

Together

magazine

PASSION FOR FASHION

DO LOOK NOW

Check out our report from the Venice Film Festival 2009 – *Together* talks to George Clooney and lands an exclusive interview with Oliver Stone

COOL COLUMNISTS

Gerald Loftus –
Gerald's Gaze
Geoff Meade –
Chatback

CHIC COMPETITION

Capture your best side – three professional shoots with renowned photographer Michael Chia to be won

LAST WORD IN LEATHER

Belgium celebrates 180 years of Delvaux





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EDITORIAL

Fashion with style

If you will bear with me for a short while, I believe you'll see that there is in fact far more to the subject of 'fashion' than meets the eye – and that clothes are but one aspect of the trappings of 'style'.

Firstly, have you seen where we've been? The *Together* team was at the 66th edition of the Venice Film Festival earlier in September, where our very own 'star man', Federico Grandesso, had the chance to chat with **George Clooney**. But that's not all – in a **Belgian exclusive**, FG had the chance to talk with renowned director Oliver Stone, which is the jewel in the crown of our eight-page special report. In fact, there was too much to fit in one feature, so be sure to check the exciting new videos from Venice and elsewhere, freshly uploaded to www.together-magazine.eu by Armand Richelet-Kleinberg. How chic is that?

Of course, we do have all the sartorial specialties that you would expect – Kimberley Lovato celebrates the 180th anniversary of Belgian leather legend **Delvaux**, Emma-Portier Davis talks to 'happiness guru' **Nick Baylis** about 'happy spending', Federico's been a busy boy elsewhere, too, chatting with Etterbeek's Mer du Nord CEO **Fabrice Duchêne**, and Josephine Overeem takes time out with Flemish ready-to-wear legend **Dirk Perquy**.

Elsewhere, Daniele Dosi explores the '**Fashion Rooms**' in a prestigious Brussels hotel, Andy Carling selects ten films, old and new, that simply define cool, Graham Reid examines the **financial investment 'fads'** that are best approached with caution, and Cillian Donnelly takes an intriguing look at accessories that make an **impact in the world of politics**.

On a more serious note, Morgan Browne relates the efforts of Burmese photographer **Zaw Min Yu's** to assist the stricken people of his homeland

following the devastation wrought by Cyclone Nagris in 2008 while, meantime, our columnist Gerald Loftus (**Gerald's Gaze**) returns with his thoughts on the joys of old-fashioned 'time to oneself', while celebrated Brussels commentator Geoff Meade makes his *Together* debut with the first in a new series of wry looks at expat life, **Chatback**. Welcome aboard, Geoff.

Culture lovers will enjoy our selection of images from the upcoming **Brussels Accessible Art Fair** in **For Art's Sake**, and what of your own 'look'? Fancy the chance to present yourself to the world, and your loved ones, exactly how you want to be seen and remembered? Our co-editor James Drew paid a visit to renowned Brussels photographic artist **Michael Chia** for exactly that purpose, namely a professional photo-shoot in which our man got the chance to 'strike a pose'. And didn't he just love it? You can see the results for yourself – and why not take the opportunity to enter our competition offering similar modelling sessions for three lucky readers?

A thought to finish – as the former editor of *Vogue*, Edna Woolman Chase, once famously declared: "Fashion can be bought. Style one must possess." I rest my case – you hold both in your hands with our latest edition. I thank you. ☺



David Mc Gowan
Publisher

© Stéphanie Cornfield



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Seeing is believing

WRITER: ARMAND RICHELET-KLEINBERG

Our 'video star' has been very busy over summer – feast your eyes on his latest online treats.



COSTA LUMINOSA – COSTA PACIFICA

Costa Luminosa and *Costa Pacifica*, the latest additions to the Costa Croisières fleet, were launched simultaneously on 5th June in Genoa, Italy. *Together* provides a behind-the-scenes look at the ceremony and a visit aboard the *Costa Pacifica*, where we meet **Noa** (Achinoam Nini), Israel's leading international concert and recording artist and Costa Croisières Benelux Director **Patrick J. Pourbaix**.

SAINT-TROPEZ: 'BELGIAN WEEK'

Saint-Tropez, the jet-set summer capital, dedicates the 20th, 21st and 22nd July every year to 'Saint-Tropez Belgian Week' [*I know we're known as les petits Belges in France, but isn't that a bit of a short week? – Ed.*] *Together*, along with VIP Offices (www.vipoffices.com) takes you there. Move with the hot dancers in VIP ROOM, or why not join us on MaTuVu Beach, with a glass of rosé champagne, naturally.

PAVANNE OBJECT II

As seen in Avignon, *Pavanne Object II* is a Belgian contemporary dance show, that's also heading for Charleroi in November). Combining artistic violence and sensuality, its inspiration was an early work of Maurice Ravel, *Pavane pour une infante défunte*.

RTBF DJ EXPERIENCE

Tour & Taxis bubbled over one late-summer evening, when 10,000 people came together for the fourth edition of RTBF's DJ Experience. And



the surprise of the evening? The exceptional DJ talents of Walloon Government Vice-President **Michel Daerden**!

BIOThERM: SKIN VIVO

Together reveals how to look ten years younger in just four weeks, with Skin Vivo, Biotherm's latest anti-aging innovation. Revitalize your skin!

LIONS OF LA MOSTRA

The Venice Film Festival had a number of international films in competition for 'Les Lions', which are awarded to the best film, directors and actors. *Together* met up with the stars and director of one of the hottest movies in the competition, *GirlLikeMe* (2009) – director **Rowland Jobson**, actress **Zoe Webster** and producers **Victoria Wood** and **Georgia Bourke**.

CHRISTIAN AUDIGIER

On 3rd September, French fashion tycoon Christian Audigier made his mark with the Paris launch of his new Ed Hardy range. Enjoy his evening with him and the stars in VIP ROOM!

VENICE FILM FESTIVAL 2009

From 2nd to 12th September, *Together* was in town for the 66th Venice Film Festival – but we've already told you that, right? Anyway, here's your chance to get a little closer to **George Clooney** and **Matt Damon** with your favourite expats' leisure magazine! And there's plenty more stars besides...

To check out these and other videos, go to www.together-magazine.eu/videos.shtml

BIOThERM

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INNOVATION
8 PATENTS

Michael Chia: Picture perfect

WRITER: JAMES DREW

By his own admission, one half of our editors' partnership, James Drew, is not particularly photogenic – what better subject, then, for Brussels-based photographic artist Michael Chia to work a little magic with? Read on – and take your chance to win one of three professional photoshoots with MC himself.

With some people, from the get-go, you just know you're in the hands of an artist. The real deal – someone who cares, passionately, about what he does. And that's Michael Chia for you – at 44, he has spent the past 20 years in sunny Brussels, building business, after moving away from his home in Singapore in the late 1980s, to share his vision with the world.

BACK TOGETHER

In fact, Michael is no stranger to the pages of *Together* - as far back as our edition #7 (March-April 2008), our writer **Hélène Noël**, who tragically passed away in June 2008, interviewed M. Chia about his then-recent victory at the Brussels

Hotel Silken-Berlaymont Photoplate Award, which he had won with his photo collection *Happy Rain* – check out the original article at www.together-magazine.eu.

But enough of the past – it was time to put myself in his capable hands, to see if I actually could be made to look good in photos. I won't pass comment on my own shot, which adorns these very pages along with far more beautiful people, as you can see, but will instead leave that up to readers to decide. No answers on a postcard, thanks...

The pleasantly airy CreatifImage studio, which is to be found just off Avenue Louise was, to be fair, pretty much as I expected – very arty, easy to relax in, with a splendid terrace for the post-photoshoot smoke and glass of vino. Pretty much a summation of Michael's approach to his work, as he explained to me: "Photography is now very accessible. To the extent that anyone who can now buy a digital camera, can now also call themselves 'a photographer'. A snapshot is now called a photograph. The days of going to a photography studio for a real photoshoot is perceived as being something reserved solely for the rich, famous, beautiful or glamorous. Not many people now appreciate the true value of portrait photography as an art form. But why not? It is art, because art comes from the imagination, imagination needs creativity and creativity needs real life experience. I make life my art."



1. JD

2. Petra Jordan:
Singer/songwriter



IN THE FRAME

And what of those who are adamant that 'I don't need a photographer because I just bought a camera!' Michael is similarly adamant in return: "You are not hiring a camera. You are working with an artist who does not use the camera in 'auto' mode. Just as a painter paints a portrait, I use a camera to 'paint' or capture my clients' personality."

Well, that is certainly telling me – better do as the artist orders, what do you think? In fact, 'ordering' is not Michael's style - depending on what you want your photoshoot for (for myself, it was for a mixture of professional purposes and a little bit of not-so-innocent fun), the artist is only too happy to help you select a costume from your own wardrobe that he feels both sums up your look and personality best, but the final decision is yours, naturally.

TIME TO SHOOT

And so my own shoot began – ever the vain one, I had opted for a very pleasant Scabal suit (keeping my other sponsors happy there, www.scabal.com), with simple white shirt, 007 cufflinks. The only other props I brought along were

cigarettes – but Michael, ever inventive, had it in his mind that garish sunglasses would work a treat with such formal attire. He wasn't wrong, either...

And thus, 200 shots flew by – Michael was kind enough to tell me that I was a pleasure to shoot and, to be fair, I did enjoy the 'acting' side of things, as emoting for camera is not something I get a chance to do that often.

As Michael told me: "My role as photographer is to explore my clients' lives. Maybe do a role play. I talk to them, tease them, shout and at times even insult them, to get their true self onto an shot. I try to ooze every bit of their inner self that they rarely show to others, and capture it. Most of my clients are exhausted after a shooting session with me!"

**'MY ROLE AS
PHOTOGRAPHER
IS TO EXPLORE
MY CLIENTS'
LIVES'**



1. Darinka & Henry Varga
2. Aidan Harte
3. Luisa Castellanos: Flamenco dancer
4. Cindy Gabilla

And, as our selection of other subjects shows, Michael is entirely at ease with elegant nude photography and family portraits – but what is his client base? "Almost all are non-Belgian, in fact, and that includes both corporate and private clients. Maybe it's because they feel more comfortable working with a foreigner. To be fair, word of mouth helps a lot too."

Well, let's see what *Together* can do – what will our lucky competition winners get for their time and effort? Well, in addition to the experience of being pampered and flattered by a pro snapper, you are given your selection of images (normally around 200 per disc), of which you select two. These will then be professionally printed to your satisfaction at approximately A4 size, with two lo-res digital files of the selected images provided, to be used for your own internet/digital purposes.

HOW TO WIN

Many thanks to Michael for his time and skill – feel like being in the frame yourself? All you have to do is send us an email, with **Michael Chia Competition** in the subject line, to info@together.eu with your full name, address and daytime phone number. Three winners will be picked at random from all entries, and that's all there is to it. Deadline is 1st November – the very best of luck! 🍀

www.michaelchia.eu
www.michaelchia.com
www.creatifimage.be

Competition organized under the supervision of a bailiff.
 Full rules available on request.
 Organizer: Together Magazine, Boulevard Saint-Michel 47,
 1040 Brussels.

Running the show

WRITER: FEDERICO GRANDESSO

From the fastest man on Earth to a band that's back in the limelight – our regular selection of stars.

USAIN BOLT

Record-breaking athlete Usain Bolt was in Roi Baudouin Stadium on 4th September, taking part in the Memorial Van Damme. Bolt ran only in the 200 metres race, but still managed to beat Tyson Gay's 19.79 seconds record time, arriving in just 19.57 secs. The Jamaican champion also took time to visit shops in Brussels, and happily took time out to sign autographs.



JADRANKA KOSOR

Croatia's new Prime Minister, Jadranka Kosor, the first woman to head the country's government, met with EU officials in Brussels on 23rd July for her first trip abroad since winning the election. She was in Belgium's capital to discuss possible solutions to the Croatia-Slovenia maritime border dispute with the European Commission – following strong diplomatic efforts, Commission President José Manuel Barroso said that Croatia and Slovenia must resolve the dispute "at a bilateral level".



EROS RAMAZZOTTI

Italian music star Eros Ramazzotti will be in Brussels for a concert on 30th and 31st October at Forest Nationale – with more than 50 million albums sold over 25 years, Ramazzotti is hugely popular worldwide, thanks also in no small part to his collaborations with artists such as Tina Turner, Luciano Pavarotti and Joe Cocker.



SKUNK ANANSIE

Skunk Anansie will be appearing in Brussels on 9th October to present their new album, *Smashes and Trashes* – the concert, which will take place in Ancienne Belgique, mark's the band's return to performing following an eight-year break. Lead singer Skin explains the reasons for the 'reformation': "Basically, we have never done a greatest hits album. We have been bugged to do it for ages and ages...but only now does everyone have the time and actually want to do it. It will have new songs on it, as well as some amazing remixes from rock and rave to dubstep – it's all very exciting."



“There’s never a new fashion but it’s old.”

– **Geoffrey Chaucer (1342-1400)**

“What a deformed thief this fashion is.”

– **William Shakespeare (1564-1616), *Much Ado About Nothing***

“Fashion is a form of ugliness so intolerable that we have to alter it every six months.”

– **Oscar Wilde (1854-1900)**

“A fashion is nothing but an induced epidemic.”

– **George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950)**

“I cannot and will not cut my conscience to fit this year’s fashions.”

