

Together

MARCH 2018 #86

magazine

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Exercise is infectious

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A double detox
Rituals of life

Margot
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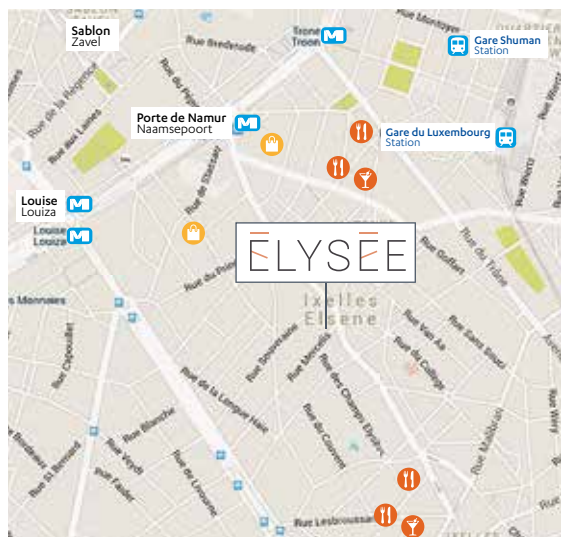
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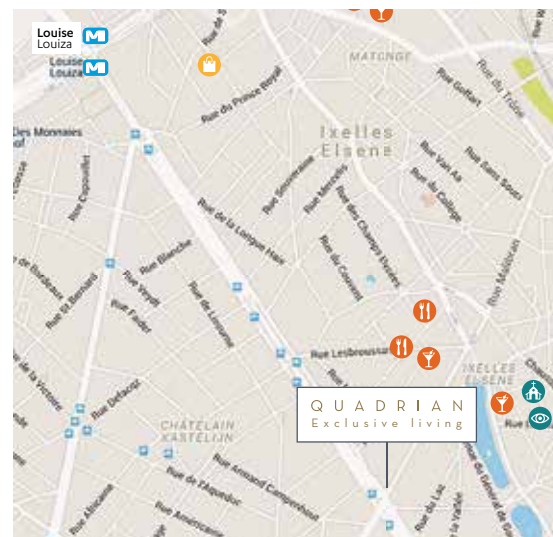
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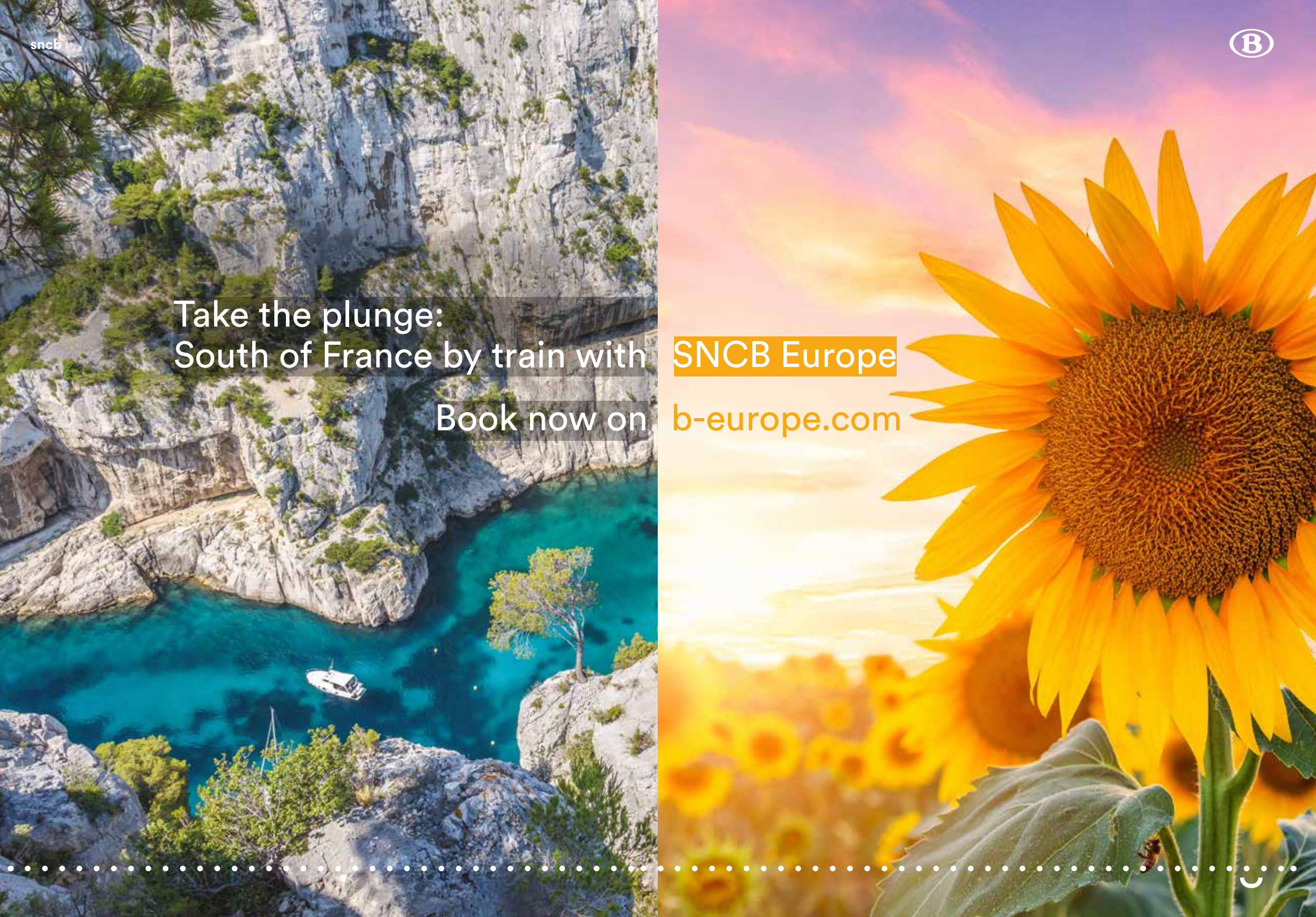
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Editor's LETTER

*Together:
Inspiring you
to reach your dreams...*

ON THE COVER



Margot Robbie stars in in the big screen adaptation of Beatrix Potter's *Peter Rabbit*

THE IDES OF MARCH

15 March has been – ever since William Shakespeare brought it to world-wide attention – a time for people, well, to watch their backs. These days, you would be forgiven for expecting exactly that among the many unhinged leaders around the world, pompous characters who are drawing just that bit too much attention to themselves: the egos have landed. Trump's attempted Camelot is the perfect case in point as it ships advisers (and relatives) at an alarming rate.

Well before Julius Caesar's nearest and dearest turned on him in 44 BC, the day was marked by several religious observances and was notable for the Romans as a deadline for settling debts. The death of Caesar made the Ides of March a turning point in Roman history, one of the events that marked the transition from the historical period known as the Roman Republic to the Roman Empire.

It was bound to happen on a day when just one of the many annual rituals was to beat an old man dressed in animal skins and drive him screaming beyond the city walls. Far be it from yours truly to suggest such an ignominious political end for Donald – I can see him now as he is hounded beyond the gushing waters of the Potomac River into the ancestral lands of the Patowomeck, an ancient tribe of native Americans who may well look at this wild refugee and wonder if it might not be a good idea... to build a wall.

Paul Morris
Editor



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Anne, 37 years old

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Intuitive healing: Relationships, The Sperm and the Egg

Intuitive healing expert Katarina Winslow offers a reflection on our conception. Imagine zooming in on the fundamentals of life through a magnifying glass. Imagine zooming in on the essence of life and the true nature of our biological conditioning to better understand humanity. Who are we as men and women? What is it that makes us different from each other? Is the soul of our true nature to be found in the conception of life, in the sperm and the egg? Is it possible to literally zoom in on the principle of the masculine and the feminine...

Finance tips: Beware of the internet of thieves

In his regular finance tips: Dave Deruytter takes a hard look at those pesky online bandits.

The Internet of Things (IoT) has been a buzzword for few years. Connecting with your equipment via your smartphone and the internet has a lot of advantages. Still, you need a secure internet connection for your Smart TV, fridge, washing machine, or central heating. If not, it is child-play for digital bandits to take over the equipment and maybe even virtually 'kidnap' it and ask you for a ransom to release it again.



Music fitness: Power to improve your gym results

Kate Cracknell explains how music fitness makes you train better and relax more deeply. Music has the power both to improve our results in the gym, and to help us combat anxiety and nerves. The power of music on our mood is indisputable: just think about how quickly an upbeat song can lift your spirits and fill you with energy, even in your most tired moments; or conversely, how calm and relaxed you can feel just by listening to a gentle, soothing piece of music.

Luxury clothes: World's most expensive shoes

Ruby Slippers from the House of Harry Winston. Are we still in Kansas, Toto? Harry Winston was an American jeweller. He donated the Hope Diamond to the Smithsonian Institution in 1958 after owning it for a decade. He also traded the Portuguese Diamond to the Smithsonian in 1963. He designed these ruby slippers as a replica of Dorothy's ruby slippers in *The Wizard of Oz*. Winston intended it as a tribute to film on the eve of the 50th anniversary of its release in 1989. They are one of the most expensive pairs of shoes in the world. \$1.09m

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Starring in Belgium

George FitzGerald Live

George FitzGerald will be presenting his digital writings live, with a full band in tow. Fitzgerald has already delivered intriguingly danceable material under the collective name *Fading Love*, from which single *Full Circle* (with vocals by Boxed In) won over many a radio station worldwide. Recently came out with fresh electronic force **Burns** – again via Double Six Records, a musical thoroughbred from the stables of the renowned Domino Records.

23 March. Ancienne Belgique. Tickets: **€15**
www.abconcerts.be



Absynthe Minded

The enthusiastic, swinging band around Bert Ostyn is now finally back together, admittedly in a modified line-up: Bert is still with Sergej Van Bouwel, plus Simon Segers, Toon Vlerick and Wouter Vlaeminck. There is the new CD *Jungle Eyes*. And you already know Absynthe Minded from new singles *Beam* and *The Execution* or from classics like *Envoi* and *My heroics, part one*.

30 March. Ancienne Belgique. Tickets: **€27**
www.abconcerts.be



Lana Del Rey: LA To The Moon

Lana Del Rey announced that she'll be taking her new album, *Lust For Life*, which debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard 200, on the road for a highly-anticipated European tour. LA TO THE MOON will kick off in Milan on 11 April, before heading to Rome, Berlin, Antwerp, Barcelona, Madrid and Brussels, showcases singles such as *Love*, *Lust For Life*, *Coachella – Woodstock On My Mind*, *Summer Bummer*, and *Groupie Love*.

17 April. Antwerps Sportpaleis.
Tickets: **€40 - €80**
www.sportpaleis.be



Art for L'Accueil

We highlight a charity that is once more dedicating a four-day exhibition to help disadvantaged children

The ASBL L'Accueil could receive more children, but it needs help... your help. The funding granted to it by the authorities is insufficient – without the support of individuals like you and us the Centre cannot continue to exist and help these children in need.

