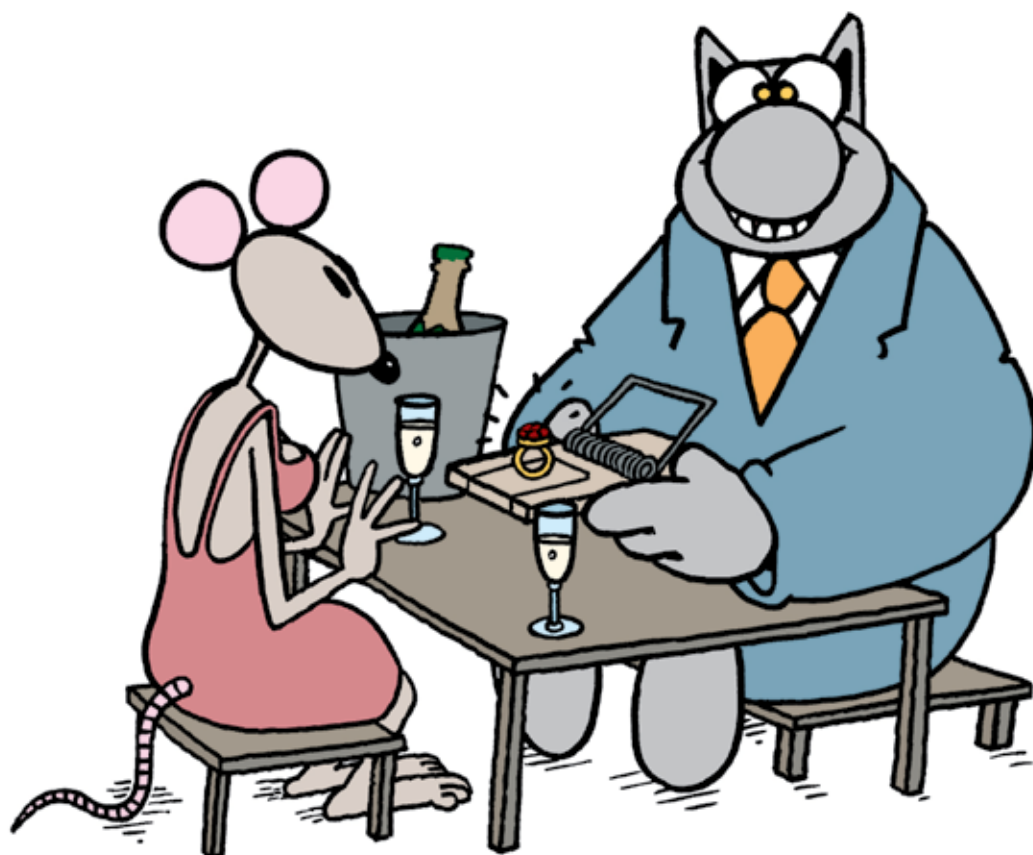
Year after year, she noticed that 99% while her clients said their objective was a career change, relationship improvement or bettering of their charisma, they actually just wanted to be confident in what they are (identity), do (capacity, attitude) and they say (communication).

Based on that, Florence decided to set up a complete coaching program:
HERO Program is a web program accessible to everyone.

More information:
0497 556 506
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LE CHAT by Philippe Geluck



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