– **Lillian Hellman (1905-1984), letter to Committee on Un-American Activities of the House of Representatives, 19th May, 1952**

PASSION
FOR FASHION

DELVAUX: IN A CLASS OF ITS OWN

WRITER: KIMBERLEY LOVATO

When Charles Delvaux began displaying his handmade travel trunks in the window of his Brussels studio in 1829, he could not have imagined, 180 years later, that his name would be synonymous with elegant Belgian accessories.

While other marques may slip off the tongue more easily today, Delvaux prevails in a world where the word style has not been diluted, and where true luxury is personal. From furniture and upholstery to the celebrated handbags, Delvaux's Exclusive Services offers customization of existing pieces or creation from scratch. Whatever the choice, clients are guaranteed a tradition of hand-craftsmanship and heirloom quality originals that have been the hallmark of Delvaux for nearly two centuries.

'FROM A TO Z'

"Everything depends on the demand," says Anne Dubuisson, head of the Exclusive Services department. "From A to Z, we do it." The sky's the limit, it seems, and Dubuisson rattles off the possibilities – design the inside of a bag, insert pockets for an iPhone, MP3, BlackBerry, or battery

pack. Her list goes on – watchcases, agendas, bags, belts, cigar boxes, document cases, and wallets. Clients can also recreate retro models and select the color and grain of the leather.

"Certain clients even choose their own exclusive leather that we save just for them so they can add complementary items to their collection in the future," says Dubuisson. Lead-time ranges from two weeks to four months and costs from 20€ for stamping initials to an add-on of infinite zeros, depending on the demand. Clients are mostly individual Delvaux loyalists but corporate clients recognize the Delvaux name too, creating personalized gifts like USB key chains and business card holders with the company logo. Delvaux also creates prestigious gifts, like briefcases, agendas, and desktop items that are offered to VIP customers.

'CERTAIN CLIENTS EVEN CHOOSE THEIR OWN EXCLUSIVE LEATHER THAT WE SAVE JUST FOR THEM SO THEY CAN ADD COMPLEMENTARY ITEMS TO THEIR COLLECTION IN THE FUTURE'



Delvaux wine holder
Comme Chez Soi



Delvaux Brilliant Bag

QUALITY, NOT 'GADGETRY'

"Exclusive Services clients are those who appreciate quality to quantity, and are looking for high-value products rather than gadgets," explains Dubuisson. Though the company's status is based on ancient traditions, Delvaux continually seeks modern impetus for the brand, a task realized at the company's creative think tank, Studio Delvaux, where outside personalities are invited to create pieces for the brand. Photographer and iconic model Hannalore Knuts and avant-garde designer Bruno Pieters have both designed for Delvaux. The next invitee will be Natalia Brilli, a Belgian known for her leather designs. From travel trunks, to the oldest luxury leather goods company in the world, and custom and modern designer, who else can transcend 180-years and still be relevant? It's the very definition of a classic, and why Delvaux remains in a class of its own.

INTERVIEW EXPRESS

A comprehensive Delvaux exhibition opened on 17 September at the MoMu Fashion Museum in Antwerp. Museum Director Kaat Debo sits down with *Together* to brag.

Together: What's been the biggest challenge?

Kaat Debo: *This is the first time we have dedicated an exhibition to accessories. How to display them in an appealing and interesting way was one of the main challenges for our team.*

What can visitors expect to see and learn from the exhibition?

The exhibition tells the story of the brand and how it relates to the history of the accessory. The changes in designs over the years were heavily influenced by the way transportation evolved and you can clearly trace these changes in the designs. Another important part of the exhibition focuses on the many highly skilled artisans who have worked at Delvaux.

What will visitors be surprised to learn about Delvaux?

They will be pleasantly surprised by the craftsmanship of this company, which is extremely rich. ☺

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POMELLATO



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ASSISTANT PHOTOGRAPHER : HARRY FAYT

A man with short brown hair and light blue eyes is lying down, looking towards the camera. He is wearing a white pullover with a black and red striped tie, a grey jacket, and a black watch with a silver face. The background is dark and textured.

Pullover:
TOMMY
Jacket:
LES HOMMES
Pants:
DIESEL
Watch:
BELL & ROSS

A man with short brown hair and light blue eyes is sitting up, looking directly at the camera. He is wearing a grey suit jacket over a yellow shirt and a patterned tie. He is holding a pair of black binoculars in his right hand. He is also wearing a silver watch with a brown leather strap. The background is a textured, brownish surface.

Suit:
LES HOMMES
Watch:
CALVIN KLEIN
Shirt and Tie:
GENTILUOMO
Binoculars:
SWAROVSKI

Shirt:
ICEBERG
Belt:
OLIVIER STRELLI
Scarf:
DIESEL



Cardigan:
HUGO BOSS
Vest:
FILIPPA K
Pants:
ICEBERG



Shirt:
LES HOMMES
Pullover:
HUGO BOSS
Jeans:
MARITHÉ+FRANÇOIS GIRBAUD
Shoes:
BASKET PUMA BY MIHARAYASHIRO
Belt:
LOUIS VUITTON
Watch and Cufflinks:
DYRBERG/KERN



Shirt:
GENTI
Trousers:
FILIPPA K
Belt:
HUGO BOSS
Watch:
CALVIN KLEIN
Shoes:
SACHA
Tie:
CHANEL



PHOTOGRAPHE ERCAN
MANNEQUIN JONATHAN ROBERT @
DOMINIQUE MODELS

FOR WEBSITE ADDRESSES OF ALL
FEATURED BRANDS, TURN TO PAGE 98



MODAN IS WEARING:

Glasses: LAFONT
Shirt and tie: HACKETT
Jacket: HACKETT
Silver comb: TIFFANY & CO
Watch: CHAUMET
Jeans and belt: DIESEL
Shoes: ASTER



ILIR IS WEARING:

Jacket and pullover: HACKETT
Gloves: NAPAPIJRI BOY
Shirt and tie: HACKETT
Belt: LOUIS VUITTON
Jeans: DIESEL
Scarf: HACKETT
Watch: CHAUMET

PHOTOGRAPHER ERCAN DEDEOGLU @ DOMINIQUE
MODELS, STYLIST AND MAKE-UP ASIL GNOUD
@ DOMINIQUE MODELS
MODELS MODAN DASSY & ILIR CELILI @ MINISTAR

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INTERVIEW

Maasmechelen Village: The fine art of shopping

WRITER: JAMES DREW



Frank Blanchette, group retail and marketing director for Value Retail, was in Brussels recently to share his passion for quality shopping outlets where the best names are available at the best prices – and Maasmechelen Village, to be found less than an hour away from Brussels, Antwerp, Düsseldorf, Cologne and Maastricht, is one such location. We figured that *Together* readers might be interested.

All well and good – but don't people who want to spend money on the big brands also frequently want to make sure that everyone knows how much they've spent? Therefore, isn't buying at knock down prices something of a no-no?

"True, there are shoppers out there who will only ever shop at full price, in season – they will go, the day the season starts to London, Paris, Milan, or Brussels, and she will pay full price, no question. However, there is also the 'aspirational shopper', whom we very much cater to, in that this is a person who is also looking for other things from their shopping experience. She is brand-aware, but she also appreciates the concept of 'value', and therefore has no problem buying from a Chic Outlet Shopping location."

“We hope to be able to explain to your readers the attraction of Massmechelen Village, which forms part of Chic Outlet Shopping,” Blanchette was quick to explain.

"Many niche European brands can now be found at Maasmechelen, with more than 95 designer outlet boutiques selling previous seasons' collections with reduction of between 30-60 per cent."

Not much more to be said, really. Check out the websites – you're going to love it, if you're going to love it. The jury's still out – but I'll try anything once. See you at the shops! 📍

Zetellaan, 100
3630 Maasmechelen - Belgium
www.maasmechelenvillage.com
www.chicoutletshopping.com

SMART, CASUAL

WRITER: FEDERICO GRANDESSO

Fabrice Duchêne, CEO of leading fashion marque Mer du Nord, took time out from her busy schedule to talk fashion with Together.



INTERVIEW EXPRESS

Together: Tell us about Mer du Nord...

We started in 1988, at first we were focused more on pullovers but, nearly ten years ago, we had a turning point and decided to enlarge our range of products to create a 'total-look' collection. At the same time, we also had big success with our logo, which at the time was a stylized 'fish' that began appearing everywhere. The collection's summer colours were also key to our success – another important development at the time was our strategy of opening 'flagship' stores in Belgium. We opened first in Knokke then Avenue Louise, Brussels in 2000, and we now have a network of 20 outlets. At first, the collection's character was sober with a maritime flavour, then we

evolved more towards 'city customer's' tastes. We didn't want to deny our origins, simply to add new elements to the collection. Two or three years ago, we started using prints, and this element is becoming ever-more important for the brand. We also started a children's range, and this new market is making us very happy. In addition, the men's collection is being launched this winter – our first idea for the collection was the American concept of 'Casual Friday' a more relaxed way to dress but not forgetting the quality of the fabrics. I believe that our 'casual' style is not too formal or too sporty (with many logos, say), it's simply chic and modern. I have always been involved in the fashion world thanks to our family company, but I'm also a lawyer and this gives me the possibility to manage both the administrative and creative sides of the business – my job is to speak to the bankers but also to the designers.

And Chine Collection?

The Chine 'universe' is totally different, Mer du Nord and Chine have two different management teams, from the creative side to the marketing point of view. The ownership is the same, but Chine is not a 'big' brand, such as with, for example Giorgio and Emporio Armani. Mer du Nord is casual, while Chine Collection (now Chine Belgian Design) is a more luxurious, exclusive and creative brand. Chine's higher prices give us the possibility of a more creative style and extensive research into new fabrics. Our aim is to keep the two brands separate – we don't want to mix the two styles. Concerning the winter collection, this summer we have started a collaboration with designer Tim van Styvenberg – our goal is to find a good mix between his personality and the brand's history.

Are you true to your Belgian 'roots'?

Today, Belgian brands are becoming more and more important – we fall somewhere between the Latin and German spirit. Certainly, Chine is more open to external markets and creativity because of our potential clients, and it was for this reason that we opened a shop in Rue Castiglione, Paris and presented our brand during Paris Fashion Week. From a creative point of view, Belgian designers are open to Italian, French and British fashion - they are able to mix the various influences and cultures and this is a real plus. For this reason, we are very proud of our Belgian identity. 🇧🇪

www.merdu nord.com



Venice Lions roar for first-timers

WRITER: FEDERICO GRANDESSO



1. Samuel Maoz
2. Kseniya Rappoport
© Fondazione
La Biennale
di Venezia - ASAC

The 66th edition of the Venice Film Festival will be best remembered for the emergence of first-time directors – a fresh burst of creativity that bodes well for the future. *Together* was there – enjoy!

The big prize-winning films touched on themes such as Lebanon, the role of women in Iran and Turkish immigrants in Germany. The Venice jury, chaired by Oscar-winning director Ang Lee, awarded the Golden Lion for Best Film to the claustrophobic *Lebanon*, by first-timer

Israeli Samuel Maoz. The story, set almost entirely in a Israeli military tank, dramatizes the 1982 Lebanon invasion. Accepting his award, Maoz told the audience: "I dedicate this to those thousands of people all over the world who came back from the war, like me, safe and sound. Apparently they are fine. They can walk, get married, have children. But the memories will remain stuck in their souls."

PLEA FOR FREEDOM

The Silver Lion for Best Director also went to a debutant, US-based Iranian artist Shirin Neshat, for her movie *Zanan-e bedun-e mardan* (*Women Without Men*). The film, based on a book that is banned in Iran, tells of the everyday repression and discrimination that the country's women suffer. During the ceremony, Neshat made a plea to the Iranian



A *Single Man* director Tom Ford (left) with Julianne Moore and Colin Firth, who won the Best Actor award for his performance in Ford's film

© www.image.net

government: "Give the people of Iran what they should have – basic human rights, freedom, democracy."

A surprise came with the Special Jury Prize being awarded to Fatih Akin for the movie *Soul Kitchen* – comedy is a genre that's not normally successful in Venice. The Best Actress award courted controversy, with Russian-Italian actress Kseniya Rappoport lifting the gong for her performance in Italian first-timer Giuseppe Capotondi's film *La Doppia Ora* (*The Double Hour*) – the

international press, however, seemed to feel that the nomination and award should have gone to Margherita Buy, for her role in Francesca Comencini's *Lo spazio bianco* (*White Space*).

'FASHION IS A VERY FLEETING AND COMMERCIAL ART, BUT CINEMA IS PURE EXPRESSION'

FIRTH FIRST

Everybody, however, agreed with the Best Actor award

going Colin Firth's way, for his role in Tom Ford's *A Single Man*, in which he plays a gay college professor who is broken-hearted following the death of his lover in a car accident. Speaking in Italian, Firth told *Together* after the ceremony: "I'm in love

with Italy – to win in this important festival is incredibly emotional for me. To act in this film, you had to be brave, you have to take risks, and Tom Ford risked everything on me."

Ford, a fashion designer was also making his director's debut in Venice, said that, for him "fashion is a very fleeting and commercial art, but cinema is pure expression".

Todd Solondz's dark comedy *Life During Wartime* took the prize for Best Screenplay and Sylvie Olivé, for the film *Mr. Nobody* by Belgian director Jaco van Dormael, won for Best Technical Contribution. The Marcello Mastroianni Prize, created to encourage young actors, went to Italian actress Jasmine Trinca for her role as a young Catholic girl who becomes ideologically and sentimentally entangled during the 1968 protest movement in Michele Placido's *The Big Dream* (*Il Grande Sogno*).