L'Accueil is a centre that welcomes children aged 0-6 years whose parents are faced with relational or personal difficulties that make them momentarily unable to ensure a secure, adapted parenting environment. It is a living space for children who need to be removed from their home environment to assure them of all necessary protection, prevent abuse happening and getting worse to the point where negligence becomes daily. L'Accueil boasts a team of specialists on hand to offer all necessary care. This team meets the demands of different social and judicial services and families desperately seeking protection for children who are abused or mistreated.

What is Art for L'Accueil?

This year the centre organizes for the seventeenth consecutive year 'Art for L'Accueil'. This event takes the form of an exhibition running for days that aims to raise additional funds to top up the subsidies that are insufficient to allow the proper functioning of the centre. The association invites you to discover artists and their works 22-25 March in Hangar H18 in Ixelles.

The jury is composed of professionals from the Belgian artistic world who will select from the artists present at the event the winner of the 'Coup de Cœur' award. You will discover a



selection of works in various disciplines such as painting, sculpture, photography and design.

From 22-25 March. Hangar Art Center, Place du Châtelain, 18 1050 Brussels.

22- 25 March, 11h to 18h - €5

Thursday 22 March, Opening night 18h to 22h - €25

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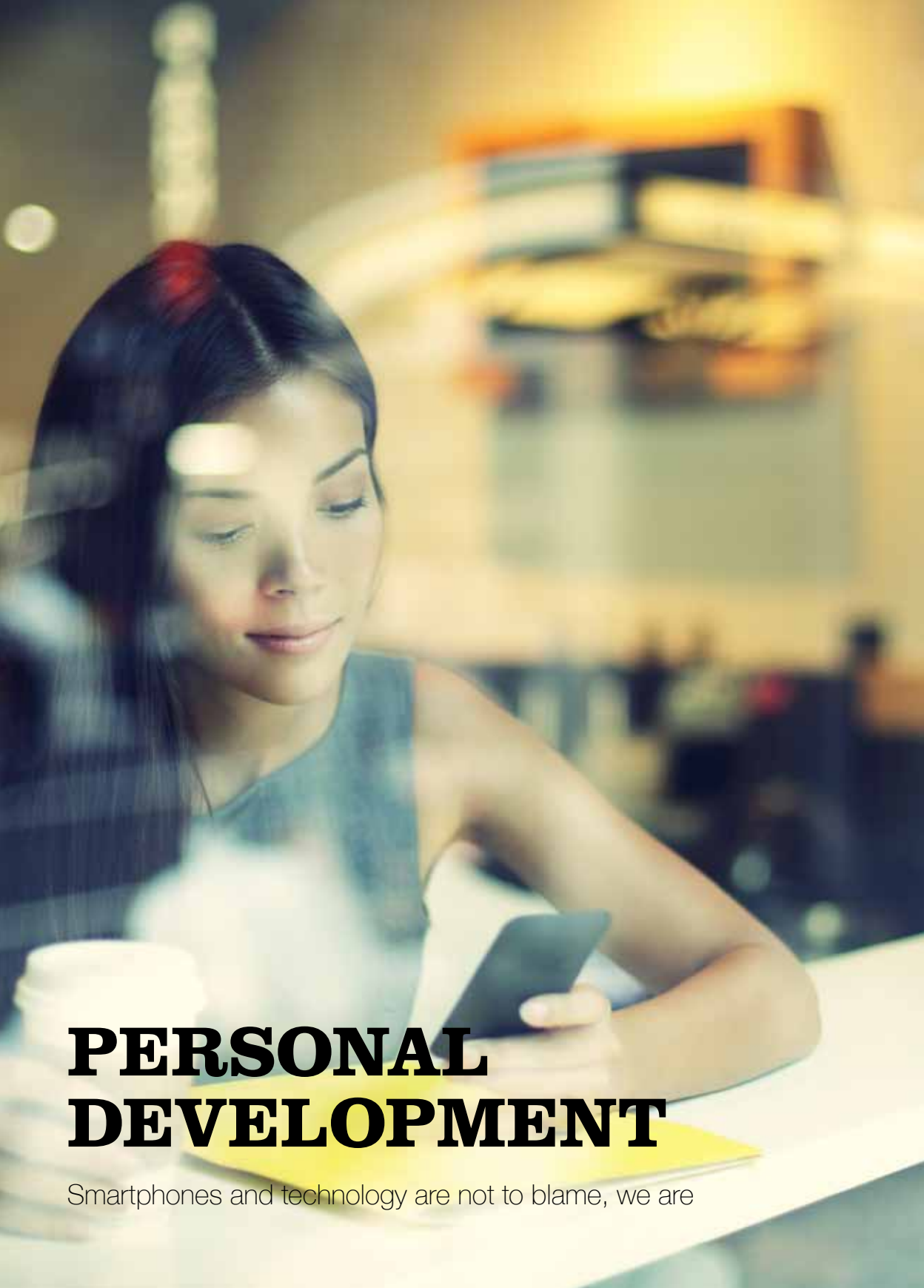


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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Smartphones and technology are not to blame, we are

Exercise is infectious

Kate Cracknell, myASPRIA contributor, looks at a new survey on our exercise habits



If you're struggling to stick to your exercise routine, it's time to surround yourself with like-minded individuals – because the more your friends exercise, the more you will.

"This year, I'm going to exercise regularly and get fit."

We've all been there haven't we, setting ourselves a new year's resolution to get in shape and get fit. And it's so easy to say on 1 January.

Yet it's so hard to do in practice - as the

novelty wears off, we realize how much time it's going to take to actually get fit, and obstacles place themselves between us and our gym visits: long days of work, family commitments, dinner with friends...

So how can we help ourselves?

Make friends at the gym

Well, here's the good news: it turns out that exercise is infectious: surround yourself with networks of friends who exercise and it can positively influence your own exercise habits.



How so? Did you know that if you've made a friend at the gym in the last three months, you're 40% less likely to give up on your gym membership than those who haven't? As the UK researchers behind this study conclude, it's a great reason to start making connections at the gym, surrounding yourself with people who will hold you accountable – albeit in a nice way, because you don't want to miss out on a gym session with them.

And now researchers from the MIT Sloan School of Management have found that 'peer pressure' is as evident in fitness as in other areas of life, with our own activity levels influenced by the activity of our friends: the more our friends exercise, the more we will.

The power of your social network

In coming to this conclusion, the researchers focused on running, looking at whether someone's global network of friends would affect how far they ran. To do this, they analysed fitness tracker data that was posted to a social media site by around 1.1 million

people over a period of five years.

Acknowledging that individuals will have deep-rooted, and often unobservable, reasons for behaving in a particular way, the researchers focused on the weather as a naturally occurring variable – something they could observe and that could be expected to

influence people's propensity to run, without needing to delve deeper into people's very diverse behavioural drivers.

The team reasoned that good weather would encourage longer runs, while bad weather would result in shorter runs. They hypothesised that when people in one location experienced good weather and

extended their runs accordingly, their friends in different locations would see this and also extend their runs – even though they were experiencing different weather. This hypothesis was proven across the board.

However, how strongly people were affected by their friends did vary depending on their profile.

“THE MORE OUR FRIENDS EXERCISE, THE MORE WE WILL”



Exercise is especially infectious for men

Men appeared to be more easily influenced than women and were particularly influenced by their male friends.

Women were moderately influenced by other women, but unaffected by men.

Runners who were typically lazier had a strong influence on their more active friends: their active friends didn't want to feel they were being left behind in their training efforts.

The opposite, however, was not true: less active people were very used to seeing (and ignoring!) status updates from their active friends and tended to just carry on as normal.

Who will be your exercise influencers?

If you're struggling to stick to your exercise routine, it seems you need to surround yourself with friends of the same gender who are being active, and whose activity will spur you on to be active yourself.

It could be as simple as agreeing with your friends that you'll do a class together; you're much less likely to drop out if you feel you'll be letting your friends down.

But why not harness the power of your social media network too? Rather than leave it to

chance that you'll see updates, you and your friends could create a group and all agree to post workout updates as a way to keep each other motivated. It then doesn't matter if you come to Aspria on your own or with friends – you'll still want to do it so you don't get left behind by your online group.

And if you really want a kickstart when you're feeling demotivated, let's hope one of your less active friends posts an update on social media about a great workout they've just done!

Find your health & fitness club on www.aspria.com 

“SURROUND YOURSELF WITH FRIENDS OF THE SAME GENDER”

Detox from your phone

In the first of our slightly different detox articles **Karen Northfield** offers tips on winning the mobile battle

There is a saying that goes: "It's not you that owns your car but your car that owns you." In the same way we could say this of our phones. Smartphones empower us in many ways, helping us to be more independent and productive in many aspects of our lives. However, some of us are spending more time on our phones than we are with other human beings to the point that they are taking over our time and mental cognition. Are we conscious of just how engrossed we have become in the digital and the virtual worlds? If you're reaching for your phone the moment you wake up or looking at social media posts before you go to sleep, it's worth questioning the relationship you have with your phone. Feeling incomplete, awkward or anxious without your device are signs of addiction. More and more studies are suggesting that the use of consumer electronics along with social media



**“ WHEN WE
REACH THIS
LEVEL, ALL
BARRIERS DROP ”**

have harmful and toxic effects on our brain. Overconsumption can lead to brain fog, loss of cognition and disruptive sleep or insomnia. The good news is, it's not too late to 'detox' from your digital device. Starting a digital cleanse is the same as eliminating foods and substances that are harmful to our health. It is useful to access how much and what you are using your phone for, and what steps you can take to consume healthily. The good news is, it's not too late to 'detox' from your digital device.



Digital addiction

Starting a digital cleanse is the same as eliminating foods and substances that are harmful to our health. It is useful to access how much and what you are using your phone for, and what steps you can take to consume healthily.

It's hard to imagine our lives today without a smart phone. And yet, just a few decades ago we left our phones - landlines mind you - at home. Our phones today have taken such a dominant and central role in our lives that we have become reliant on them. They are sophisticated to the point of enabling us to connect for business, social engagement and pleasure. When Steve Jobs announced the original iPhone a decade ago, it would soon disrupt many industries and create others. Most people don't buy digital cameras or alarm clocks any more as these are incorporated in smartphones. CDs, DVDs and PlayStations have become old-fashioned. Instead we consume music and videos digitally. Fax machines and desk computers are antique.

We can photograph, scan, attach and send documents directly with our phones. We can even shop and complete banking transactions without having to go in person to the bank. Additionally, smartphones can be viewed as an extension of our brain in that they come with a certain amount of storage or 'memory'. Smartphones allow us to do everything with one single device - on the go.

Our phones contain more processing power than the first rocket ever launched into space. Every year, newer devices are unveiled with a new design and new 'spec' to outperform the competition. Businesses understand the brain's addiction and entice us into staying switched on by consuming their apps

and social media. In today's world we have become so obsessed with buying the latest version and so engrossed in our devices that the average user is engaged between three to five hours (even up to eight hours) and checks their device as often as 150 times over the course of a day. The extent of consumption is affecting our behavior. Just as a child with a toy, when separated from our devices we can get irritable and moody. Our use of them

**“ IT'S WORTH
QUESTIONING
THE RELATIONSHIP
YOU HAVE WITH
YOUR PHONE ”**



has turned into a dependency or an addiction. An addiction (just like sugar or tobacco) raises the level of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that is released when the brain expects a reward or new information. When the level of dopamine drops, our mood changes and we crave more of the addiction. When we reach this level, all barriers drop. The brain does not know when it's had enough. So we consume more and more in order to satisfy our mental stimulation.

Tips for detoxing

I recommend using the Moment App to check just how often you use your phone. Over the course of one week, seek to connect less and less to your phone by applying the tips below so that by the end of the week you will have significantly reduced your time spent on it. Here is a list of tips, try them out for yourself:

- Disable alerts and notifications
- Establish phone-free zones (leave it outside bedroom and bathroom)
- Switch it off in the evening before your curfew
- Clear out unnecessary apps (access social media from a computer)
- Don't take it into work meetings
- Use airplane mode at work (only turn it on during breaks)
- Use airplane mode while on vacation (your battery will last longer so you can make it through a day of taking pictures and looking up directions and things to do and see)

Go back to basics:

- Go back to using a 2G phone
- Favour voice calls over texting and social media
- Read magazines and crossword puzzles while going to the toilet

Challenge: can you make it through an evening without your phone?

The next time you go out to dinner, have everyone place their phones in a stack in the middle of the table. The first person to reach for their phone must pay for everyone's dinner!

Take the challenge

Smartphones and technology are not to blame, we are. We have allowed ourselves to become so attached and dependent to the point of becoming addicted. Remember, technology itself is not a bad thing, it all depends on how it is used. Take the challenge to use the month of March to march away from your phone. Disconnecting for as little as one hour a day can give you a renewed sense of energy. You'll find more time for other activities and appreciate just how much more you can get done when you're not 'switched on'. By consuming less you'll reclaim and appreciate time for yourself, your family, relationships and social gatherings, and you'll regain mental cognition such as improved focus, attention, productivity and sleep! 📱



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Emotional detox

In our second detox article, intuitive healer **Katarina Winslow** invites us to listen to the voice in our head



We all have that little 'should' voice in our head, saying I should eat less, I should exercise more, I should quit smoking, I should become a vegetarian... I should do a detox. And it continues: I should know better, I should be more positive, I should be more free, I should be more intelligent, I should, I should and I should... I should do an emotional detox.

The voice of knowing what we should do is, indeed, the voice of a better version of ourselves. We constantly listen to it but in most cases do not follow it. Often, it is a voice that is simply present in our consciousness, just changing subject and form. Sometimes, of course, we do listen, and we do obey it but then only for a while, a few months, a few

weeks, a day, or just a fleeting moment. More often than not, once we act and actually embrace the 'should', we end up in our old behavioural patterns with the 'should' still there, or we replace it with something else that we should. We end up in the place where we feel safe, even if it is not perfect, or less than life could be.

More than anything, we end up with the comfort of having a 'should' as a companion. A companion that keeps repeating that you are less than you could be, and that there is a slimmer, better and more beautiful version of you - somewhere. We feel secure in the way things have always been; in a way we are attached to our 'shoulds'. If we actually acted on our 'shoulds', they would disappear. Then

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“ IF WE ACTUALLY ACTED ON OUR ‘SHOULD’S’, THEY WOULD DISAPPEAR ”



there would be acceptance, uncertainty and freedom. With our companion present, we are at least certain that there is something to fix. How sad to lose such a precious friend, the one that is constantly telling us that we are not good enough! That we are not perfect the way we are.

We would benefit tremendously from acting on our 'shoulds', so that we could become free from this negative friend of ours. Or our second best option: get the voice out of our minds once and for all and be free to just be, without any guilt. When you realize that a 'should' not acted on is like a demoralizing friend, you could either take action to follow the advice or accept yourself with your imperfections. To stop demoralizing yourself,

either change and be happier, or do not change and let go of the guilt, and be happy anyway. 'Should' is like an extra icing on our imperfections. Not like the one on the cake, but like a thick layer of cloudy black smoke, preventing you from accepting yourself just the way you are. To be allowed to exist, to fully live and be happy. Perfect imperfections included.

To detox has become a fashionable thing to do, and it is in fact extremely beneficial for your whole being, both physically and emotionally. During any detox, you get closer to who you would be if you were perfect. Detox is a kick-starter to finally listen to the voice that knows. During detox, your body is cleansed from sugar and toxins. You get even further benefits from getting in touch with your true feelings,

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Self-help

embracing any unpleasant feelings and the non-expressed frustrations that tend to emerge during the detox. During detox, all that was hidden inside tends to become visible so that you can get closer to your true self. The emotional detox, included in any physical detox, removes old emotions and liberates you.

To focus on something that we do not like about ourselves is deeply human, as if we were not good enough just the way we are. We miss out on precious life concentrating on something that needs to be fixed and changed before we can really live.

There are things that everybody knows are bad like alcohol, cigarettes, fattening food - the list is endless. But there are many other things that are regarded as good even though they are just a form of comfort. Things that you need to do, or things that you focus on, be it TV shows, frequent naps, meditation and yoga, or needing 20 supplements a day and only organic vegetables otherwise you freak out, or checking your mobile every two seconds to see if your partner has sent you a text. We are all more or less attached to something to soothe ourselves, and if not an addiction most people are at least a little obsessed about one thing or another.

It can be your partner, your hobby, your children, your colleagues, the way you feed yourself, your clothes, your appearance, learning, cleaning, your dating app - just about anything. We are not that different from one another when we scratch beneath the surface; everybody is obsessed about something. So, just relax, it is all going to be fine in the end. We are human. We are not supposed to be perfect.

The small things that we focus on are not addictions. To be addicted is a completely different story. When you are addicted, your life



suffers because you need something outside of yourself, something that is slowly destroying you, and probably people around you as well. Maybe you are stuck and have not even acknowledged to yourself that you have a problem. Then it's time for a serious detox, and you need outside help. First to accept you have a problem, then to acknowledge the truth. As in the AA, acknowledging that you are powerless in the face of alcohol. Or like with bulimia, that you are powerless in the face of food. Or like with anorexia, that you are powerless in the face of not wanting to feed your physical body. Or with sex addictions, that you are powerless in the face of sex. Or with workaholics, powerless in the face of having to perform, or as a shopping addict powerless in the face of spending too much. Anything that is present in your head at all times is an addiction. Anyone who has been addicted, and recovered, has a lot of wisdom to bring to this world. In the powerlessness of an addiction, we are certainly less than we could be.

When we lose our power, we lose ourselves.

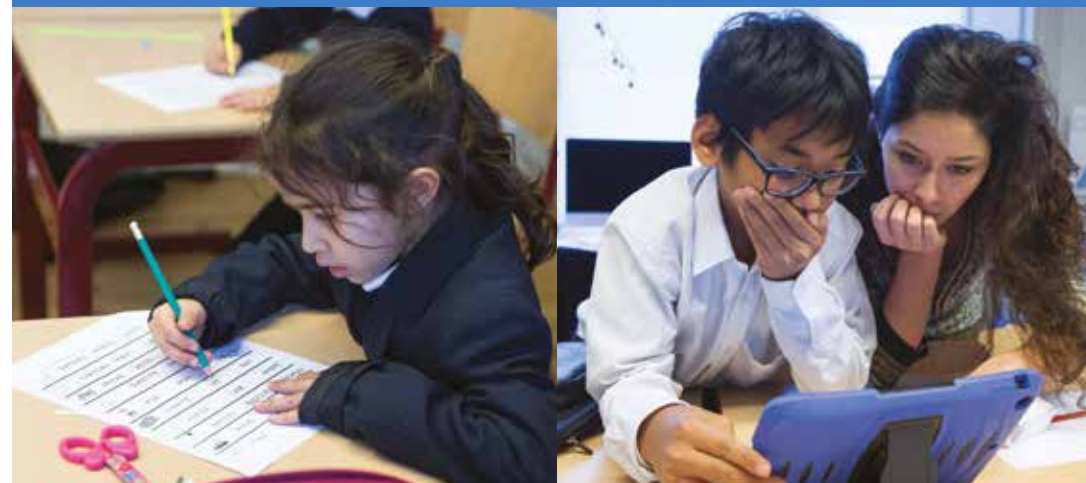
Let us regain our power by accepting our small perfect imperfections, and let us show the way for the people who need us to help them detox.

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The rituals of life

Sarbani Sen takes a broad look at the rituals that govern different cultures



When we experience violent or important events in our lives, the brain often perceives this as a shock - an unusual event that disrupts the course of things, or alters it: a death, a birth, a move, a separation, an accident, a sale, etc.

But in a more and more globalized, smoothed environment, where culture is mixed, particularisms are lost, and with them the rituals of our ancestors. A

piece of humanity is lost. Of course, the consumer society has been careful to keep the so-called 'commercial' rituals such as Saint Valentine's Day and Saint Nicholas and Halloween. But it is important to reclaim certain rituals that mark the course of our stories, both

individual and collective. Since it would no longer be possible to adhere today to practices that no longer correspond to our current values, it is interesting to look at the creation and reintroduction of new rituals in life for the

few important steps in human life.

The best known are the rituals around birth (in Brazil there is for example the 'cha de nenem', feast of the

future mother who sees herself cherished with gifts for her and for her future baby), the ritual of the first meal (Mukhebbat in India, when the first teeth appear, the child is dressed and shown to his community), the ritual of the first menstruation or first sperm, the ritual of

“ THE UNDERLYING MEANING OF THINGS IS LOST ”

academic success (the famous Graduation in the United States), the ritual of leaving childhood and entering adulthood (many tribes in Africa have their rites), the ritual of marriage and the ritual of death are just a few examples.

These are ceremonies intended to help the subject overcome the crisis represented by a change in his or her physiological or social characteristics. They have an important role in strengthening the social order and the cohesion of the group. By respecting the social rites and the codes specific to the group's culture, each person in fact manifests his desire to be fully admitted to it, marks his belonging. But today, given the complexity and the mix of the majority of the population, which membership do we talk about? That of the original group? To the group we are currently forming? To both?

The constants of the rite are its repetition, its practice renewed identically, in a perpetually similar context. If we take the example of the funerary rite, it includes: a funeral ritual, a burial ritual (coffin or for Muslims on the right side of the earth towards Mecca, three shovels of earth by those close to Israelites), instructions on the tombstone, and possible bans (cremation, organ donation). Every culture has its own, often linked or grouped with religion. Religion has taken over and instituted these kinds of rites in order to maintain social cohesion in the group.

Western society, more and more liberated from all these dogmas and sectarian beliefs, was at the same time relieved of its panoply of rites. As a teenager, I questioned the importance and the meaning of the rites of my parents (Indian, Hindu, Bengali on one side and Protestant, German on the other, Belgian, atheist on the third). I questioned the need for presence at family meals, weddings, religious holidays, meaning and lack of communion. I felt that my friends had privileges in their social groups that we did not have (just the concept of godfather and godmother that we did not

really have in Indian culture has long disturbed me and my brother).

My parents never found the right explanation, which is often the case in cultural expats: the underlying meaning of things is lost, but only the ritual remains, often adapted to modernity and the local possibilities. Funnily enough, I only became interested in all this at university during my sociology, then anthropology studies.