So, as was the case in Cannes 2009, the jury's fascination with new cinematic interpretations and auteurs held sway – an encouraging sign. ☺

www.labiennale.org

OLIVER STONE: CHEERING ON CHAVEZ

WRITER: FEDERICO GRANDESSO

The setting, Hotel des Bains in Venice – Federico Grandesso has a rare chance to talk with world-famous director Oliver Stone, who was in town to promote his latest film, a controversial documentary about Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez, *South of the Border*.

Together: Documentaries appear to be making the headlines at Venice, with your *South of the Border* and Michael Moore's *Capitalism: A Love Story*. How did your film come about?

'WITH CHAVEZ, I HAD ACCESS TO THE REAL MAN – HE IS A CHARACTER, AND I HOPE HOW DYNAMIC HE IS COMES ACROSS IN THE FILM'

Michael has been great, he has been at the forefront of the American situation for years and this is his specialty, he has written books about it and he is very well informed. I do my job, but I'm a dramatist, I write and direct, so my interests are different. I went down to South America to see Castro and Chavez, and made this, which is in fact my fourth documentary. I made a documentary about Chavez,

because I was already busy with *W* (2008). With Chavez, I had access to the real man – he is a character, and I hope how dynamic he is comes across in the film.

What I like is that you can see how sincere he is on camera, he is not a dictator, he was elected as a democratic socialist – I'm sick and tired of American and European media calling him a dictator, nobody has undergone so much scrutiny.

Your film seems to be highly critical of America?

People forget that Chavez cut the poverty rate by half, he took over the national oil company but is actually re-distributing the wealth. People in Venezuela now have education, healthcare, welfare, a much better life than before. He has kept his promises, which is rare in politics. Not even Barack Obama can keep his promises – look at the coup in Honduras, for example. America could do much more to end that coup quickly, but we are extending seven military bases in Colombia to fight in a dirty war. The Obama administration is



'THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION IS TWO-FACED – ON THE ONE SIDE IT SAYS 'I'M A NEW PRESIDENT' AND ON THE OTHER IT WOULD APPEAR THAT THERE IS A PERMANENT 'SUB-GOVERNMENT' IN THE US WHICH CONTINUES REPRESSIVE POLICIES'

Oliver Stone (centre) and Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez (right)
© www.image.net

Opposite:
Michael Moore, director of *Capitalism: A Love Story*
© Yvan Barbera

two-faced – on the one side it says 'I'm a new President' and on the other it would appear that there is a permanent 'sub-government' in the US which continues repressive policies.

Does this documentary begin with Fidel Castro?

Castro, for me, was the starting point of the project, because his reign goes back 50 years. It's very funny when I did the documentary *Comandante* (2003), Castro at that point was still a precursor, but now there are eight countries that moving away from Washington-consensus control. It's an amazing story that isn't reaching people in the US – the Americans don't even know that these presidents exist. I don't think they care – the US is treating South America almost like a backyard where you go and do whatever. In fact, our country has had an awful reputation in Latin America since the 19th century – Chavez is restoring dignity to his own country also controll.

AND THERE'S MORE...

Federico also had the chance to meet with **George Clooney** in Venice, who was there to promote his latest film, *The Men Who Stare At Goats*. A dark comedy inspired by a true-life events, concerning the US intelligence service's interest in a legion of 'Warrior Monks' who had allegedly unparalleled psychic powers, could read enemy's thoughts, pass through solid walls or even kill a goat simply by staring at it.

As George told *Together*: "We were looking at a film that we thought of as a comedy from the very beginning, based on such an interesting story. If you look at the 1970s, most films on war were successful after Vietnam was over, so for us it was more difficult.

"This was not conceived as an Iraq war film, but rather a comedy concerning crazy ideas that began at the end of Vietnam and still have resonances today."

PARTY POWER

WRITER: FEDERICO GRANDESSO



1. Nicolas Cage and Eva Mendes
2. Matt Damon
© Yvan Barbera

Be they in a five-star hotel, the renovated baroque palace on the Grand Canal or onboard a mega-yacht, the pre- and post-awards Venice parties gave new meaning to 'glamour'. Our man was there, of course.

Partygoers frantically jumping from one boat to the next until the early hours is quite something to behold, before the revellers headed for the bar of Cipriani Hotel (where George Clooney and Sylvester Stallone were normally to be found) to finish.

'[THE GUCCI GROUP AWARD] REWARDS THE ARTIST WHO HAS THE CHARACTER, CAPABILITIES AND TALENT TO MOVE FROM ONE ART FORM AND ALSO BE SUCCESSFUL IN CINEMA'

GEORGE'S GIRL

Palaces such as Ca Vendramin Calergi – the Venice Casino – continued the traditions of previous festivals, hosting various gala dinners, one of which was attended by Clooney with his latest flame in tow, Italian showgirl Elisabetta Canalis, along with 190 other super-elect guests.

Another unmissable appointment came with the dinner organized to honour

Sylvester Stallone. The *Rambo* star was very happy to cut the celebration cake with Casino Director Mauro Pizzigatti and share some snapshots with fans.

Headed in the direction of San Marco, we stopped off at Palazzo Grassi, to enjoy the fourth edition of the Gucci Group Award. As Group CEO Robert Pollet explained: "What we are finding now, particularly in the past two years, is that when we request particular jury members, they tend to immediately accept and say that they are honoured to do so – this means a lot to us. The prize itself rewards the artist who has the character, capabilities and talent to move from one art form and also be successful in cinema."

The winner this year was Mark Boal, who wrote the screenplay for Kathryn Bigelow's *The Hurt Locker*.

CRYSTAL CLEAR

The Giudecca Canal was the venue for the screening and post-screening cocktail party of Passage organized by Nadja Swarovski (of Swarovski Crystal) in the Granai della Repubblica. Confirming her passion for cinema, Swarovski told *Together*: "We have been involved in so many different fields such as jewellery, fashion and art, so we decided that our next creative milieu would be cinema. We have certainly planned many more short films, but for the moment I can't say more."



1. Catherine Deneuve at the Jaeger Le Coultre party
2. Diane Kruger at Jaeger Le Coultre
3. Paris Hilton
© www.image.net

4. George Clooney and Elisabetta Canalis arrive at the casino
5. Sylvester Stallone and Tiziana Rocca, also in the casino, attending a dinner held in honour of 'Rocky'
© Casino of Venice

Tired of palaces? Why not join Alberta Ferretti's on board his yacht for a party with Nicolas Cage and Paris Hilton? Or perhaps you prefer the exclusive atmosphere of the Hotel Des Bains, in which case you would have enjoyed a splendid VIP dinner and the company of Venezuelan President President Ugo Chavez, who is in Venice for the documentary *South of the Border* by Oliver Stone (check out *Together*'s exclusive interview with the director on page 34).

The Hotel des Bains was also the setting for the festival's closing party – on the final

red carpet were stars such as Tilda Swinton and the relaxed (if omnipresent) Paris Hilton, with boyfriend, and, in secret, there was also a Cipriani dinner for 150, with Sarah Ferguson and the french actress Catherine Deneuve attending.

Still not satisfied? I think, perhaps, that you'll need an ambulance to take you to your next party... ☹

www.labiennale.org

STYLE STARS

WRITER: FEDERICO GRANDESSO

In a Venice 'mini-festival', we discover how fashion is seeking new promotional opportunities in short films.

The fashion and luxury landscape is undergoing great change. Catwalks are no longer the only way to promote mode in the globalized, technological world of the 21st century, and the fashion and luxury consumer is no longer seen merely as a target, but rather as an individual who demands participation, exchange, and co-creation.

BRANDS AND DESIGNERS ARE NOW ABLE TO SHOWCASE THEIR PRODUCTIONS AND TELL THEIR STORY IN AN APPROPRIATE AND EMPOWERING CONTEXT FUELED BY THE MOST INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

BRANDED
In fact, short films have become a distinct expression of brand, an must for the strongest and most innovative fashion and lifestyle companies. To produce them, Louis Vuitton, Prada, Chanel, Dior, Tod's, Ferragamo, Alexander McQueen and others have engaged well-know personalities such as two-time Oscar winner Pietro Scalia (Prada), Dennis Hopper (Tod's), Edoardo Winspeare (Louis Vuitton) and Gabriele Muccino (Intimissimi), to name just a few.

Style Star, the first fashion and luxury short film concept festival created by Italian

fashion and technology visionary Marina Garzoni – President and Founder of Moda e Tecnologia no-profit association – frames and addresses this new era of communication.

SHORT IS BEAUTIFUL

Style Star celebrates short fashion and luxury films, thereby creating a fertile collaborative and promotional environment involving designers, fashion and luxury companies, production houses and advertising agencies, well-known and up-and-coming directors. Within the Style Star format, brands and designers are now able to showcase their productions and tell their story in an appropriate and empowering context fueled by the most innovative technologies.

Forward-thinking, visionary luxury brands are taking notice and experimenting with new forms of brand communication and promotion – a mix of digital and traditional media, including cinematography and short film. In this context, cinema and technology emerge as strong allies of creative communication, leading luxury and fashion brands to choose the short film as the natural evolution of brand communication and storytelling. 

www.stylestar.modatecnologia.com



1. A scene from Edoardo Winspeare's short film *Les Noces de Papier*, commissioned by Louis Vuitton



2. Maria Teresa Cuccinotta (right), host of the 66th Venice Film Festival with Marina Garzoni, the creator and director of Style Star

GERETTI

JEWELLERY & DIAMONDS



FAMILY BUSINESS SINCE 1929
IN THE HEART OF THE
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DROP OFF POINT IN BRUSSELS
ALL DIAMONDS SOLD WITH CERTIFICATE
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'ANTWERPSE DIAMANT BEURS'

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IT'S THE CELLULOID, DAAARLING!

WRITER: ANDY CARLING

Fashionistas have used many sources of inspiration and one of the richest is the world of film. Even before celluloid started to speak, stars of the silver screen showed a real sense of style. Some films have influenced fashion, others reflect it, while a few have that certain 'special something' to ensure their cool reputation. *Together* presents ten of our favourite 'fashionable' films.

À BOUT DE SOUFFLE (1960)

Jean-Paul Belmondo and Jean Seberg, directed by Jean-Luc Goddard. What more could you want? The birth of New Wave cinema in the director's first outing and Gallic cool like never seen before or since. As Roger Ebert began his review: "Modern movies begin here."

BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S (1961)

Belgium's own (well, in part) Audrey Hepburn's look is as stylish and fashionable as ever. She also exudes a sizzling sexuality that comes from within, rather than what she is (or isn't) wearing, and who could resist a line like: "You

could always tell what kind of a person a man thinks you are by the earrings he gives you." Words to live by.

DR. NO (1962)

Enter Bond, James Bond. Sean Connery made the role his own, as the sophisticated spy who is as familiar with all the best brands as he is with his ladies. Speaking of ladies, Ursula Andress makes one of the most memorable entrances in film. "Are you looking for shells?" "No, I'm just looking."

A CLOCKWORK ORANGE (1971)

So, what's it going to be then, my droogs? With 'nadsat' as its futurist slang, outrageous designs and clothes, this film was not fashionable for a good reason at the time, as it inspired gangs to commit copycat crimes, leading its director Stanley Kubrick to ban the film from the UK, which was only lifted upon his death in 1999. However, the film's star, Malcolm McDowell, claims: "I met Jean Paul Gaultier at a film festival, and he said, 'Thank you very much, because that film changed my whole design.'" We say horrorshow!

GET CARTER (1971)

Michael Caine at his cruellest as an immaculately tailored hitman returning to his hometown for revenge. Caine's crisp suits were designed by legendary 1960s tailor Dougie Hayward and they're the only



1. Dr. No (1962)

2. A Clockwork Orange (1971)



tailor Dougie Hayward and they're the only relief in this grim tale as Caine descends, layer by layer, into the depths of his own doom. Even the critics were stylish, one describing the film as "the equivalent of drinking a bottle of gin before breakfast." Possibly the best gangster film ever made.

SATURDAY NIGHT FEVER (1977)

The film that infected the world with disco fever and starred the shimmying scientologist, John Travolta. Although known for its dancing scenes, the film is also a gritty look at life in New York and how music can provide an escape from a troubled daily life.

DIVA (1981)

Before the 80s discovered big hair, this film became a cult thanks to its cool look and cast of characters. Hip heroes, sharp bad guys and a quirky and tense plot. Deserves to be seen. Especially by bald men.

PRÊT-À-PORTER (1994)

Nothing matches Robert Altman's black comedy on the fashion world – filmed in Paris fashion week, it stars everyone from Lyle Lovett to Björk in a brutal, unforgiving

satire on all that fashionistas hold most dear.

AMERICAN BEAUTY (1999)

A pitch-perfect deconstruction of suburban life, that's sad, funny and with something to say about living at the turn of the millenium. It shows the perils of conformity, the stupefying and dehumanizing effects of repressed desires and hope on how to escape. If that's not enough, it should have won an award for the best use of rose petals, as well as for its tight, dry and sharp script. "Janie's a pretty typical teenager. Angry, insecure, confused. I wish I could tell her that's all going to pass, but I don't want to lie to her."

BRUNO (2009)

Finally, the fashion industry gets the film it deserves – Sacha Baron Cohen takes the sharpest look at the industry since *Prêt-à-Porter* and discovers the truth about male sexuality: "So... if they are nice, they are gay, right?"

If this has made you hungry for more, then The Fashion Film Festival –

www.fashioninfilmm.com – is being held in 2010 and will tour London, New York and elsewhere, but is not expected in Charleroi any time soon... 

Room for fashion?