Secular rituals in secular life

However, we all have our rituals, individual or collective, which are more or less governed by time and space. They are constituted by rites, that is to say, a set of immutable rules, fixing the course of a ceremony, which is public, thus exoteric or secret to be discrete,

therefore esoteric. With regard to individual rituals, we need only think of our habits such as meditation, prayer, reflection or less spiritual habits such as the systematic time of the coffee break, the bedtime story or the train schedule.

Although these habits are for the most part the result of improvisation or simply the consequence of the time that remains available to us during the day, these rituals have the particularity of allowing us to reassure ourselves and to plunge ourselves into an inner self, to somehow establish a balance sheet. This report is simply the daily reference point about our family balance, our emotional situation, our performance at work done the same day and our body condition.

Shamanic and masonic rituals

By comparison, and to look for the opposite extreme of a contemporary reality, let us observe what is still done today on the shamanic and masonic side. In masonic life, each symbol, each rite, each ritual has no other interest than a permanent individual search for light, but this research is generated

“ A PERMANENT INDIVIDUAL SEARCH FOR LIGHT ”



and activated by all the brothers in a lodge and this research continues in meditation and interpretation of the meaning of life in the secular world. The masonic ritual is an initiatory vehicle that leads us on the path of the search for truth. A universal tool with which each brother can work intuitively, by means of his five senses, in order to awaken and develop his individual consciousness.

The meaning of the masonic ritual is to make each person Receiver and Donor, Student and Teacher, Apprentice and Master. It aims to encourage us to a state of fraternal sharing, thus enabling us to awaken to a permanent evolution of the mind and the heart. It is a link between the visible and the invisible, between the microcosm (man) and the macrocosm (the universe). In the shamanic life, we work with the elements of nature, the seasons, the solstices, the end of the harvests or the beginning of the harvest. So many rituals related to primary agricultural life, which was the basis of life at one time.

The ritual as active meditation

Active, because its action is greatly increased by the invocations. Just as the person who pronounces them does not have the right to

ignore its scope and meaning, those who listen to them must be in perfect symbiosis with them too. Then there is the support of symbols and some sacred geometries (yantras or mandalas as we call them in Hindu science). Furthermore, in rituals the individual goes through certain paths identical to those of meditation: silence, abnegation, devotion and love among others. This goes against the current tense rationalism of society, profane or not. Our society has unfortunately gradually cut its roots and has, in this way, broken most of its contacts with the living source of a culture and a tradition where it drew the best of herself.

This is how civilizations die, for having confused umbilical cord and silver cord, the modern world is deeply engaged in a process of self-destruction.

To sum up, we could say that in rituals, whatever the work on the agenda, whatever the nature of the work and the discussions and analyses that result from it, the main goal is to invoke, call and redistribute the energy that is given by the group. ❶

“ A PERMANENT INDIVIDUAL SEARCH FOR LIGHT ”

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Success: The easy life

Gemma Rose wonders whether true success lies within choosing an easier life

My Dad has often

complained about not being fully accomplished in life. I found his regret very strange, because to me he has achieved so much. He grew up in a small town in northern Malaysia. His father had four wives and left my grandmother alone with five children and no child support. From about four-years-old, my Dad was shunted around from one family member to another, never really having much food or many clothes to wear. He was poor.



Photo © Alexandra Goodman

Yet, his saving grace was a scholarship to boarding university in London. He has his jobs. He has a long, healthy children. By an would say that my Dad I think, however, that I've underachievement. fairly accomplished. I job, I am in good health, I live in a lovely apartment, I am married to someone honourable and good. But, on the grand scale of things, I could have achieved more.

In the book *What's it all about? Philosophy and the meaning of life*, the philosopher Julian Baggini,

**“ONE WOULD SAY
THAT MY DAD HAS
ACCOMPLISHED A
LOT”**

his intelligence. It got him school, and then to rose to senior positions in strong marriage and five objective standard, one has accomplished a lot. inherited his sense of Objectively speaking, I am have a fairly distinguished

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Be Successful

explores what it means to be successful, referring to a number of fictional characters who struggle to achieve success as illustration. For George Bailey, the main character of the film *It's a Wonderful Life*, he is dissatisfied with where he has ended up - living a very ordinary life in small-town America - and contemplates committing suicide. His guardian angel shows him all the lives he has touched and at the end of the film, he realizes that he has led a good life and is valued and appreciated by those who matter to him. His life has been a success, but not the kind of success that society tends to value.

In the play *The Seagull* by Anton Chekhov, Baggini cites the example of three characters: a celebrated writer who wishes he was more successful; a moderately successful writer who envies the success of the celebrated one; and the civil servant who envies the success of the moderate one because he failed to even try to become a writer. Thus, Baggini notes that success tends to be subjective, relative only to people more successful than us (rather than less), and elusive. Life cannot be meaningful if all it depends on is being successful, can it? Because if it does, then what happens when we have reached that success? Does life become meaningless after it? And if the purpose of life is to be successful then what happens to those who do not succeed? Are their lives pointless? Surely not, says Baggini. Rather success ought to be about becoming who we want to become by doing what we do. He refers to another character in Chekhov's play *Nina*. She is an actress and struggles to make a living but she is satisfied with life because she is an



“WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE HAVE REACHED THAT SUCCESS ”

actress by being one. This kind of success – being by doing - places meaning within our reach, because it focuses on the process, not the outcome. “Whether we want to become good parents, teachers, artists, firefighters or just decent people, life can have meaning if we strive to be who we want to be by doing what is necessary to become that person,” says Baggini.

In his book *Stand Firm: Resisting the Self-Improvement Craze*, professor Svend Brinkmann of Aalborg University in Denmark advises us to do away with being the best or doing the most. Instead, we should pride ourselves on being average. He sees more value in the George Bailey way of life than that of Chekhov's angst-ridden celebrated writer. He believes that the best way to live is to live

contentedly - integrity, dignity, character, loyalty and duty make up part of this.

I could have achieved more by becoming a celebrated writer or a savvy entrepreneur

curating Malaysian food. But every day, as Baggini says, “I am becoming by doing: I write a little, I cook a little.” At the same time, as Brinkmann recommends, “I want to be content: to earn a decent salary and work regular hours to be able to enjoy life.” Perhaps my wants and dreams can complement each other, or perhaps they can't. Maybe, to live the good life, my duty has to come before my passion. But if my duty consists of having a good enough job that pays the bills and leaves me enough time, energy and space to pursue my passion, then surely, that in itself is a success? 📌



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Pitch Anything by Oren Klaff

Our latest Be Successful book pages look at two authors offering powerful tips for long-term success

The full title of this innovative book is *Pitch Anything: An Innovative Method for Presenting, Persuading, and Winning the Deal*. When it comes to delivering a pitch, Oren Klaff has unparalleled credentials. Over the past 13 years, he has used his one-of-a-kind method to raise more than \$400 million—and now, for the first time, he describes his formula to help you deliver a winning pitch in any business situation.

Whether you're selling ideas to investors, pitching a client for new business, or even negotiating for a higher salary, *Pitch Anything* will transform the way you position your ideas.

According to Klaff, creating and presenting a great pitch isn't an art—it's a simple science. Applying the latest findings in the field of neuroeconomics, while sharing eye-opening stories of his method in action, Klaff describes how the brain makes decisions and responds to pitches. With this information, you'll remain in complete control of every stage of the pitch process.



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Fifty years on since he started his first business, Branson has brought out a new autobiography, *Finding My Virginity*, in which the Virgin Founder shares his personal, intimate thoughts on five decades as the world's ultimate entrepreneur.

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A happy life in the age of urgency

Dave Deruytter suggests we slow down our speedy lives



Relax... You can only do as much as you can at any given time. Do not worry about things you cannot influence, cope with them and work on those things you can influence. Plus, you need to get away from it all now and then, even away from the digital world that is always awake and changing fast.

**“ EMBRACE
CHANGE, GO
WITH THE FLOW”**

The fittest person or organization is not the one

who keeps on running fast until he or she hits the wall. The principle of the 'survival of the fittest' has been around forever in our world, and, when looking at history, it was clearly not always the fastest that survived. A continuously speedy life can eat your health away.

Waiting for Godot is not the best strategy either. We all know that Godot eventually did not come. Waiting whilst


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**“ BE CONFIDENT
IN YOUR FUTURE,
ALSO IN
YOURSELF ”**



Photo © Alexandra Goodman

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Self-help

the others advance is falling behind in relative terms.

From the sky your happiness or progress will not fall either. From the sky you merely get rain, snow or hailstones, or occasionally a meteor, or, sadly, an airplane crashing to Earth.

Then what is living a happy life all about? Balance! Yes, but that balance should be checked with the fast-changing times. Given that the current era is one of urgency, or speedy change, so must our balance parameters change at that same speed and in the same manner.

Relax... You are not alone. Everyone on our planet faces the same issues of urgency and change. Contribute to, but also rely on, your networks, your ecosystems.

Networks or ecosystems are magic once they know that you are a contributor to them. You will get back what you put in and more. Particularly the time and effort you put in is key - money alone is not enough, and not the most important input you have to give for you to thrive in your network or ecosystem. Make sure you inspire other people and are passionate about what you do. Others will do that too and they will follow you.

The key to a fulfilling life is also to have an added value, a purpose. That can be anything, but the fact of merely consuming other people's money does not count as an added value or valid purpose. Do things. Learn from failure. Act when you have 50% of the required information, do not wait for 100%, because by then the market has moved already. You should learn, improve or innovate on the go, on the job.

To be a leader is not a job-title, it is the result of what people do, most often inspiring, bringing passion, bestowing enthusiasm, showing energy and determination. All of that is of course never always or at the same time present in any single person. That is why success is all about diverse teams with a general common purpose or goal. All the team

members know that that purpose or goal can change.

Be confident in your future, also in yourself. If you are determined that you will learn from failure, you are in a strong position. Shy away from people or organizations that punish failure. Anyhow eventually they will fail, at least when compared to their peers who embrace it as a fast learning tool. Keep on moving is key. Keep on doing, learning, innovating, changing, living a happy life. The latter is easier than before, because in our digital world you can work anytime and from anywhere.

You can work from 7 to 11am, go to the beach from 11am to 4 pm, and work again from 4 to 8 pm, before enjoying the evening. That is 8 hours of work per day too. You can do your 40 hours per week also in four times 10 hours if you prefer, or even three times 12 hours plus four hours extra during the other days of the week. You can also do seven times five hours per day plus five hours extra during the weekend. The project approach in many businesses today can also lead to you working 60 hours per week for three months followed by a 1.5-month break. After which, it all starts over again.

Labour flexibility is ever more possible today, even in industry. Self-discipline is of course key, particularly when you are self-employed. Then you do not have an income when you do not work. There are more and more self-employed people in today's labour market.

In conclusion, embrace change, go with the flow. Anyway, the flow is so huge that going against it is not an option, since you would be swept away by it. Still, do not lose yourself in all that speed, or in the 24/7 availability of almost every service today. Such things are achieved by teams, in which everybody does his or her part, not by one person. Take your pauses, your rest and holidays and dare to even disconnect completely now and then. People will value you for it. We humans need to sleep eight hours per day - enjoy life, to renew your energy and focus, to keep on going strong and lead a happy life, even in the age of urgency. ❶

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CES 2018 - Highlights and no lights

Colin Moors goes behind the curtain at the latest geek fest in Las Vegas



At the beginning of every year in Las Vegas, CES takes place. Formerly known as the Consumer Electronics Show, the organizers moved the name from the 1990s to the 21st century and called it the much snappier 'CES' we geeky types now know and love. There was something of a surprise in store for the assembled Technorati this year though - a power outage.