WRITER: DANIELE DOSI

You might not have noticed, but in the very heart of Brussels, there is a corner of paradise. Since the late 1970s, the Royal Windsor Hotel, Grand'Place, has represented the heights of luxury hospitality in the capital of Europe. But there is even more to discover – in 2004, 12 talented and eclectic Belgian designers were each given the opportunity to express their creativity in the designing of a room, in which 'fashion' was no longer just about clothes. Intrigued?

Thus, each designer created a 'Fashion Room', with the only constraint imposed being international safety standards. To name a few of the artists involved – Pascale Kervan,

**ROOMS ARE
INTENDED
FOR CLIENTS
WHO CONSIDER
UNIQUENESS AND
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SPACE'**

Jean-Paul Knott, Christian Wijnants, Gerald Watelet, Nicolas Voit, Kaat Tilley, Romy Smits and Nina Meert. Nothing innovative there, one might argue. After all, other famous stylists such as Versace, Ferragamo and Ferretti have undertaken similar projects in the past.

UNIQUE AND UNFORGETTABLE

Yet at the Royal Windsor, there is something different. Moving from one Fashion Room to the next, you just know that these gifted guys have provided the hotel's clients with an experience that is truly unique and unforgettable.

A Fashion Room offers an ingenious reflection of the intimate imagination of the designer who envisioned it, while providing an ultra-personalized cocoon of comfort for the traveller. The rooms are intended for clients who consider uniqueness and luxury (without ostentation) as priorities, but are also very much the artist's 'own space'. In other words, a room unlike any other, anywhere in the world...

As Roland Paulis, assistant director of sales at Royal Windsor, confirms: "Our clients have so appreciated our Fashion Rooms that many return to our hotel only on the condition that they can have the same room!"

No wonder – truly, you will be astonished. ☺

*Royal Windsor Hotel
Grand'Place
Rue Duquesnoy, 5
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 505 55 55
www.royalwindsorbrussels.com*



1. Knott
2. Yee
3. Smits

Business Centers: The smart way to work

WRITER: MORGAN BROWNE

Together takes a look at the office-space revolution that's taking Brussels and Europe by storm.



1. Kristel De Prins
2. Frédéric Vermeylen

The idea of a Business Center is actually rather straightforward – it is office space that's available for rent, and included in your monthly fee is reception service, internet access, meeting rooms, free-use kitchens and office technology at your fingertips. And best of all? The costs are shared with the building's other tenants, slashing expenses for all involved.

MARKET TEST

"Business Centers are ideal for companies to test their markets," says Frédéric Vermeylen, president of BOBCA, the Belgian Office Business Centers Association. "This is due to the fact that there is no investment needed up front, and the centers are very flexible with the lengths of time that their clients can stay. At BOBCA, there is a minimum standard of equipment used in offices – all must have fully staffed receptions, a minimum of eight offices per building, common areas, meeting rooms, broadband internet, phone services and so forth." Business Centers can also provide a 'virtual office', for clients who work from home or abroad but want to have a 'shop window' office in Brussels, complete with a private

phone number, address and meeting rooms, which also offers the flexibility of working outside office environs.

VIP SERVICE

One such Center in Brussels, VIPOffices.com, offers services that are above and beyond the norm: "We want to make working life better by creating an ambience," explains Kristel De Prins, manager of VIPOffices.com. It is clear that De Prins has succeeded. People from a range of businesses interact with each other on a daily basis, including the British Chamber of Commerce, a superb expat leisure magazine (mentioning no names) and everything in between, while quarterly cocktail parties and art exhibitions bring the office together in a more social atmosphere. These aspects combine to provide excellent networking opportunities. "It is unmatched here," says De Prins.

"We have people in our offices that have been here since we started in 1992," Kristel adds – a rare feat, when one considers that most Business Centers have average stays of one to one-and-a-half years. "We want you to feel like this is your office. Looking around, you don't see much with our logo on it. You are free to hang your own pictures and have your space however you want it."

With little to no decline in their office use during this economic downturn, it would appear that they're doing everything right. ☺

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WEARABLE CHIC

WRITER: JOSEPHINE OVEREEM



What's the secret of Terre Bleue's success? The third generation of a Flemish family business, born and bred in wholesale ready-to-wear, is lead by Dirk Perquy, a softly spoken man of 53, whom we grab for a chat in his offices in Nazareth, near Ghent. Terre Bleue offers women's, men's and children's collections in 12 flagship stores across Belgium.

INTERVIEW EXPRESS

Together: How would you describe Terre Bleue?

Dirk Perquy: *The brand is all about casual chic. We make two collections per year. My wife and her team are in charge of that. Terre Bleue stands for wearable fashion, with high quality knitwear and very well cut trousers and skirts. Everything is designed in such a way that a piece can be combined with a lot of other items. The colour themes don't change abruptly from one season to another; they evolve. Flanders has been embracing some aspects of the American way of life and a more casual way of dressing is part of that. The brand is not about basics. The designers take great care to add the detail that makes the difference.*

How did it begin?

It started in the eighties when, after I got my MBA at Insead and, after following different courses at Insead and Vlerick, I decided to apply management and marketing principles to fashion. We would create a brand. The wholesale branch was founded in 1934 by my grandfather who sold textiles. Today, we are an important player in the ready-to-wear sector and it is still the bulk of our business. This allows us to take our time. The first thing I did was build a board for the company with a lot of different skills. The next decade I consciously used this group of people as a sounding board for all our projects. I wanted them to ask us difficult questions, to push us to go further and do better. We take risks, but very well calculated risks.

How does your company understand so well what will sell?

It is a combination of simple common sense, listening closely to everyone who

works here and to our clients, and solid market research. We started with a fashionable female total-look: Porcini. In 1986, we created a kids' line, Chummy Face, which became CF Online. Around the turn of the millennium, I found that there was a whole generation we were not yet serving – younger women who dress in a more relaxed way. Terre Bleue started as a women's collection in 2002, in 2008 we transformed CF Cie into Terre Bleue Junior and in 2009 we launched the men's collection, with our chief stylist Maryse Poivre and my wife who is responsible for production and quality management.

When you enter a Terre Bleue store, anywhere, the ambiance is the same. Why is this?

We like it to be inviting, with simple natural materials and a shop layout that allows easy circulation and effortless trying-on and combining. The same ambiance can be found in our catalogue. The selection of the items and the choice of the photos make for heated discussions between production, marketing and styling. Sometimes, an article that we think should be only moderately successful sells very well because of how it is photographed. We know what will sell well, and what to add for fun and to complete the collection, but there are always surprises and we learn from them.

What would you say is a good first buy at a Terre Bleue shop?

Clients often start with a cardigan. In our climate this is a must in all seasons and, since we are 100% Belgian, we do this well. As for the rest – come and discover for yourself! 📍

www.terrebleue.be



Vendredi 30 Octobre au K-nal

Nous vous invitons à la célèbre soirée des compilations Hôtel Costes pour la sortie mondiale de la nouvelle compilation « Hôtel Costes XII » en compagnie de

Stéphane Pompougnac

Lorenzo Ottati & Bernard Dobbeleer

Salle du K-Nal – Avenue du Port, 1 à 1000 Bruxelles

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INTERVIEW

HAPPY SPENDING

WRITER: EMMA PORTIER DAVIS



Shoes, champagne and swanky travel – our girl wants more, more, more. But, for the good of her soul and in reverence to stark financial crisis warnings about greed, she sets out to find answers to the perennial question: “Can money buy happiness?” ‘Happiness guru’ Nick Baylis is on hand to help...

The French say you can't overdo luxury but what of the clichés? The bankers left with nothing as they woefully walk the city streets? Celebrities who have all the trappings of wealth and yet for whom, for some reason, happiness is elusive?

There are enough cautionary tales and trite quotations on the shallowness of material wealth to fill an encyclopaedia, so I'm relieved when 'happiness guru' Nick Baylis, University of Cambridge lecturer and author of *The Rough Guide to Happiness*, confirms what I've long suspected.

"I protest against the idea money can't buy you happiness. Money should not be

**BAYLIS ARGUES...THAT
OF COURSE HAVING
MORE MONEY MAKES
US HAPPY BUT IT
DEPENDS ON HOW YOU
EARN IT AND HOW
YOU SPEND IT**

disparaged," he says, scoffing at "wealthy psychologists with their hippy nonsense" who suggest that once you cross the poverty line, more money makes no difference.

If I had money to visit loved ones (and perhaps buy more shoes) then I think I would be happier. Baylis argues, more profoundly, that of course having more money makes us happy but it depends on how you earn it and how you spend it.

INVEST IN YOURSELF

A crucial element of happiness is accepting the highs and the lows and remaining cheerful throughout (bankers take note), according to Baylis. One way to do this is to invest money in your relationship with life. "Find something you really love – a skill, a passion, something that requires an investment from you. Can you buy yourself a year's sabbatical in Italy to learn the language or do a degree in fine art? These are things that will be with us forever."

He warns against one-off experiences: "A bungee jump will give you a real thrill at the time but then it's gone." I wonder where my financial goal of having enough money to go to the spa once a week would fit in. Natasha Aburdarham, a success-orienteeering life coach based in Brussels, gives me hope. She says that in our fast-paced society, if we're not succeeding, we keep going. "What we need to do is slow right down – walks in the park, swimming, anything that allows the mind to be quiet." He also advocates giving money away once you have enough for yourself although Baylis notes that philanthropy is still all about how you spend it. "People should invest in projects which mean something to them rather than just handing over the money and walking away."

INNER CALM

If we are to avoid crashing the dream like our rock-star idols, we need to work on our internal happiness. If some kind of therapy is involved, this may cost you but – just allow me one cliché – Spike Milligan did say that money can buy you a more pleasant form of misery. Abudarham recommends experimenting with holistic therapies, emotional freedom therapy (where a therapist taps on energy points on the body while repeating positive statements) or massage. I wonder if I have the time to invest in myself in this way.

Baylis chirps: "You see people who are close to being workaholics and they don't dare to leave but the person who will walk back in after a break will bring such a freshness of perspective. It's all about letting oxygen into the fire."

My fears are scotched that more money will ruin me. I just have to work out a plan to get more. A colleague suggested we turn all Bonnie and Clyde and rob a bank, until someone else pointed out they haven't got any lucre left, either. ☺

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FOREVER AUTUMN

WRITER: MORGAN BROWNE

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Prices available on request.

www.jmweston.com

2. BIODERME SKIN VIVO

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3. EARRINGS BY FREY WILLE

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www.frey-wille.com

4. CABANA RACER II BY PUMA

The legendary German shoe, these pumas can run. In flashy colours, you're sure to get noticed.

70€, www.puma.com

5. IDOLE D'ARMANI

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75ml, 50€, www.giorgioarmani.com

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3



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FOR HIM

1. GIRARD-PERREGAUX PISTON PEN

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3. BELVEDERE IX

From one of the most renowned names in the 'spiritual' world comes a different type of Vodka. Belvedere IX (one X) is distilled with nine different flavors and additives, including ginseng, ginger, and acai berry for a new twist on a classic.

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4. EMPORIO ARMANI DIAMONDS FOR MEN

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FOR KIDS

6. FASTKID SHOE BY PALLADIUM

This classic slip on in bright pink is the staple of a young girls outfit.

35€, www.palladium.eu

7. RAINCOAT BY PETIT BATEAU

A statement that will come as a shock to none, Brussels is wet, very wet. Keep the little guy dry and stylish with this classic raincoat.

64€, www.petit-bateau.com

8. TAO HYDRATION

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8



And Saint-Tropez created...Belgian Week!

WRITER: ARMAND RICHELET-KLEINBERG

In order to enjoy the summer's charms in a near-mythical location, renowned for its luxury and party power, the *Together* team headed for Saint-Tropez. A jet-set capital since *And God... Created Woman*, Brigitte Bardot's signature dish, way back in 1956, the resort has, for the past four years, celebrated Saint-Tropez Belgian Week on 20th, 21st and 22nd July. So, what better time to go?

TTo ensure that our holiday went without a hitch, we rented two holiday maisonettes in Saint-Tropez's Pierre et Vacances (more of which later) – for a more-than reasonable price, our accommodation afforded us a sea view, private terrace, access to a large, attractive swimming pool and enough room for five people per lodging. The welcome was efficient and kind – in but a few minutes, we had all the necessary info to take us to the very best beaches. Our break could begin!

TALKING TABOO

Just a few kilometres away, we arrived at a premier location – the 'Taboo' beach in

Pampelonne, which had been renamed for Belgian Week festival as Beach MaTuVu. At 11h, we had our very first taste of the cool environs – just a few metres from a crystal-clear sea, with elegant yachts as a backdrop, we allowed ourselves to be carried away by the beats of a classy DJ who, even this early in the day, got our dancing feet itching. There was much more to come – after a charming day spent sipping elegant wine, we were more than tempted by the prospect of an insane 'soirée tropézienne' – unanimously, we plumped for VIP Room!

To be found in the heart of Saint-Tropez, Jean Roch's mythic disco has played host to many famous faces, including Karl Lagerfeld, Claudia Schiffer and Pamela Anderson. We couldn't resist it – entry is free, but you have to be beautiful, sexy and, above all, well dressed. An adrenaline rush when you cross the portal? It doesn't even come close...

THE VIP VIBE

The champagne is vintage Don Pérignon, and the dancers are simply beautiful. The evening was organized by the Belgians – VIP BELGIUM, Noxx, Diamond Club and Beautiful Belgian People were, on 20th July, the genial hosts of VIP ROOM.

Esconced at our private table, we met VIP Belgium's Alexandre Bodart Pinto, who was only too delighted to share his joy with us concerning the event's success.



'SEA'-ING IS BELIEVING

It's handy to have a millionaire friend, of course, but we can in fact reveal that to rent a boat for 10 people is not out of reach – quite the contrary, in fact.

From 80€ per person per day, you can live the maritime dream in one of the world's most beautiful resorts – and it is the sea that is the jewel in its crown. Like us, you will not be able to resist jumping from your boat into the perfectly clear water, nor be able to pass up the opportunity to savour seafood delights on the beach.

'LIKE US, YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO RESIST JUMPING FROM YOUR BOAT INTO THE PERFECTLY CLEAR WATER, NOR BE ABLE TO PASS UP THE OPPORTUNITY TO SAVOUR SEAFOOD DELIGHTS ON THE BEACH'

We chose Niki Beach for 21st July – decorated with exotic sun-loungers and with a splendid swimming pool nearby, the menu offered included roast fish, a wide variety of salads and delicious sushi, all accompanied, naturally, by rose champagne. And, in a feast for our eyes, there was a fashion show highlighting a collection as original as it was sexy. Wow!

'FROM A TO Z'

And, for our final evening, we enjoyed an evening with the splendid music of saxophonist Pierrot Cabay (typically Belge, non?) and ten more musicians

and singers on Stefano Beach – the next morning, just before reluctantly hitting the road for our return to Brussels we succumbed to temptation and enjoyed a last meal on the beach. More than anything, Saint-Tropez allowed us the opportunity to so many fascinating people...after all, *Together* is the name!

PIERRE ET VACANCES

Fancy spending a week or more in Saint-Tropez? *Together* recommends, unreservedly, the Pierre et Vacances village 'Restanques'.

Whether as a couple, with friends or family, it is the ideal place to taste the tropézien lifestyle at a price that won't make you blanche. The village offers a wide range of residences that are faithful to classic Provence architecture – apartments overlooking the Saint-Tropez golf course, country-style houses that come with private terraces, hotel villas with sea views. Barely 7km away from Saint-Tropez and Holy-Maxime, Restanques also offers many activities sure to delight holidaymakers – archery, tennis, football, circus classes, hockey, treasure hunts, minis-trampolines, or why not just relax around the 270m2 swimming pool? There's something for everyone – you have our word on that. 

Pierre et Vacances
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Middle Tuscany: The undiscovered country

WRITER: DAVE DERRUYTER

Italy, land of culture, history, wining and dining, of good weather, soft hills and green valleys. In short, the land of La Dolce Vita, but there is much more to be seen and enjoyed off the beaten track, as our correspondent reveals.

Let me introduce you to Middle Tuscany, to be found around 120 kilometres south of Florence. My hideout is a little, one-street town called Casino di Terra, the main attraction of which is that it does NOT have a casino – it is a very quiet and relaxing spot.

RURAL IDYLL

The neighbours are all farmers, the architects of the magnificent patchwork-cover on the beautiful landscape. Sunflowers and wheat fields, olive groves and vineyards, patches with trees, small settlements and many artefacts of a fascinating past dating back to the Etruscs and later, in the glory days of Tuscany during the Middle Ages, under the rule of the Medici family.

And the magical quartet of Tuscan cities is situated just an hour's drive away: **Sienna:** With its magical Piazza del Campo and famous for its Palio horse

races, and, of course, the wonderful Duomo (cathedral).

San Gimignano: Famous for its 14 mediaeval towers, considered very avant-garde when they were built, it must have looked like a city of high rise apartment buildings in those days.

Lucca: A smaller version of Florence, but with a completely intact city wall, allowing you to walk around the whole town in an hour.

Pisa: With its world-renowned leaning tower. Quite frankly, I prefer a good stroll on the banks of the Arno River.

All four cities have good restaurants with tempting wine lists and local speciality dishes for any taste or budget. In my hotel, a gastronomic four-course dinner with a wide choice of dishes and a superb wine list was included in my half-board package.

UNDISCOVERED CHARMS

If you enjoy quiet, small towns nestling in the hills, there's no need to drive very far. There are an abundance of them less than half an hour from Casino di Terra by car. My favourites are Casale Marittimo and Campiglia Marittima. The former is a beautiful village on a hill – almost unknown to tourists, it has kept all the charm of the days when it was populated by the farmers working the surrounding fields. Now, only the older generation




IF YOU ENJOY QUIET, SMALL TOWNS NESTLING IN THE HILLS, THERE'S NO NEED TO DRIVE VERY FAR. THERE ARE AN ABUNDANCE OF THEM LESS THAN HALF AN HOUR FROM CASINO DI TERRA BY CAR

remain, as there is little or no farm work for the youngsters. Even if there were, the youth prefer to live in cities, where the pace of life is faster and the opportunities greater.

The latter, Campiglia Marittima, is known for the ruins of its castle and its ingenious aqueduct and water storage system, which brings drinking water from the surrounding mountains to the town. There are many great beaches along the Ligural coast – my personal

favourite is Marina di Castagneto Carducci, the beach of the famous local poet, Giosuè Carducci. A beautiful road, with parasol pine trees on both sides, takes you to a small forest with playing fields just before the town and the beach itself. The village is small but charming. You can walk for miles and miles on the beach, with nothing but the sea, the sand and pine-trees as company.

Middle Tuscany – take a walk on its winding farm roads, picnic near the Cecina River, or simply enjoy the sun, the splendid views and the great locals. 

A fairy tale: Domaine de la Bretesche

WRITER: DAVID MC GOWAN

When you arrive at Domaine de La Bretesche, it's like entering wonderland – the kind of place that inspired fairy tales. And you'll feel like a king or prince...

The Domaine is filled with history – though not much is known about the castle prior to the 15th century, it is thought that it played a strategic role, as it was built near deep-water lakes. But who built the castle, and when, remains a mystery. It was restored and became the residence of the barony of La Roche Bernard up to

the French Revolution of 1789 – a renowned haunt for nobility, the Dukes of Brittany, François I and François II frequently hunted in the 1,100-hectare forest...

GRANDIOSE SPLENDOR

In 1965, Philippe de Montaigu sold the castle – rumour has it, to pay off gambling debts.

Divided into apartments, it has since been sold to around 15 co-proprietors,

who occupy the castle to this day. Four stars shine brightly over the beautiful premises of this grandiose 15th-century château, which is now home to the elegant Hôtel & Spa de la Bretesche, situated in the Manor of the castle.

Nestled in the verdant countryside between the Brittany countryside and the Loire Valley, this historic property invites you to enjoy calm, luxury and elegance.

A stone's throw away, you'll find the peaceful waters of the lake and the Domaine de La Bretesche 18-hole golf course, which runs over 200 hectares of parkland adjacent to a century-old forest. The 32 guest rooms at Hôtel & Spa de la Bretesche open their doors to a world of wellness and comfort. To brighten your days, you can capture unspoilt views of linden trees and the gentle lake. To clothe your nights, fabrics bearing the signature of great names such as : Rubelli, Kenzo, Manuel Canovas, Pierre Frey...

FOOD FIT FOR ROYALTY

The hotel's restaurant 'Le Montaigu' has a well deserved star in the Michelin Guide and a rating of 16/20 in Gault Millau. Let chef Gilles Charpy take you on a gastronomic trip through France's most beautiful regions – with his talent and daring creativity, he brings Brittany and Provence together in delectable compositions that will amaze even the most experienced palates. Sea bass, bream, game, vegetables of the day offer an ode to the seasons and, as for desert, discover the best for yourself. For wine,

the finest grands crus and many more discoveries from the hotel's sommelier await your pleasure, all served with elegance and discretion by the first-class servers.

Take time to enjoy the Square Courtyard Spa, an experience of sheer luxury, tranquillity and sensuality. Sharpen your senses, enjoy relaxing massages, aromatherapy, oligotherapy and a multi-sensorial cocoon – there is a team of specialists on hand to cater to your every whim.

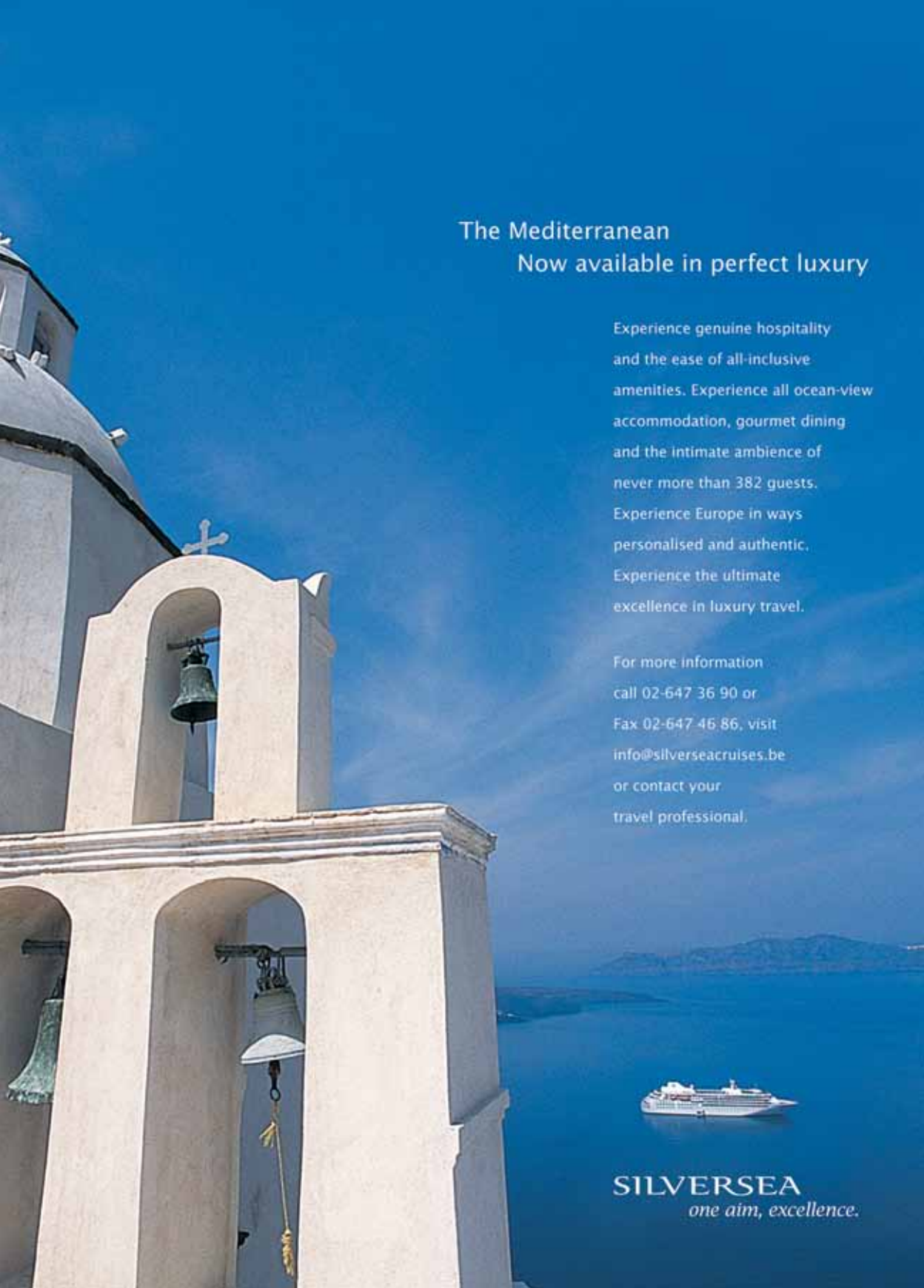
Domaine de la Bretesche's 18-hole golf course, with its chequerboard mowed fairways and velvet greens, can justifiably

boast as being one of the most beautiful in France, perhaps even the world.

In the majestic forest surrounding the castle, you can also choose from 25 cosy cottages, which offer a more independent stay, with your own kitchen included. Château de la Bretesche offers a unique experience to live a fairytale – for those who love dreams, Chateau de la Bretesche is a place where many will come true. ☛

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GOING PLACES

Branché Bel-Ami!

WRITER: DAVID MC GOWAN



The Bel-Ami Hotel is all about the spirit of modern, urban conviviality in one of the oldest parts of Paris – our publisher paid a visit.

Bel-Ami is to be found near the beating, romantic heart of Paris, in none other than the 6th District, St Germain des Prés which, for those who are not familiar with Paris, is one of the city's most exclusive neighbourhoods.

HISTORIC HAUNTS

The hotel itself is very luxurious and stylish, with young, very friendly, who help provide a classy but warm ambience and, near the Bel-Ami, you will find St Germain des Pres Church, from which the neighbourhood takes its name, and which is the oldest church in Paris, with sections dating as far back as the

6th century. Opposite the church is the Café des Deux Magots which, like its neighbor Café de Flore, was among the favourite haunts of intellectuals such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir following World War II. St. Germain is perfect for 'unguided' tours – art galleries, swanky shops and excellent restaurants can be found on just about every corner.

'ST GERMAIN IS PERFECT FOR 'UNGUIDED' TOURS – ART GALLERIES, SWANKY SHOPS AND EXCELLENT RESTAURANTS CAN BE FOUND ON JUST ABOUT EVERY CORNER'



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www.hotel-bel-ami.com
www.bel-ami-trend.com
www.organdino.com



INTERVIEW EXPRESS

We met with the hotel's interior designer, Marina Bessé, for a quick chat.