All the lights and, of course, all the toys that exhibitors were showing off to potential early adopters were reduced to the efficacy of ornaments. With a decidedly above-average number of attendees having Twitter or live streaming from their mobile devices, the

news was out in minutes. It's entirely likely that the main source of light in the hall was the familiar glow of a tablet or phone. Being out in a desert can certainly cause issues, as it

“ IT'S NOT JUST A SLOPPY THROWN-TOGETHER COLLECTION OF COMPUTER KIT ”

transpired that the cause of the two-hour blackout was caused by the most Belgian of annoyances - rain. Their first rainfall in nearly four months had all come at once, it appeared and the place in which a shirt and light slacks are *de rigueur* just wasn't ready for it. NV Energy, the Nevada supplier, had it all in hand in around two hours, earning praise from the organizers and possibly learning a valuable lesson in contingency planning. After this brief dramatic interlude, it was on with the show.

Now, the thing with CES is that it's not just a sloppy thrown-together collection of computer kit like so many other shows are. Rather, it's an exposition of electronics from cars, to boats, TVs and audio equipment. On the subject of which, the must-have item in the world of audio his year is apparently the DS W2 cartridge from Japanese audio doyens JS Audio. It's the latest iteration of their optical cartridge system. For those not in the know, on a record deck there's an arm, which is the thing on a pivot that holds the needle. The cartridge is the thing that encases the needle. Put simply a regular cartridge will contain a magnet set between two electric coils. The magnet vibrates in response to the needle moving along the record and translates it into electrical signals sent to the amplifier.

With the DS W2, the magnet is replaced with - what else? - a laser. The company claim that using an optical signal to read the vibrations cuts down the interference on the needle itself and reduces the tracking force, causing less damage to the record. If this is the sort of thing that makes you drool, you just know there's bad news coming. Along with its own pre-amplifier (for boosting and 'cleaning' the signal) the whole affair will set you back in the region of €10,500 - happy shopping.

Something perhaps more of us are familiar with is the Samsung phone range. In recent months, Samsung have taken some serious flak on account of their now ubiquitous 'digital assistant', Bixby. Their latest range ships with

Bixby built in and a special button for calling the little bugger up if you want a recipe for moussaka, theatre tickets or to buy some flowers for your partner's birthday. It's basically Samsung's Alexa or Siri. Bixby is not loved by all, being notoriously easy to wake up, causing all sorts of music-hall high jinks. Samsung have also been very strident in killing any apps designed to re-map the button to something more useful than an over-sensitive yet bumbling assistant.



“ THE HIGHLIGHT FOR ME HAS TO BE THE SPARTAN ANTI-RADIATION BOXERS ”

perhaps a little harsh but if they're going to insist you talk to your fridge, they're going to have an uphill struggle convincing me. Besides, if you live in a small apartment and you shout "off", does your TV go into standby, or your freezer?

In quite the tangent, it appears L'Oréal have come up with something genuinely useful, because you're w...no, they get enough advertising as it is. Encapsulated in a fingernail sized sensor housing is their UV Sense technology. Being fingernail sized is particularly

The good/bad news is that Bixby is making its way to your TV, potentially giving you the opportunity to do all manner of things from the comfort of your sofa, except get out more. My regular readers will recall my take on possibly the most useless idea ever - the Samsung fridge with a built-in tablet screen. Well, guess what? Yep, Bixby will be shoehorned into a fridge near you very soon. Samsung have gone from a major innovator to the most blatant pedlar of novelty nonsense in the world of electronics. OK, that's



useful, as it's intended to be worn on a fingernail. The astute will have already guessed it meters ultraviolet (UV) light. Containing said UV sensor, a heat sensor and an NFC device to allow communication with your smartphone of choice. With storage enough to track three months of exposure, this device could well be useful for those who travel a lot and aren't as canny as the locals in staying out of the sun. The company plans to increase the range of methods by which it can be worn in the near future too, in case nail art isn't your thing.

Naturally there were dozens of TVs, phones and the like and the usual amount of smart augmented reality everywhere, each as ugly as the last and with the added bonus of making you look a bit of a nincompoop walking down the road, talking to yourself and looking like a failed Roy Orbison impersonator. No, the highlight for me has to be the Spartan Anti-Radiation boxers. One of the few items that aren't voice controlled, nor claim to be, these boxer shorts (trunks, to be more specific) will protect your, er, 'guys' from the deadly radiation emitted by the phone in your trouser pocket. Several serious studies have suggested that radiation affects motility and quality, so it's Spartan to the rescue, with

pants made with silver fibres woven in. The silver effectively blocks any radiation, reducing the risk to nearly zero. Of course, if you're one of those people prone to walking into lamp posts while on your phone, there's not a pair of pants in the world that'll help. ❶

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Turkey improving relations with EU

Gerry Callaghan looks at Turkey's problematic push for visa-free travel



On 26 March, EU and Turkish leaders will meet in Varna, Bulgaria in efforts to renew strained ties between the blocs.

Turkey wants to improve relations with the European Union and will seemingly press for visa-free travel for its citizens during the upcoming EU-Turkey summit in Bulgaria's Varna in March. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan will meet European Council President Donald Tusk, European Commission President

“ THE EU IS SLOWLY CLOSING ITS DOOR ”

Jean-Claude Juncker and European leaders in the Bulgarian Black Sea city on 26 March. However, given the events of the past few years and Turkey's unwillingness to protect the rights of its citizens, visa-free travel is an unlikely outcome of the summit.

In 2013 the European Union offered Turkish citizens the prospect of visa-free travel on the condition that Ankara met 72 criteria on democratic rights, primarily in freedoms of

thought and expression, civic society, economic transparency, the judiciary and tackling corruption. Visa-free travel for Turkish citizens was also a key issue in the refugee deal Turkey and the EU signed in March 2016. Ankara was supposed to meet all of the criteria by the end of that June, but failed to do so. The EU said seven criteria remained outstanding which infringed on the freedoms of thought and expression. President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, in a speech on 6 May 2016, said Turkey remained under the threat of terrorism and criticized European authorities for tolerating exiled supporters of the armed Kurdistan Workers Party, or PKK, considered a terrorist group by Ankara. “We're going our way, you go yours,” said the Turkish leader. In July of the same year, a failed coup attempt resulted in the declaration of a state of emergency, which is still ongoing. The aftermath saw a heavy-handed crackdown on opposition leaders and supporters, marked by mass purges at public institutions and universities resulting in the arrest of journalists, academics, politicians and parliament members. The crackdown sunk Turkey-EU relations to a new low. Yet Erdoğan has taken up the issue of EU membership anew, including during recent trips to France and Italy, amid growing talk of normalizing ties with the EU. At the beginning of February, Turkey submitted documents to the European Commission, saying it had fulfilled the outstanding criteria for the visa waiver. “The ball is now in the EU's court,” said Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu.

However, the seven outstanding criteria identified by the EU required Ankara to introduce biometric passports for its citizens, adopt measures to fight corruption, align its anti-terror legislation with EU standards, conclude an operational cooperation accord with Europol, adopt rules on the protection of personal data in line with EU norms and cooperate efficiently with all EU countries on issues related to fighting crime and fully implement the terms of the refugee deal.

Turkey has since begun issuing biometric passports and adopted a law on the protection of personal data but the EU has deemed those steps insufficient and not fully compliant with its standards. On the issue of combating corruption, then-Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu had unveiled a ‘transparency package’ in 2015, but planned measures were shelved after vocal objections from Erdoğan. Davutoglu was eventually forced to step down, and his successor Binali Yıldırım has never revisited the issue.

For the EU, the amendment of anti-terror legislation is a top priority. Ankara has not only failed to make any move to meet the EU's demands, but it has continued to arrest and prosecute opponents on terror-related charges. Most recently, the judiciary targeted members of the pro-Kurdish Peoples’

Democratic Party ahead of the party's convention in Ankara in mid-February.

Meanwhile, the European Parliament, a key player in winning the visa waiver, passed a harsh resolution

condemning Ankara's emergency rule, political pressure on the judiciary, arbitrary arrests of dissidents, suppression of the media and attempts to silence opponents. The resolution acknowledged that terrorism remained a threat for Turkey but stressed that “the broadly defined Turkish anti-terrorism legislation should not be used to punish citizens and media for exercising their right of freedom of expression”. To which the Turkish Foreign Ministry responded by calling the resolution “null and void”.

Just days earlier, EU leaders had announced they would hold a summit with Erdoğan to review the state of EU-Turkish relations on 26 March 2018. Turkey wanted the summit to take place in Brussels, but the EU chose the city of Varna in Bulgaria, which is currently holding the rotating presidency of the bloc. The relegation of the venue suggests the EU is trying to give the meeting a low profile. The

“ ANTI-TERROR LEGISLATION IS A TOP PRIORITY ”



invitation to Erdoğan says the agenda will focus on issues related to the supremacy of law and basic freedoms. Given Ankara's toughening practices under the state of emergency, the Varna summit seems unlikely to yield any substantial results toward improving ties.

Moreover, in Germany, the coalition protocol between the Christian Union parties and the Social Democrats suggests that the EU door will be closing for Turkey. The protocol states that progress on Turkish demands such as the revision of the Turkey-EU customs union accord and the abolition of visa requirements will depend on Ankara's fulfillment of its obligations. On the issue of membership talks, the protocol continues the current freeze. It describes Turkey as an important partner for Germany and an "EU neighbour", dropping the reference to "strategic" cooperation used in the previous protocol.

"THE EU IS SLOWLY CLOSING ITS DOOR"

On 6 February, the European Commission announced a new strategy to expand into the Western Balkans, setting 2025 as the target year for the first accessions. Serbia and Montenegro appear first in line for the next enlargement, a strategy in which Turkey is not featured. As the European Parliament's resolution underscores, any visa waiver for Turkey requires first and foremost the lifting of the state of emergency and an end to the suppression of opposition, namely the media and other government critics.

decrees, the restriction on the rights of defence lawyers and the detention of hundreds of people for "terrorist propaganda" over social media posts will not satisfy EU leaders. With more than 150 journalists behind bars, Ankara's argument that they landed in jail because of links to terrorist groups and not solely by carrying out their occupation is left wanting. Any visa waiver will require the approval of the European Parliament and the European Council. The European Parliament's resolution already shows that almost no political bloc will be willing to vote in favor of such a gesture to Turkey. And with Germany and France floating an alternative status for Turkey less than membership, the country's accession appears off the table for the foreseeable future, until at least 2025.