Together: Could you tell us about the themes that inspired you for the design of the rooms?

Marina Bessé: *I wanted to lift up the Zen ambiance that you already find in the hall, bar and lobby of the hotel. I used a floral theme and went with a collection of colours and materials that are very relaxing and soft to express the notion of creativity and the notion of artist that are representative of St Germain des Prés neighbourhood.*

Which, in your opinion, is the most beautiful room?

There is not one singular one, they all release something different, they all tell their own story. You just feel good

differently in each room and you will always leave with different emotions. The hotel also has its own bar, restaurant, spa, gym, and Marina's talents extend even further – she has her own shop on site, Espace Organdino.

In line with the neighbourhood's chic ambience, the hotel often hosts exhibitions of famous artists, with the works of Amylee and Thierry Chemouny recently on display, and the hotel's Piano Bar has live music every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night, beginning at 19h30.

1st October: Mélanie Dahan
5th November: Vincent Balse
3rd December: Eileina Williams

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Costa Croisières: Music on the ocean

WRITER: ARMAND RICHELET-KLEINBERG

Friday 5th June 2009 marked world maritime history – two Titans of the sea set sail simultaneously from the port of Genoa, Italy, *Costa Luminosa* and *Costa Pacifica*. Our man, it goes without saying, was there...

It was an international event, attended by more than 4,000 stars, artists and artists and, of course, *Together* was part of it – and there's an official record of the event on www.together-magazine.eu.

Accompanied by Patrick J. Pourbaix, the charming director of Costa Croisières Benelux, we spent two days onboard *Costa Pacifica* – 290 metres in length, and 35.5 metres wide, with the capacity to hold 3,780 passengers, the *Pacifica* is the second-largest vessel of its kind in Europe.

MUSIC, MAESTRO!

And its theme? Music! An integral part of each voyage, from the daily musical entertainment offered to passengers, musical classes for children, a real on-board recording studio for older 'performers' and, every evening, at cocktail hour, the harmonious delights of a traditional orchestra, jazz or rock 'n' roll.

Onboard, there's 22 musicians and singers or, to finish your day in style, why not be carried away by the rhythms of the sumptuous disco, superbly decorated with a multitude of mirrors and monitors?

Our guide Patrick J. Pourbaix, explains the Costa Croisières outlook: "The fundamental attraction of this type of holiday is the rediscovery of the fine art of living well – the onboard facilities are without compare, and our personnel are hand picked to offer each and every holidaymaker an unparalleled journey into

**'THE
FUNDAMENTAL
ATTRACTION OF
THIS TYPE OF
HOLIDAY IS THE
REDISCOVERY
OF THE FINE
ART OF LIVING
WELL'**

pleasure. Whether it's fine cuisine, cultural discoveries or simply a great time, there is something for everyone on a Costa cruise.

There's more information available in the new Costa 2010 booklet – make your dream cruise a reality! ☺

www.costacroisieres.fr



Leading Israeli concert artist Noa (Achinoam Nini) (right) aboard the *Costa Pacifica*



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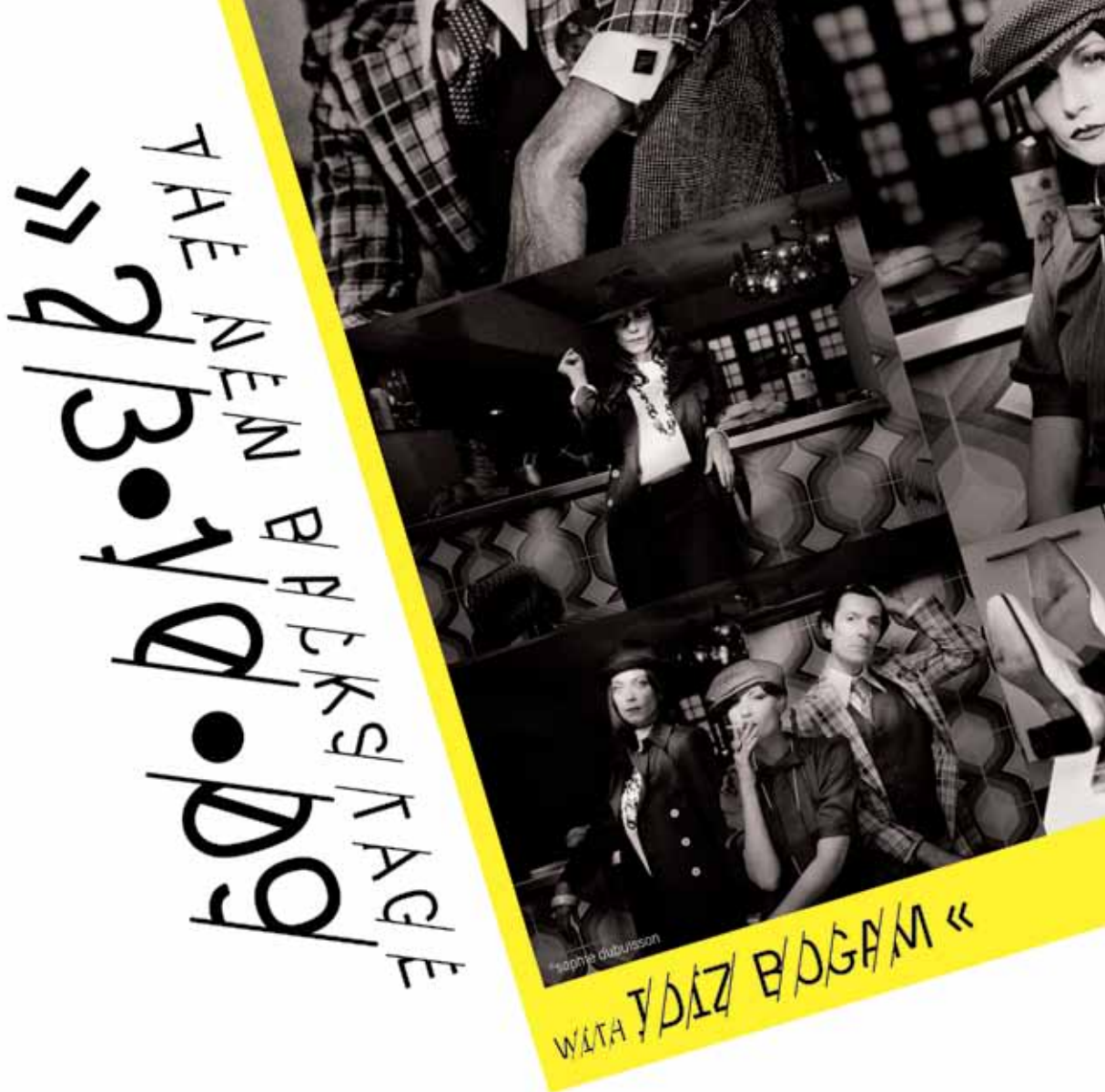
FACT: IT'S YESTERDAY ONCE MORE...

According to those in the know, this year's autumn collections are marking a return to the exuberance and individuality of a certain decade that, in certain schools of thought, it was felt that fashion forgot. We're talking about the 1980s so, painful as it may be to hear, padded shoulders straight out of *Dynasty* and sequined tops fit for a *Golden Girl* look likely to be making waves as 2009 draws to a close. But why, we hear you ask? Well, fashionistas believe it may be because the eighties and the noughties share more than a few cultural and social similarities – as Donegar Group Creative Director David Wolfe explained to the *Los Angeles Times* recently. “People are tired of being worried about money and being sensible. Even though it wasn't the carefree time everyone remembers it to be, the 1980s now looks like the party we've not been allowing ourselves to have lately. It's a denial of the recession...now that a tough economy is the reality, we want to look fun.” Well, bring it on...but let's not have Joan Collins back on primetime, OK?

FIGURE: \$9,000,000

That's how much the world's most expensive item of clothing costs. Wearing one, you wouldn't exactly cut a dash, but you would certainly make an entrance. Just ask Neil Armstrong. Need more help? OK – nine million 'clams' is how much you would have to fork out for a NASA astronaut's costume – and one doubts that they have 'coupon' days.

NEWS



SHOWTIME! UN DEFILE C'EST BIEN. MAIS UN VRAI SHOW C'EST ENCORE MIEUX !

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POLITICAL TIES?

WRITER: CILLIAN DONNELLY

Today's politicians may generally not be as affectatious as their predecessors but, occasionally, even in the European Parliament, some will make a bid for their own kind of sartorial immortality – and the humble neck-tie, curiously enough, has increasingly become a make-or-break fashion statement.

Finding herself gazing upon a particularly iconic piece of 19th century headgear in the Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC in an episode of The Simpsons, Lisa was moved to declare that it represented "America's greatest citizen summed up in one piece of clothing".

She was, of course, referring to the iconic stovepipe hat worn by Abraham Lincoln (and NOT Fonzie's jacket, which so enraptured her father), and her statement rings true; it is indeed hard to separate the image of Lincoln from that of his famous chapeau.

TIES, ON THE WHOLE, PRESENT SOMETHING OF A PROBLEM FOR POLITICIANS

ACQUIRING AN ACCESSORY

Like Margaret Thatcher's handbag or Winston Churchill's cigar, Lincoln's hat

became an iconic symbol of his political leadership, adopting a particular accessory that will hopefully make them stand out in today's political environment of faceless clones, much in the same way as Screaming Lord Sutch and his collection of outlandish costumes or, in a more sober way, Charles de Gaulle's military garb.

One such man is Belgium's own Elio di Rupo, leader of the Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste) who was voted Minister-President of the Walloon Region in 2005. A somewhat flamboyant politician, he was likened to a "character in a novel" by François Mitterrand, and is known for his love of bow ties. Indeed, di Rupo is rarely seen in public without his trademark butterfly-style bow tie, making it his sartorial centrepiece and very own iconic fashion statement. Which is quite something, given that in the wider world bow ties only tend to be regularly worn by clowns; still, one cannot fault di Rupo's bravery in the face of possible ridicule.

Ties, on the whole, present something of a problem for politicians. Coupled with a smart jacket, the wearing of a tie is considered the appropriate apparel for any serious public servant. The problem, however, is that often the public do not approve of stuffy political careerists with their whiff of establishment clogging up the airwaves or braying in the chamber, leading many of the younger breed to soften the image of the public servant, adopting a kind of half-way approach between respect for tradition and a more



*Daniel Cohn-Bendit:
He won't be tied down*

casual look. One such way to achieve this is simply to abandon the tie – particularly if you want to maintain a connection to your radical past.

TOSSING THE TIE

When Tony Gregory was elected to the Irish Parliament (Dáil) in 1982, he did so on the back of a vigorous, community-based platform of reform. Upon taking his seat, Gregory chose not to bow to convention and refused to wear a tie, a tiny gesture that caused a disproportionate amount of kerfuffle – in doing so, Gregory sealed what would become his lasting trademark. Upon his death in January 2009, the Irish Times noted: "Gregory was also making history in the Dail

chamber, refusing to wear a tie as was required at the time...the intense young Dubliner escaped the censure of Ceann Comhairle [Speaker] Dr John O'Connell."

In fact, his refusal to wear a tie became so famous that, when a fictionalized version of Gregory appeared wearing a tie in the movie *Veronica Guerin* (2003), Irish critics sniggered at the inaccuracy, as was also taken up by websites such as *moviemistakes* and *IMDB.com*. Others, incidentally, have since followed suit, such as the current Green Party member, Energy Minister Eamon Ryan.

The European Greens have their own radical in the ranks, of course, in Daniel Cohn-Bendit, AKA Danny Le Rouge, a man previously branded a "seditious alien" by the French authorities after the events of 1968, now vociferous MEP in the staid surroundings of the European Parliament. Like other radicals caught between compromise and individuality, Cohn-Bendit has also chosen to drop the tie, as he acknowledged when rumours abounded that he may be making a bid for the French presidency. "I can't be President," he told reporters, "I don't have any ties."

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FASHION (OR FADS?) IN FINANCE

WRITER: GRAHAM REID

Fashion is just a variation on the herd instinct – there is safety in numbers, and behaving so as not to stand out from the herd protects you from predators. According to our money man, similar principles can apply in the financial world.

In the 1980s, everyone wanted to invest in shares, because it was thought that they were certain to go on growing for ever. Towards the end of the 1990s, it became dot.com shares. More recently, shares in the banking and finance industries became all the rage, but with dire consequences for investors.

NINJA DANGER

The dangers in following such investment trends become obvious when the sector that investors have piled into suddenly falls out of favour or, worse still, suffers a sharp reverse. In the recent past, even banks and fund managers have followed the herd. It became fashionable to buy packaged 'Ninja' loans. No one dared to question it because it appeared to be commercial suicide to do so if competitors had them. In fashion terms it was more like The

Emperor's New Clothes – lacking in substance and offering no cover where it was needed.

MANAGERS THAT FOLLOW THEIR TRUE CONVICTIONS HAVE OFTEN BEEN MORE SUCCESSFUL OVER TIME

On the other hand, managers that follow their true convictions have often been more successful over time. One well known French fund nearly had to close down in 1998 because it refused to invest in dot.com companies on the grounds that, although they were promising huge profits in the future, they were not actually making any money. They considered the share prices to be disproportionately high in relation to the real results. By not investing in this booming sector, the fund did not appear to be producing returns comparable with its competitors and investors began moving out to seek higher returns elsewhere. When the dot.com bubble burst in 1999, the funds that had



'Ninja' loans: Would you borrow money from this man?


been overexposed to it failed dismally, whereas this fund immediately moved to near the top of the league tables, a position it has maintained over the years by pursuing the same cautious strategy.