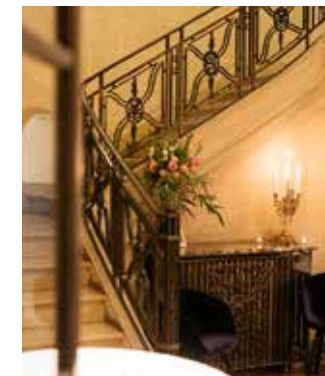
To avoid the full alienation of Turkey and its citizens, the EU might consider a limited visa waiver covering certain groups such as businesspeople, scientists, artists and civil society activists. Yet, inevitably, it would still require the lifting of emergency rule, the release of jailed journalists, steps to ensure judicial independence and the narrowing of the scope of terror crimes to exclude the expression of opinion. In conclusion, Turkey is unlikely to emerge with a visa waiver programme at the summit in Varna on 26 March, and the EU is slowly closing its door. If Turkish leaders do not address the issues outlined in the European Parliament's resolution, a new crisis in EU-Turkey relations might be just over the horizon. ①



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Paganini used to play during the summer evenings for Napoleon's sister, Princess Elisa Bonaparte Baciocchi

LIFESTYLE

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Villa Antinori di Monte Aguglioni, Florence

This beautiful historic villa, located on a scenic position, on one of the hill tops on the left side of the river Arno a few kilometres from Florence, once belonged to one of the great families of the Tuscan wine tradition from the late 19th century until the middle of last century. This villa, located just five kilometres from Florence, is rich in history. From 1498 to 1517 it was owned by the powerful del Giocondo family who owned the famous Mona Lisa, wife of Francesco del Giocondo, called *La Gioconda*, painted by Leonardo Da Vinci in 1505.

This is a rare complex from the 16th century, constituted by the manor house, the keeper's lodgings and other rural buildings. The property is surrounded by splendid parks and gardens, tree-lined alleys, vineyards and olive groves. A

large wood surrounds and shelters this dreamlike property. There are two entrances: the main and original one is an iron double gate that allows access through a driveway, lined by cypress trees, that leads to the Italian style garden rich in ornamental plants and basins.

The main body of the villa, with a total floor space of 2,800 m², is constituted of three levels and a basement floor: on the ground floor, in correspondence with the loggia at entrance level, we find a grand entrance hallway, five halls, a large lounge, a corridor, a kitchen, a service entrance, two bathrooms, a closet and a technical room; in the basement there are three large rooms, a large gallery with access to the park, a kitchen, a dining room, two storage rooms, two bathrooms, three technical rooms and a cellar; on the first floor there are the sleeping quarters with five

Luxury



bedrooms one of which with a veranda decorated with stain glass and wrought iron, three walk-in wardrobes, five bathrooms, a fantastic library, a closet and a small balcony on the front face of the building; on the second floor there are two more bedrooms, a fitness room, a study, two bathrooms and a vast terrace called 'dell'orologio' (literally "the clock's terrace"), that offers a spectacular view of the plain of the city of Florence.

The floors connect to each other by wonderful internal staircases but also by a practical elevator.

An additional feature that adds value to this luxury property is the chapel, typical of prestigious period dwellings and a precious example of the devotional architecture of the 18th century. Among the many outbuildings we find the lemon conservatory, a second conservatory and a warehouse.

The current decor of this luxury villa is of total prestige, with the façade featuring a large clock that was fixed on request of the Marquise Antinori in the early 1900s, when the great works of restoration were directed by her brother, architect Egitto Fabbri, who was an artist and art collector.

An ulterior added value to this period dwelling, rich in architectural and historic value, is the immediate proximity to the main Tuscan cities of San Gimignano, Siena, Pisa, Lucca and other localities like Chianti and the Tyrrhenian coast, all rich in artistic, architectural and natural beauty. **Price on application.** (Ref: 0966)



A luxury hotel in the heart of Brussels


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A prestigious Venetian palace

This stunning, Neo-gothic-style historic estate is for sale today in the centre of Venice, just a few steps away from the Grand Canal. This building, which still maintains its old splendour, was owned by eminent people like Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino and Giovanni Battista Donà. The estate was redrawn thanks to two main restoration works: the first were done by Giovanni Battista Meduna who, between 1847 and 1848, renovated the interiors, while the second were in the following century. The estate's great monumental door leads to a 700m² large central courtyard with the palace built around it. The piano nobile features, instead of the classic portego (state room), some rooms

adorned with precious details such as stuccoes, coffered ceilings, some beautiful polychrome glass windows, fireplaces and columns. This luxury property is currently used as a private home but has great potential and could be converted into a tourist accommodation facility. It would, in fact, be perfect as a luxury hotel in one of Italy's most beautiful cities of art. Its 6,125m² surface area (5,300m² for the villa and 825 m² for the showroom) is another strength of this high-quality estate, which is so well-located and with great potential. This is a truly wonderful estate in the stunningly unique Venetian landscape. **Price on application.** (Ref: 1343)



Luxury villa near the beach in Roccamare

Just a few metres from the beach, immersed in the quiet pine forest typical of Roccamare, this beautiful luxury home boasts a surface area of 420m² and is surrounded by 4,000 m² of luxuriant garden, which houses a large bean-shaped pool with sunlounger to comfortably sunbathe while remaining inside the property. The exterior, partly lawn and partly paved, with tall pines that provide shady spots, is equipped with comfortable chairs and tables to stay outdoors and eat al fresco. The exposed stone that covers the outside of the villa is perfectly integrated with the enchanting natural setting in which it was built. Upon entering, there is a large open space

decorated in shades of white and turquoise, with large glass windows that create a continuum between the inside and outside, furnished with beautiful sofas overlooking the garden. The villa has a total of nine bedrooms and five bathrooms. All of the rooms are familiar and comfortable, enjoy great privacy, and there are also open spaces where you can comfortably accommodate many guests. In the beautiful resort town of Roccamare, just steps away from the beach, this magnificent dream house surrounded by pine forests will be an oasis of peace for anyone who stays here.

Price: **€5m-€10m** (Ref: 1080)



Villa Reale di Marlia

Once the residence of Napoleon's sister, princess Elisa, and of the first King of Italy Victor Emanuel II of Savoy, I'm afraid you've just missed this one – it has been snapped up and is going to be converted into a super luxury dream hotel, all 18,000m2, including 70 historic villas and residences in the area of Lucca. The famous violinist Paganini used to play during the summer evenings for Napoleon's sister, Princess Elisa Bonaparte Baciocchi, in the spectacular Green Theatre. We are talking about the most celebrated historic villa in the province of Lucca, Villa Reale di Marlia. The estate was bought from the Pecci Blunt Counts, by a Swiss couple, who, after having it accurately restored, under the surveillance of the Arts Council, will open a dream hotel that aspires to be one of the prime extra luxury hotels in Italy. Among one of the

most representative Italian historic dwellings, Villa Reale di Marlia is one of the Monumental Villas of Lucca, which were built in the 15th century in the countryside surrounding the town of Lucca, by rich bankers and silk merchants. The villa is surrounded by a 19-hectare English style park, with parts of the garden original from the 1600s, including the magnificent Green Theatre, created in 1652, an open-air theatre, with walls of yew hedges and statues in terracotta, representing the characters of the Commedia dell' Arte. Among the numerous rooms of the villa is the grand ballroom where the princess used to give memorable parties. **Sold.**

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Bra: Love Stories

Mer Du Nord: De-coding the DNA that is MDN

Jeanie Keogh looks at a Belgian fashion brand that dares to care

Photo © Gregory Derkenne



Long-standing Belgian fashion label Mer du Nord, which now goes by the peppier acronym MdN, has undergone an interesting revival. When the company went into receivership three years ago, French businesswoman Dominique Nebbout Chekly was handed the challenge of bringing it back to life, thus becoming the fairy godmother of struggling fashion houses. Here's how the story goes...

Once upon a time, Mer du Nord found itself boxed in by its reputation as a staid fashion house. Nebbout Chekly, who was working as a fashion consultant after a 20-year history in strategic brand development for fashion houses such as Maja and Tara Jarmon, was

invited to cross the border from her native France to work her magic on Mer du Nord. Now she is in the process of nurturing it back to financial health and saving it from the brink of fashion extinction. As the new moniker suggests, MdN is more modern, with a touch of laidback bohemian added to the company's signature preppy and conservative style. The private school/horse riding look is still evident in the classic blazers with a gold-embossed MdN on the coat pocket, or the striped tunic dress with MDN embroidery, but there's a down-to-earth twist thrown in. The look says "dare me to care" while remaining decidedly chic.

I met up with Nebbout Chekly ahead of Paris



fashion week in January, where the spring/summer 2018 collection was to be presented, the second collection since she became artistic director of MdN a little over a year ago. She spoke about the transformation the brand has gone through under her leadership, as well as the reverence she has for Mer du Nord and its established prominence in the Belgian fashion market.

"There's still a history – it's a company that is going to celebrate its 30th anniversary in 2018. Today, you need to look at the present and the future and not look at the past. Yes, the past is

important because you need to examine it and try to see the DNA of the firm and the legacy that we need to preserve and respect. Beyond that, when it comes to the negative aspects,

“THERE'S A DOWN-TO-EARTH TWIST THROWN IN”

I'm not in denial, but we have to move forward, of course, while considering the brand. It's easier to launch a new brand, which includes other difficulties of course, but it was

more simple, in any case for me. But in this instance I think it's worth stretching out a bit. Today, there is a shortage of established companies. This brand has an effect on people in Belgium. Everyone knows Mer Du



Nord and people like the brand. It's true that this was a bit tarnished in its last seasons, but now we're giving it another life, which it deserves. It's a Belgian brand that is renowned and fashion comes from Belgium so it was a super challenge for me."

To wake up this "Sleeping Beauty", as she refers to it, she first spent six months focusing on getting to know its DNA and remaking the code, before thinking about collections. It was important, she said, to first identify the fundamentals of the brand, which came down to two things: timelessness and high-quality material. The newly-launched spring/summer collection has an androgynous theme, and Nebbout Chekly turned to men's clothing for inspiration for the designs, which are exclusively for women at the moment. Oversized boyfriend shirts feature highly, as well as men's silk pyjamas intended for loose summer streetwear. The poplin cotton is made by Thomas Mason in Italy and the embroidery is also done in Europe; the printing happens in

"LOOK AT THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE AND NOT LOOK AT THE PAST"



studio. There are plans in the works to add a men's line starting with a capsule collection – a few pairs of pants, a coat – and next year they are going to add accessories to their women's line, introducing bags and shoes.

"I want to go much, much further with this company. We have boutiques in Belgium, and we opened a boutique in Paris in Le Marais.

The idea is to really develop the online site because it's a storefront window that is accessible to everyone around the globe. The next step will be to work on exporting the brand, especially to Japan and to South Korea. But for the moment the concentration is on Northern Europe." In these times, converting a fashion house from passé to trendy is not as easy as waving a wand and turning Cinderella's rags into a ballgown, but here's hoping MdN goes on to thrive in the ever-changing world of fashion and lives happily ever after.
www.mdn-online.com



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www.godivachocolates.eu



Ice-Watch: LOVE!