STAYING LIQUID?

The current fad is to avoid shares altogether and to stay in bonds, medium-term cash or near cash, but this can be as bad as over-exposure to shares – even these vehicles have their risks. How often have clients told me about their fantastic internet deposit account in an obscure Icelandic Bank that was offering 1% or 2% more than the others? Whenever an investment offers a return that is higher than comparable investments, look at it carefully before investing. Do the same for

any sector or currency that seems to offer higher returns than the others. It is usually a sign of weakness. They may be fashionable, but are much more risky than they appear.

This does not mean that you should avoid investing in anything that seems attractive, but it does mean that you should take into account that there may be greater risks. Keep your exposure to any one sector down to a level that mitigates the impact if that sector should fail – and spread the risk.

There are a number of sophisticated risk-assessment packages on the market can be used to assess your tolerance to risk and create a model portfolio based on that assessment. 

THE WRITER

Graham Reid is director of Classic Financial Solutions NV, 321 Brusselsesteenweg, 3090 Overijse.

One picture, one house: Helping Burma rebuild

WRITER: MORGAN BROWNE

Together learns of the work of Zaw Min Yu, a photographer who has documented both the beauty of his native country and who, with the proceeds from his work, is playing his part in Burma's reconstruction following the devastation of Cyclone Nargis.

At first glance, Zaw Min Yu would not strike you as being the premier photographer in Burma. His mane of black hair is pulled back in a ponytail showing a few streaks of grey and an English Dunhill cigarette is never far away from his mouth. While being a man who takes his work very serious, he is always quick with a smile and a laugh.

HEAVEN AND HELL

FOR MORE THAN 12 HOURS, THE INHABITANTS OF THE REGION WERE SUBJECTED TO THIS METEOROLOGICAL HELL; ENTIRE COMMUNITIES WERE WIPED OFF THE MAP AND PEOPLE WERE CARRIED MILES INLAND OR WASHED OUT TO SEA

In his long career, he has published many collections of his photos, most focusing on the beauty, history, and culture of his home country. He has also photographed Burma's most luxurious and decadent 4 and 5 star resorts as well as others around the world, and has also worked as a photographer for Lonely Planet. After living abroad for more than 24 years, Zaw



returned to Burma to start work anew. Several years after his return, he witnessed one of the worst tragedies to ever befall his people, who have already suffered so much.

On 2nd May, 2008 Cyclone Nargis made landfall on the Irrawady Delta in Myanmar, resulting in one of the worst natural disasters in Asia's history. Bringing with it winds of up to 165km/h and torrential rain, the tempest destroyed thousands of homes. For more than 12 hours, the inhabitants of the region were subjected to this meteorological hell; entire communities were wiped off the map and people were carried miles inland or washed out to sea as the Bay of Bengal ebbed and flowed into the delta. The death toll was believed to have exceeded 120,000, while many thousands more are still missing and presumed dead. Immediately following the disaster, the international community was ready and able to help. However, entrance visas were hard to come by at the beginning and it was only after a few months that the military government agreed to receive aid and granted visas to aid workers. More than a year later, thousands are still homeless and much of the rebuilding effort and money promised has been put on hold due to the world economic crisis.



THE ART OF RELIEF

In July, Zaw came to Brussels to shore up plans for his latest project. After visiting the Irrawady Delta area many times and documenting the horrors that his countrymen were still facing, he decided to act. Helping Zaw is Brussels businessman Pascal Gerken – Pascal had also visited Burma several times and happened to be in the country when Nargis struck. "I escaped on the last flight out before the airport closed down," he explains. "After a very tough flight that night back to Europe, I landed in my home to realize that thousands of people had lost their lives and hundreds of thousands more were homeless." To help, Gerken began encouraging friends and colleagues to visit the beleaguered country not only as tourists but also to work to build houses for those still in need. After returning to Burma a year later and seeing that very little progress had been made, Gerken decided more needed to be done than merely drafting families to help with the relief work.

Zaw and Pascal first met in the photographer's gallery in Yangon (Rangoon). Both recognized that art could be a way to help those in the delta that were still in need. "I realized that Zaw was involved in helping people as well and, together, we could create an

exhibition where one limited-edition picture of Burma could buy a house," says Gerken. The expo will be a departure from Zaw's normal mode of selling his pictures, which are usually limited to three to five prints – instead, the photographer will be selecting five of his photos, printing 50 of each, with the proceeds of every shot going towards paying for a house for a family. The money will buy the land for the house, the materials, and also the labour – it costs as little as \$700 to rebuild a house. As an added bonus, buyers will also receive a picture of the family for whom the house is being built as well as their address, should the buyer wish to see the results of their altruism if they ever decide to visit Burma.

And great work has already been accomplished – thanks to their collaboration with Tin Htar Oo, managing director of Sunbird Tours (www.travelmyanmar-services.com), 120 houses have already been rebuilt based on the construction model and a close working relationship with local NGOs Acted and Amurt. There are also opportunities available to visit the families who are benefitting from the work – contact Tin at tinhtaroo@gmail.com.

www.zawminyuphotography.com

CLOONEY'S CLASS ACT!

George Clooney, the star of the show for this edition of *Together*, was in Venice to promote his latest film, *The Men Who Stare at Goats*. The movie concerns a reporter in Iraq who stumbles onto the story of a lifetime, when he meets a man who claims to be a former member of the U.S. Army's First Earth Battalion, a unit that uses paranormal powers. Clooney is pictured here with girlfriend Elisabetta Canalis and director Grant Heslov – see you next year, guys!



Exclusive Together George Clooney/
Elisabetta Canalis/Grant Heslov image
© Yvan Barbera



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ING 

Fantastic four

WRITER: MARIE HOCEPIED

New season, new shops. *Together* opens a few doors for you...



1. LES HALLES GOURMANDES

It is now five years since Philippe Pellegrino drew on the very best of Brussels' gastronomy, with the single purpose of bringing expertise, passion and simply great cuisine together under one roof. Result? There are now no less than nine craftsmen in his charge, with but one purpose – to wake up your tastebuds! Quite simply, Les Halles Gourmandes is a catering delicatessen service, offering concoctions prepared only with the fresh produce of the day, straight from the markets, according to the mood of his clients. And, to accompany these culinary delights, great wines from around the world – something for everyone!

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Chaussée de Bruxelles, 58
1410 Waterloo
T. +32 (0)2 502 90 93
www.hallesgourmandes.be

2. ALEXANDRE DE PARIS

Renowned Parisian hairdressing salon Alexandre de Paris has now opened its doors in Brussels – the quintessence of luxury in discreet surroundings with a full range of Shu Uemura hair-care products, and beautiful tonsorial accessories, accompanied, naturally, by coiffeurs at the very peak of their game. Enjoy!

Alexandre de Paris,
Boulevard de Waterloo, 36
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 503 54 04
www.alexandredeparis.be

3. V.O.

It's a new temple of accessible luxury, to be found in the heart of the Louise district – second-hand, to be sure, but don't be put off, there are clothes classics aplenty to be discovered, at the prices you deserve. Check it out – you won't be disappointed.

V.O.
Rue Jean Stas, 10
1060 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 537 17 70

4. ISABELLE BAINES

A new address for Isabelle Baines. Also to be found near Avenue Louise, the creative Belgian's new outlet continues to position Baines at the meeting point of 'art' and 'artisanal', specializing in handmade, made-to-measure and one-of-a-kind creations clothing creations for women. Over the years, Baines has remained faithful to a style and vision that's both sober and refined, using top-quality merino wool, cashmere and cotton, and with meticulous attention to detail and finish. It's there for you to discover.

Isabelle Baines
Rue de la Longue Haie, 4
1000 Brussels
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A MOUTH-WATERING SELECTION

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THE GOURMET STORE

Rob is not merely a large store, but also a gourmet market, where every specialist's passion for their profession is conveyed both to their teams and their customers. The result is 1,400 square metres dedicated to culinary pleasure, all year round.

Apart from the numerous fresh food sections that have built Rob's reputation, you will find an exceptional range of spices and oils, a remarkable array of

chocolates, a mind-blowing range of teas, and not forgetting a wine cellar that's among the richest and most varied in the country, where the great vintages rub shoulders with more recent treasures unearthed in vineyards all over the globe.

Better still, the 'passion for the taste' has led to Rob forging sustainable links with certain partners. Over many years, partner-suppliers who are proud of their products, their region and their expertise have shared their great passion with Rob.

Small fruit and vegetable producers, craftsmen, cheesemasters, fishermen and farmers enjoyed a trusted relationship with Rob's teams. For you, the customer, this amounts to a guarantee of quality and distinction. 🍷

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T. +32 (0)2 771 20 60
www.rob-brussels.be

I am curious orange

WRITER: GEOFF MEADE



Brussel's premier expat raconteur joins Together to offer his wry thoughts on

everyday life in the capital of Europe – by way of a signature dish, our man explains the reasons behind his own fashion excesses. Take it away, Geoff!

Somewhere in Paris, there is a man with an orange suit, and he has a lot to answer for. Not a Guantanamo Bay-style suit, but a gent's two-piece, in a needlecord material.

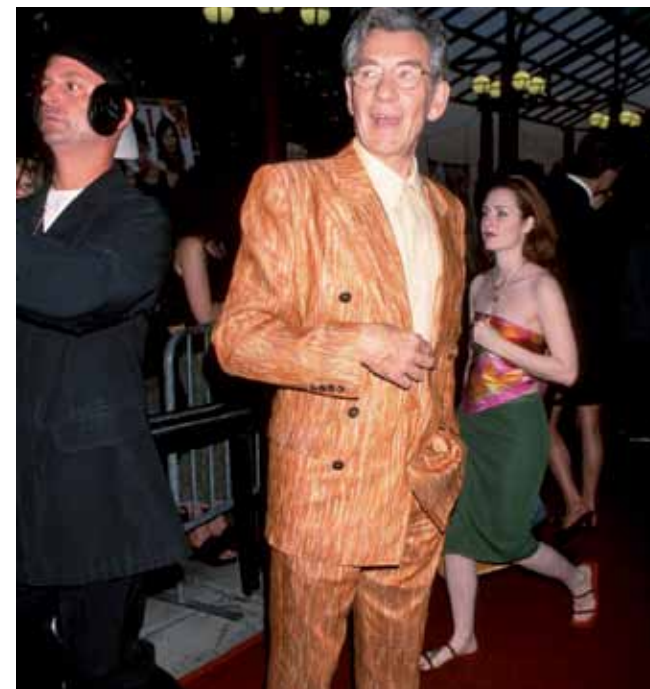
I spotted him standing on the Champs Elysee a few years ago, tall, stocky, late-50s or older. He had about him an air of quiet confidence, which is pretty much compulsory if you're going to go outside in an orange suit, even one as well-cut as his. He had paused during his perambulations to light a stubby cigarette and, as he regained his stride, I heard accordion music and I spotted Inspector Maigret stepping out from the shadows to mutter to a junior officer: "Fellow zee homme in ze costume a l'Orange!"

SUITS YOU SIR!

The accordion music and Maigret faded from my imagination, but the orange man was still there, ambling nonchalantly away from me. And that is the moment I blame for my current flirtation, if that's all it is, with, shall we say, a more colourful wardrobe. Back in Brussels, I remarked to a little man who runs what we used to call a gent's outfitters that the French peacock is still alive and well among the grey suits of the male species. Ah, he insisted, there is a Belgian peacock too, and disappeared towards the back of the shop and returned, wheeling a rack of garments which, if sewn together, would have put Joseph's Technicolour Dreamcoat to shame. But why, I asked, are you keeping these things hidden? He gestured me into a mid-yellow cord creation: "Because I don't want to scare away my more traditional customers."

COLOUR SCHEMES

Between then and now, in what is clearly a mid-life crisis, I've acquired not just orange trousers, but yellow, green, and some in colours worthy of a restaurant dessert trolley. Another occupant of Meade Towers vetoed the purchase of an orange suit, arguing that the proximity of the jacket to my face made me look anaemic. But I sneaked home with a yellow needlecord suit some time ago under cover of darkness, plus a rather dashing tweed jacket with a bold red check.



Does Sir Ian McKellen rate Geoff's wardrobe? Answers on a postcard, please...

I have a pact with one of the Meadelets that I will not wear my deep red trousers when in her company, and I haven't even dared discuss the ones the shade of raspberry ripple ice-cream or the moleskin ones in a kind of Banoffi Pie tone. I'm not wearing the yellow suit until I see someone else in one first but, just the other day, the Mayor of London (dark blue regulation suit), was in town and commented favourably on my pale green linen suit.

Then there's my two-tone gangster shoes (pale brown and cream) which the salesman in London said he'd like to buy himself, but daren't, as he lived in a sartorially risk-averse city centre.

"But I live in Brussels," I said. He nodded: "That's okay then – people are much more tolerant on the continent." ☺



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WRITER: GERALD LOFTUS



Ostentation's out, humility is in – our Gerald muses on ways of enjoying life's personal

luxuries without the need for labels.

Luxury – especially as its antonym is “discomfort” – cannot surely be all bad. Carried to extremes however, its pursuit can become, in the phrase coined by 19th century economist Thorstein Veblen “conspicuous consumption” that is, wasteful, unnecessary, and – in these days of economic down-turning – downright despicable.

LUX REDUX

What this will mean for all those products – Electrolux® appliances, Unilever's Lux™ brand line – with the sinful suffix is difficult to say. As a prefix, 'lux' is another matter, however – nobody accuses Luxembourg of lustful excess, though the Grand Duchy might have to go some extra lengths to prove that it is no longer a haven for all those luxury-seeking tax cheaters.