From the forces of nature that is the Ice-Watch group (whose dynamic boss J-P Lutgen won Manager of The Year) comes some LOVE. A glance at the ICE love small (34 mm) models is enough to get the message across: LOVE! The four letters burst with passion on a red cherry or pink dial. Their look is perfect to celebrate the feelings that go bang! For the tenderness, there are hearts, all-white needles and the softness of the white or pale pink silicone bracelets. **€79**
www.ice-watch.com



Dior multicoloured crystals

For the spring-summer 2018, Maria Grazia Chiuri is inspired by the vocabulary of Niki de Saint Phalle, where bright colours speak of love, joy and happiness. Earrings, rings, necklaces as well as chokers have multicoloured crystals – these jewels embellished with multicoloured crystals can only make us happy.
www.dior.com

LeaRose

Perrine Leysen's ancestors have been jewellers for over five generations and she is carrying on the family tradition as is her father Henri and her brother Maxime, in charge of the famous Maison Leysen at the Grand Sablon in Brussels. From the beginning, she learned in jewellery workshops the magic of creating jewels. She brings together treasures that come from carefully selected designers, making sure the prices stay affordable
 Katy earrings. Silver: **€65**, Vermeil: **€75**
www.learose.be



Zadig & Voltaire x VK Lillie: Balance Collection

Ying and yang, black and white, masculine and feminine – often viewed as opposites yet one cannot exist without the other. Inspired by balance, VK Lillie creates a capsule collection for Zadig & Voltaire, SS18. Fingertips of red & blue vintage leather gloves are cut and hand-sewn with half white Quartz crystal and half black Obsidian - made only by the hands of Vanessa or Kira Lillie. A limited edition of 100 pieces, sold only in Paris and New York. Each piece numbered and is one of a kind. Quartz Crystal is the Master Healer and Obsidian is truth-enhancing, a strongly protective stone - it forms a shield against negativity.
www.zadig-et-voltaire.com, www.vklillie.com



PARA-COMMANDO WATCH PROJECT :
LIMITED EDITION FOR BELGIAN COMMANDO AND PARACHUTIST CARD HOLDERS
MORE INFO : GMTCHRONOGRAPHS@GMAIL.COM

LIFESTYLE

Shopping



Yvonne Leon at AXL store

Axelle Delhaye creates a refined and timeless collection of unique & distinctive jewels brought back to the present day. Each piece has its own history that can never be matched nor reproduced. Ancient symbols, Victorian motifs and long-lost memories are some of the designer's beloved directions, fulfilling her ideal vision of a playful sophistication. And of course she finds time and space to offer fine work from fellow craftsman and women. Yvonne Leon Earrings: **€2,125**
www.axelledelhaye.com

Caroline Biss

Big or small, tassels never go out of style. These finishing features have been spotted in different versions in many cultures around the world. These colourful ornaments just scream buy me, don't they?
€59.75
www.carolinebiss.com



Wouters & Hendrix

With every collection made, the designers tell a unique story. The stories of the collections come to life and are discovered through the artefacts they have collected over the years during their numerous visits and travels, giving new edge to their collections. Along the way, their mix of refinement and adventure became more and more sophisticated and so did the materials of their craft shifting from copper to Sterling Silver and semi-precious stones such as Onyx, Quartz, Moonstone, Mother of Pearl... **€220**
www.wouters-hendrix.com





LABELCHIC

French by birth but Belgian at heart, Océane moved to Brussels more than ten years ago. A long-time arts and crafts devotee, she spent several months travelling in Asia in search of the most remotely located craftsmen and women, from the highlands of Nepal to the steppes of Mongolia. This journey of a lifetime led to a blog on uniquely talented craftspeople.

At the same time, as part of her work as a trend consultant specializing in luxury, beauty and arts and crafts, she has identified what modern women want, taking an interest in little known and emerging skincare brands, who are shaking up and reshaping today's cosmetics landscape.

It is out of this dual passion and the desire to make what is a unique, personal form of luxury available to as many people as possible that LABELCHIC was born, redefining luxury skincare, to introduce women to an outstanding and carefully curated selection of masters of beauty, from Los Angeles herbalists to Beirut soapmakers employing time-honoured methods.

Every day, they gather and bring the best out

of the rarest, wildest and most powerful organic ingredients to offer our skin the finest and most natural of products. Each cleanser, cream and oil has been tested, analysed and unanimously approved by Océane and by the women and men around her, who marvel at her latest cosmetic creations, with their unique textures, captivating natural fragrances and immediate results.

Largely unavailable in Europe, these intimate yet outstanding brands are now waiting for beauty lovers to try at LABELCHIC.

The boutique is home to:

- A texture bar for smelling, touching and trying the finest blends.
- A "greenhouse of beauty" displaying some of the plants and flowers found in the products.
- A relaxing, inviting lounge for browsing through a selection of beauty books and magazines while sipping on a homemade lemonade.

We only have one skin, so let's take care of it. This intimate beauty space makes that possible.

LABELCHIC - Rue Antoine Dansaert 95
IG: @labelchic_brussels 📍



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are two wellness centres, where you can fully relax and recover. Both centres have two completely separate sections (bathing suit or nude area), with a wide variety of saunas, steam baths, swimming pools, jacuzzis, relaxation rooms and much more. Get yourself pampered in the beauty salon with a blissful massage or a facial treatment 7 days a week. Those who would like to turn it into a multi-day outing can book one of our hotel rooms. Would you rather enjoy a sauna and wellness in private? Then our private saunas offer the ideal solution. •



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NEW Essential Energy Moisturizing Cream

SHISEIDO
GINZA TOKYO

*Consumer test - 100 women - 4 weeks - Essential Energy Moisturizing Cream



LIFESTYLE

Beauty

French touch

Our beauty expert **Delphine Stefens** goes va-va-voom

The Parisian women's key to looking good and ageing even better is their effortless chic and... a little help from some French pioneering beauty brands and professionals. Luckily for us, some of the latter hold consultations in our capital as well.

Plumped skin

Martine de Richeville has gathered an international following with her signature fully manual kneading massage technique for remodeling one's silhouette. For a few years now, she's been offering her famous combination of stroking, palpating, rolling and lymphatic drainage outside of Paris and also applies it to the face, neck and yes, even the eyelids (!) for a rested look and above all improved skin elasticity.
info@martinedericheville and 02 534 5111.



Martine de Richeville



Dr. Nadine Pomarède



(2)



(4)

(1)

And add rosy glow with (1) **Lancôme's New Rénergie Multi-glow** cream (50ml/€50).

The (2) **Guerlain Spring Make-up** collection with its iconic météorites base and a beautiful heart shape powder (€56).

(3) **Lierac Double Peeling Supra Radiance** mask (75ml/€39.90) which launches in April, (4) **Caudalie French Kiss** lip balm (€12.30),

(5) **Dior Hydra Life Micellar** milk no rinse cleanser (€37.45) and last but not least some signature French va-va-voom with (6) **Chanel Limited Edition Cushion Chance Eau Tendre** fragrance touch up (€69) exclusively available online at chanel.com.

Fuller hair

Dr. Nadine Pomarède is a well-known dermatologist and author with offices in Paris and Brussels. Because 25% of women in their thirties and forties and 50% of those in their fifties and half the men suffer chronic hair loss, she now offers two state-of-the-art treatments based on regeneration to improve androgenic alopecia. The first is **Rigenera®** which mechanically isolates stem cells from the patient's hair follicles which are then injected in the scalp to boost density by encouraging the production of new follicles and vascularization. Then there are the tried and tested **Platelet-rich Plasma (PRP)** injections to slow down hair loss, thicken hair, improve density and boost its resistance. *Info@dermomedicalcenter.com* and 02 290 1888.



(6)

Massage

Institut de beauté

Cryothérapie

Chromothérapie

Manucure ProNails

Maquillage permanent

INSTITUT DE BEAUTÉ

Visage et Corps • Pour elle @ pour lui

Rajeunissement
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Pédicure
Manucure ProNails
Amincissement
Épilation définitive
Maquillage permanent

...

Brussels Design Market: The largest European vintage design market

We take a look at a wonderful design market that takes place in March and September



Brussels Design Market was founded 15 years ago. Initially it was simply a flea market exclusively devoted to productions from the 50s to the early 80s. Today, Brussels Design Market is considered to be one of the best events in Europe dedicated to vintage design of the 20th century. Twice a year, in March and in September, Brussels Design Market welcomes 100 exhibitors and over 7,000 visitors in an exceptional and very famous location: Sheds 3 and 4 of Tour & Taxis - home to the largest Belgian cultural events, shows and fairs.

Since its creation in 2002, the Brussels Design Market has evolved into the largest European

vintage design market and has quickly become a must-see in the international vintage design calendar. Maintaining its unique atmosphere usually characterized by flea markets, the Brussels Design Market has continued to attract more and more visitors from year to year and has developed into a real meeting place.

Brussels Design Market is not only a place to find original design pieces which have made the history of design, but also a welcoming place to meet and exchange. Besides buying a piece of Knoll, Eames, or Pesce, you will enjoy a break with a warm coffee or an original dish proposed by the quality food trucks on site.

19 / 05
MAISON
VERVLOET

Collection *Euclide*

Designed by Jean-François D'Or



Design



Novelty for this year - 40th anniversary of Dutch design icon: The Amsterdamdammer

Brussels Design Market presents an exceptional exhibition to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Amsterdamdammer Cabinet, a genuine design icon and one of the best-selling pieces of Dutch furniture of all time. The A'dammer has been part of the Pastoe collection since 1978, designed by Aldo van den Nieuwelaar. It has won a range of awards and is displayed in various museums. A'dammer is a distinctive example of furniture as a design object. The A'dammer trademark is the ribbed roll-top door, which can slide up and disappear into the back section of the cabinet. The ribs in this roll-top door provide a handle at any given height. The quirky image of the standing cabinet is further enhanced by the rounded top section.

A Brussels Design Market exhibition, presented in collaboration with Pastoe et Diito.

Rendezvous is given to design lovers and professionals, to dealers and collectors, in the historical and exceptional setting of the exhibition rooms - Sheds 3 and 4 - of Tour and Taxis!

The exhibitors

Brussels Design Market, the largest vintage market in Europe, includes more than 100 exhibitors from Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Denmark, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Austria, Switzerland and beyond.

“ A WELCOMING PLACE TO MEET AND EXCHANGE ”

Only exhibitors who display 20th century furniture and objects are accepted. Our goal is to provide customers with a maximum of authentic vintage design. At the Brussels

Design Market, visitors can discover furniture from across the globe including: Scandinavia, Belgium, France, Italy, America as well as ceramic and glass objects, collectables, and accessories made of metal, wood or Bakelite.





Brussels Vintage Market

For the second time, the Brussels Design Market is happy to present a vintage clothing area organized in collaboration with the Brussels Vintage Market, the monthly must-do event for vintage fashion lovers! Brussels' top two 100% vintage events will be joining hands to fly the flag of their favourite fetishes: fashion and design. Over 50 exhibitors specialized in vintage fashion will be setting up shop alongside retro furniture to sell their treasures of yesteryear. You will find a great range of clothing for men, women and children, together with jewellery and accessories showcased in little pop-up shops throughout the weekend. 📍



Aldrovandi Villa Borghese

★★★★★

Rome, Italy

THE PERFECT COMBINATION BETWEEN LUXURY AND FAMILY HOLIDAYS

Aldrovandi Villa Borghese is a beautiful 5-star hotel located in one of the most beautiful areas of Rome. It borders the famous and lush gardens of the famous villa of the same name.

The hotel offers 2 restaurants, 2 bars, a heated outdoor pool, a small indoor pool, a spa, a state-of-the-art fitness room, a large tree-lined garden and access to a large park, ideal for jogging.

Connecting rooms, family rooms, cooking classes, welcome gift, babysitting service, crafts, stroller loan... The Aldrovandi Villa Borghese is a real paradise for families.