Flaunting your luxurious lifestyle to excess can sometimes result in trouble – if your conspicuous spending mismatches your tax

contributions, it can even bring the taxman to your door. The French have a term – ‘signes extérieurs de richesse’ – there's a delicious moment in the excellent 1998 comedy *Le Dîner de Cons* where the imminent visit of an inspector has the tax-avoiding leading man scrambling to stuff all his expensive artwork into a broom closet.

“Ostentation is a godsend for the fiscal authorities,” says a leading expert. But in some places, flaunting wealth is de rigueur. The Principality of Monaco actively courts URIs – Ultra Rich Individuals – who help fuel that casino country on the Med. But now, even URIs are facing straitened circumstances. The Economist, which recently ran a special report, *The Rich – Under Attack*, notes that luxury-goods spending has plummeted some 34 per cent. ‘Bling on a budget’, apparently, is now the way of the wealthy. The Economist's cover illustration is a Delacroix spin-off: French Revolutionaries led by a bare-breasted maid carrying a ‘Get the Rich!’ placard (check the anachronous Blackberry on one of the fallen aristos). Poor dears.



Old-fashioned quqlity of life

LITTLE LUXURIES

Okay, there are the rich, the super-rich and then there's you and me. For slumdogs who aren't yet millionaires, paying to poo in the relative comfort of a Mumbai latrine might be the height of luxury. Somewhere between that – and paying £35,000 for a diamond-studded cocktail in London's Movida nightclub – is where I'd situate the luxury range for most Together readers. So, here's a suggestion – start thinking of luxury in strictly personal terms, instead of what you think those famous Joneses are up to, for you'll never be able to keep up with them, and will be unhappy trying.

**SO, HERE'S A
SUGGESTION –
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Instead, carve out your personal luxury space and revel in it – a distinctive Belgian beer-of-the-month, perhaps, taken in a local bistro, in a part of Brussels you don't yet know. A €4.50 day-long public transport ticket, to crisscross the city in the quest for that special beer... (Note – non-alcoholic pleasures are permissible, but they escape me for the moment).

Here's my personal cheapskate luxury favourite – find a seaside (or lakeside) location facing east, make a thermos of your preferred hot beverage, buy or bake some yummy pastries, and get up early enough to watch the sun rise. Variation – trade the breakfast fayre for smoked salmon on fresh bread, accompanied with appropriate bubbly, and watch the setting sun opposite Ostend, or the ever-changing play of light over Mont Saint Michel.

It will set you back a couple of euros, but so what? If unstructured time, the sound of silence, and good company are precious commodities, you'll be able to enjoy countless luxuries that those URIs can only dream of. Webster's alternate definition of luxury: “A pleasure out of the ordinary allowed to oneself.” Doesn't sound terribly sinful to me. ☺



Chic spots

Have you been flashed?



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www.oliviersaxe.com

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www.simplybetter.be

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www.spa-francorchamps.be

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COME TO THE FAIR, MEET THE ARTISTS, TAKE THE ART HOME

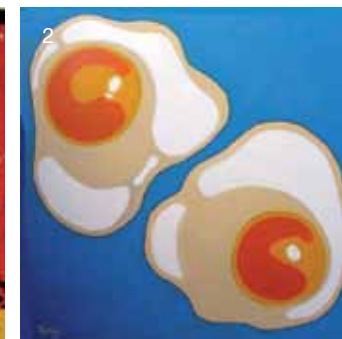
WRITER: JAMES DREW

Brussels Accessible Art Fair (BAAF) is gearing up for its next sensational event – from 20-22 November, Brussels Accessible Art Fair: EU Quarter will be held in the Hotel Silken Berlaymont, near Schuman. During the weekend, more than 30 international artists will be exhibiting and selling their works – painting, photography, print and sculpture, with prices ranging from 50€-3,000€.

Pasquale Bonfilio



1. Gordon Hopkins
2. Helen O'Sullivan
3. Rachel Stewart
4. Fiona O'Farrell

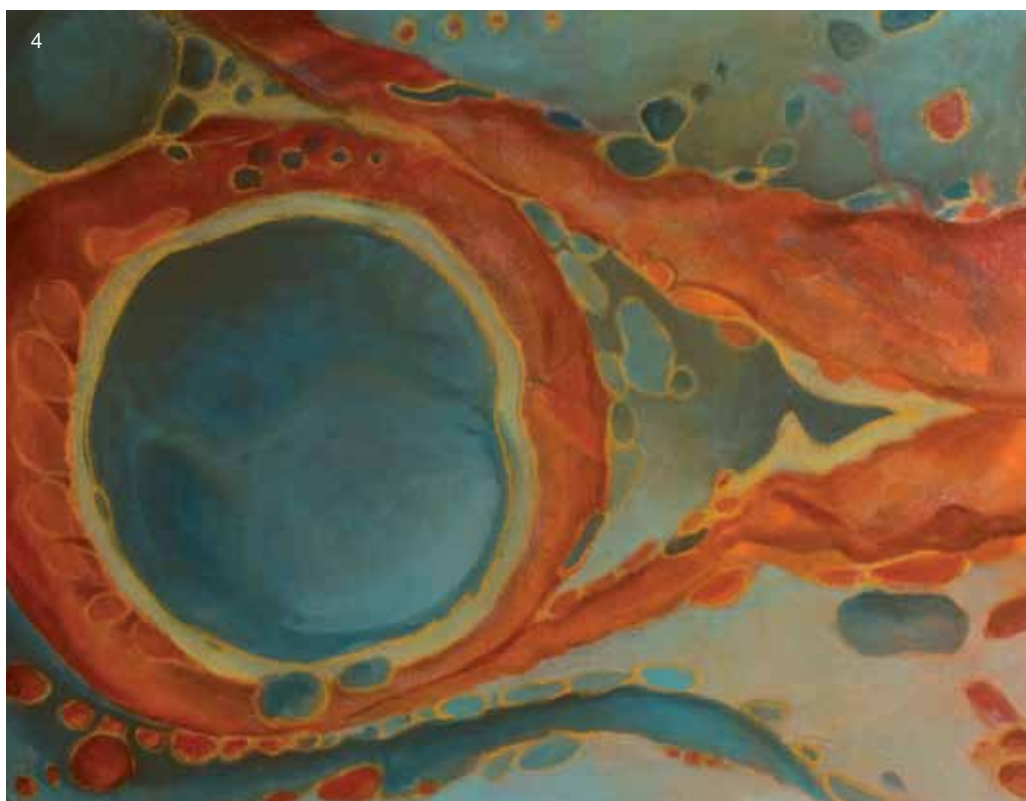


'Come to the fair, meet the artists, take the art home' – you really can't say fairer than that, which is probably why the Brussels Accessible Art Fair has proved to be such a resounding success since its launch in 2007. The event has grown remarkably, welcoming more than 3,000 visitors who came to meet 30 leading artists and peruse their work during BAAF's most recent edition, which took place in June 2009. According to Director Stephanie Manasseh, it's all about making the connection: "As part of the Brussels culture scene, we strive to connect local and international artists to a local and international public. The summer edition was beyond our expectations, and I look forward to a promising winter show with new artists and surprises."

Combining originality, accessibility and a chance to talk and buy from the artists themselves Brussels Accessible Art Fair

is a veritable smorgasbord of artists, experiences, colours and forms – entrance is free, and the talented artists already confirmed for the winter edition of the show hail from a variety of countries including Belgium, the UK, Ireland, Chile, Zimbabwe, Spain, France and the US. Check www.accessibleartfair.com for updates – and, courtesy of Together, enjoy a selection of the art that will be available in November on the following pages. Let's go to the fair! 🎨





1 & 2. Dagmara Pater
3. Helen Tyrrell
4. Marina di Carlo



Helen Tyrrell

Brussels Accessible Art Fair
20th-22nd November 2009

Hotel Silken Berlaymont
Boulevard Charlemagne, 11-19
1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 231 09 09

Director: Stephanie Manasseh
info@accessibleartfair.com
www.accessibleartfair.com

Together's 'To Do' list

WRITER: MORGAN BROWNE

Depressing being back in Brussels after the holidays, isn't it? Not necessarily – check out our selection of exciting events that are heading your way.

BBOB - AUTUMN OPENING 29.09.09, 7h30-9h30

BBOB (Brussels Business Over Breakfast Club) is a business networking group that meets twice a month, bringing together independents, entrepreneurs and business owners to network in a friendly and informal setting over breakfast. Autumn's first guest speaker will be John Niland, talking about 'The Outstanding Professional'

www.success121.com
Register at info@bbob.be

BRUSSELS MUSEUMS EVENINGS

24.09>17.12, 17-22h
Every Thursday evening during autumn, young and old can discover Brussels' finest museums in a relaxed and inviting atmosphere. Think you've seen them all? You'll be surprised! There are 53 museums taking part - and it's your chance to enjoy culture at your own pace.
T. +32 (0)2 512.77.80

www.museesdebruxelles.be

BRUSSELS MARATHON 04.10.09

For the select few who feel the need to don spandex and subject their bodies to a grueling 42km journey, this is the place to be. The race starts at the Parc du Cinquanteaire, heads through Bois de la Cambre, all the way to Tervuren, before

the finish at Grand'Place. Those without the Forest Gump-esque desire to run such an absurd distance can take part in the 4km mini-marathon or the half marathon, or simply enjoy the race from the sidelines.

www.sport.be

OPEN DAY 04.10, 10-17h

A chance for you to discover what International Montessori Schools can offer your child, from 1-16 years old. *Remember, a good start lasts a lifetime!* Open days being held in Tervuren, Sterrebeek, Woluwe and Wezembeek-Oppeem. Go to www.international-montessori.org for more information.
T. +32 (0)2 767 6360

OKTOBERFEST AT PLACE JOURDAN

14.10.2009>18.10.2009
Bring on the lederhosen and oomp music, it's Oktoberfest time. The fest, organized every two years by the Bavarian delegation to the EU, is the closest thing you can get to the tents of the Theresienwiese in Munich. Drink a German beer in a 1L Maß mug and enjoy the treats of Bavarian cuisine. Ein Prosit, ein Prosit...

Place Jourdan - 1040 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 237 48 11
bayern.buero@stk.bayern.de



1. Brussels Marathon
2. Europalia International Arts Festival
3. TG STAN - TOESTAND



TG STAN - TOESTAND 16.10.09

This autumn, theatre company STAN will be 20 years old. To celebrate the event, STAN is inviting a large number of friends and kindred spirits to share the stage with them for a night and a day. An 'impromptu', 24-hour marathon, showcasing a combination of old and new material, work from the STAN repertoire and by invited actors, dancers, and musicians. A joy!

Kaaitheater
Sainctelettesquare, 20 - 1000 Brussels
T. +32 (0)2 274 03 64
www.kaaitheater.be

MEGAVINO 16>19.10.09

Sample a bounty of wines from Portugal, Germany and California at Benelux's largest wine fair. Also on hand will be a plethora of gastronomic delights to nosh on while sipping your foreign and exotic vino. If you are new to the wine scene and perhaps a bit intimidated, worry not,

Megavino's motto is 'sample before you buy'.

Parc des Expositions
Heyssel - Palais 3
Place de Belgique, 1
1020 Brussels
www.megavino.be

EUROPALIA INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL

16.10.2009>13.2.2010

China - not just a land of communists and gymnasts of questionable ages. Held biennially in different venues across Belgium, this year's Europalia festival aims to showcase the vast and ancient culture of the People's Republic through all mediums. From acrobatics and martial arts to puppetry, contemporary paintings and even a Chinese take on Hamlet, Europalia spares no effort to present China's cultural heritage.

www.europalia.be



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K-Nal
Avenue du Port, 1
1000 Brussels
www.thebackstage.be

HÔTEL COSTES XII 30.10.2009

A night to party - join Stephanie Pompougnac, Lorenzo Ottati and Bernard Dobbeleer. How cool?

K-Nal
Avenue du Port, 1
1000 Brussels
www.lessoireesdescompilations.be

BBOB - AUTUMN OPENING 03.11.09, 7h30-9h30

BBOB (Brussels Business Over Breakfast Club) is a business networking group that meets twice a month, bringing together independents, entrepreneurs and business owners to network in a

friendly and informal setting over breakfast. Speaker Natasha Abudarham, Personal Success Coach & Emotional Freedom Techniques Practitioner, will be talking about the importance of stress management and its relation to running a successful business - www.natashaabudarham.com.

www.bbob.be
Register at info@bbob.be.

BRUSSELS INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL

03>08.11.09

Sprung from the 'Super 8' movement that began in the mid 1970s, the Brussels Independent Film Festival has become the showcase for filmmakers outside the structured bounds of mainstream movies. With 100 films - many of them European and worldwide premieres - from 60 countries, the 36th edition is truly an international event. For six days, Brussels will become a meeting point for filmmakers from all around the globe - the talent of today and tomorrow.

Centre Culturel Jacques Franck
Chaussée de Waterloo, 94
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T: +32 (0)2 649 33 40
info@centremultimedia.org
www.centremultimedia.org/festivalinternationaldufilmindpendent

ORQUESTA BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB

18.11.09

While not the entire original lineup from Wim Wender's acclaimed film, these 13 veterans of the Havana jazz scene are still pumping out some of the best Cuban music today. With some of these musicians sporting Grammy awards and worldwide acclaim that would make a footballer blush, this is a night not to miss.

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