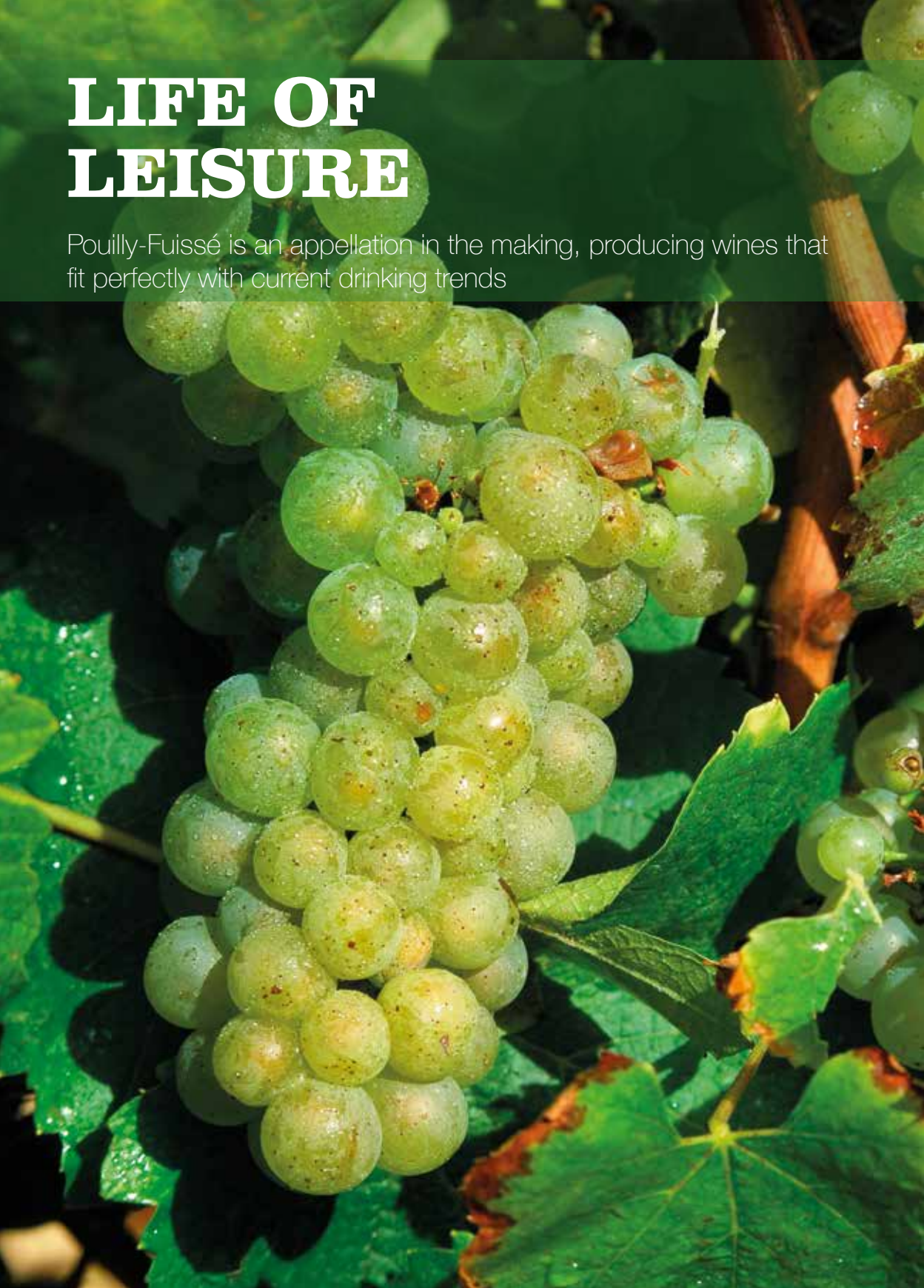
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MORE INFO & RESERVATION: WWW.LITTLEGUESTCOLLECTION.COM

LIFE OF LEISURE

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LIFE OF
LEISURE

Interview

Margot Robbie: Living the dream

This month we sat down with Margot Robbie, an Australian force of nature



Since a blistering breakthrough in *The Wolf of Wall Street* only four years ago, the 27-year-old from the Gold Coast has ascended to the top of the Hollywood heap in record time. From *Suicide Squad* to *Focus* to *Tarzan* to her first Oscar nomination for *I, Tonya*, Robbie is an unstoppable force of nature... who still sleeps with her childhood stuffed bunny.

"I've had him since I was a baby and he's called Bunny," she snorts. "What can I say, I wasn't a very imaginative child. But I still have him today. I still sleep with

him. Every night." It could be said her bond with Bunny was perfect research for Robbie's latest roll as cute rabbit Flopsy in the big screen adaptation of Beatrix Potter's *Peter Rabbit*.

**" I THINK WHEN
YOU COME BACK
TO YOUR FAMILY,
IT'S LIKE GOING
BACK "**

Taking on the title role, James Corden is the head of the family of carrot nibblers including Robbie's Flopsy, Elizabeth Debicki's Mopsy and Daisy Ridley's Cotton Tail, who join together with our hero as he competes against Domhnall Gleeson's Farmer McGregor for the affections of a kind animal lover who lives next door [Rose Byrne]. It's a rip-roaring



affair for all the family to enjoy, says the blonde superstar who equates the Rabbit's family dynamic with that of her own family.

In cheery, fun humour, Robbie chats about her upbringing and her shrewd moves as a child. She also chats about *Peter Rabbit*, her stalking tendencies, best friend Saoirse Ronan and the Oscars.

Margot lives in LA with husband, Tom Ackerley.

Together: Firstly, the lisp. Beyond cute! Was it your idea and did it come naturally?

Margot Robbie: No, it was in the script, I didn't add that embellishment to Flopsy, I'd love to be able to take credit. [laughs]

Yeah, it just sort of came naturally, it fit with her very cute, nervous energy. Who can resist a



little cute rabbit with a lisp? And it fit with her need to stand out beyond her family and assert who she is. And I totally got that because I come from a big family, getting bossed around like Flopsy, I totally went through that. I'm not a middle child technically,

though I am the third of four, so I'm in the middle, and I was always vying for attention with my brothers and sisters, and there were no shrinking violets in my family, everybody had a voice. A loud one. My poor mum, I don't know how she did it. [laughs]

What was it like growing up in your family?

The usual. Bickering and snapping, fighting over the front seat, fighting over clothes, fighting over toys, just fighting as all good families do. But always loving each other. I loved it - I look back at my upbringing and it just makes me smile, we've all grown up so close. We're really tight.

“ I ROOT FOR EVERY WOMAN IN THIS INDUSTRY. I’M ALL ABOUT WOMEN ”



Are you particularly close with one member of your family?

Honestly, there isn't one over another, we're all very tight and have individual relationships but like, so unquestionably loyal, would do anything for each other. They're my best friends. My older brother was like bossing me around, but I looked up to him, but my little brother, he was always like my sidekick so we still have that kind of sidekick relationship. I think when you come back to your family, it's like going back. It's like no time has passed and you all regress, back twenty years, nothing changes. I love that.

And I think my favourite part of playing Flopsy was sort of reliving that dynamic again with Elizabeth and Daisy and James, it felt very close to home for me.

If you were a family of rabbits?

There are a lot of striking similarities. [laughs]

This is your third film with Domhnall Gleeson...

It's getting a little weird. I feel like I'm stalking him [laughs]. The poor guy just wants to be

left alone. He has really great taste, he knows a good script so when I hear he's said yes, I immediately try to worm my way onto it too. I want in too.

But he had a little saving grace this time around in that we actually didn't work together, he got some breathing space

[laughs]. He was doing the live action stuff in Australia and I was stuck in a recording booth, so we never actually got to be around each other.

“ I’M HOPING I DON’T WAKE UP FROM THIS, I STILL THINK IT’S A DREAM ”



It was shot in Oz, and you didn't get to go?

What are the chances? They were shooting in Centennial Park in Sydney and I'm in a recording booth in LA. That killed me.

How did you find the recording process?

I loved the booth, it was such a new experience for me and getting to just focus on my voice and conveying emotion and building that character without using my physicality was a really new thing for me, but I responded well. I want to do more.

And I loved doing something for kids but I'm so glad there's all this humour for the adults too. Yes, this is a children's movie, but I literally had my head back, cracking up watching it, it's just the perfect movie for everyone, kids, mum dad, no kids, whatever. There's no specific demographic.

What were you like as a kid?

I was really dramatic. Not in throwing tantrums, pulling my hair... well not much but I loved putting on shows, there was always a show in

my house. I was obsessed with movies with anything on TV and whatever I saw, I would re-enact it for my mum who had enough on her plate running a house, looking after four kids and I'd be pulling at her leg, 'Mum... mum watch my new show.'

I'd even make my family pay to watch my shows. Well specifically my magic shows. No

kidding. I would make up a bunch of magic tricks, well they weren't bad for a six-year-old. And then force them all to pay me to watch me do these tricks. And I would make them pay double if they wanted to know how I did the tricks [laughs].

How much?

Like 50 cents. But it added up.

What was your go to trick?

I used to make stuff disappear, that was my thing.

Like what?

Just anything really. I loved to see things disappear.

**“ I LOVED THE
BOOTH, IT WAS
SUCH A NEW
EXPERIENCE
FOR ME ”**



Sounds like you were a very shrewd kid?

Yeah, I like to think I was quite savvy. I remember stealing my older brother's stuff and then setting up a stall down the road and selling it all, just terrible [laughs]

Congrats on the Oscar nom, how does it feel now having some time to sink in?

It still feels really unreal. Yeah, I can't believe it, I can't stop smiling when I talk about it. It's yeah... and especially learning about the nomination when I was home with all my family, oh my God, was so magical. I get chills thinking about it.

It, timing wise, could not have worked out more perfect. Seriously. I was with all my family and we had just watched *Tonya* together for the first time, so everyone was on a high. I was floating, didn't think it could get better. I had actually forgotten the nominations were being announced, and you know, the time difference, I had only flown in, I was all over the place. I was so tired and then I knew I

had to get some sleep cos I had all this press to do for the movie.

And then we found out it was being announced. Our editor, she got it for I *Tonya* got a nomination, everybody was cheering and going crazy. Then Allison [Janney] got a nomination, oh my God, the best feeling in the

world. And this was at the after party of the premiere and my friend plugged his phone into the speaker as they were announcing Best Actress and it was like 'Saoirse Ronan, *Ladybird* - Margot Robbie...' We all went crazy. Screaming so loud. It was crazy!

How do you get your head around it?

You know. I'm hoping I don't wake up from this, I still think

it's a dream.

You're now forever going to be known as Oscar nominee, Margot Robbie – like over the titles!

Ahhh, that's so weird [laughs]. It's so weird.

**“ I LOVED
PUTTING ON
SHOWS, THERE
WAS ALWAYS A
SHOW IN MY
HOUSE ”**



And you're going up against Meryl Streep!

That's even weirder. It's so wrong to mention our names together, c'mon it's Meryl Streep. I don't know what I'm doing there. I spoke to Saoirse and she was speaking about how great it was to have you in the mix because you're so close.

Yeah, she is one of my best friends so it's like, I know we're going to have such a fun time just being in that experience.

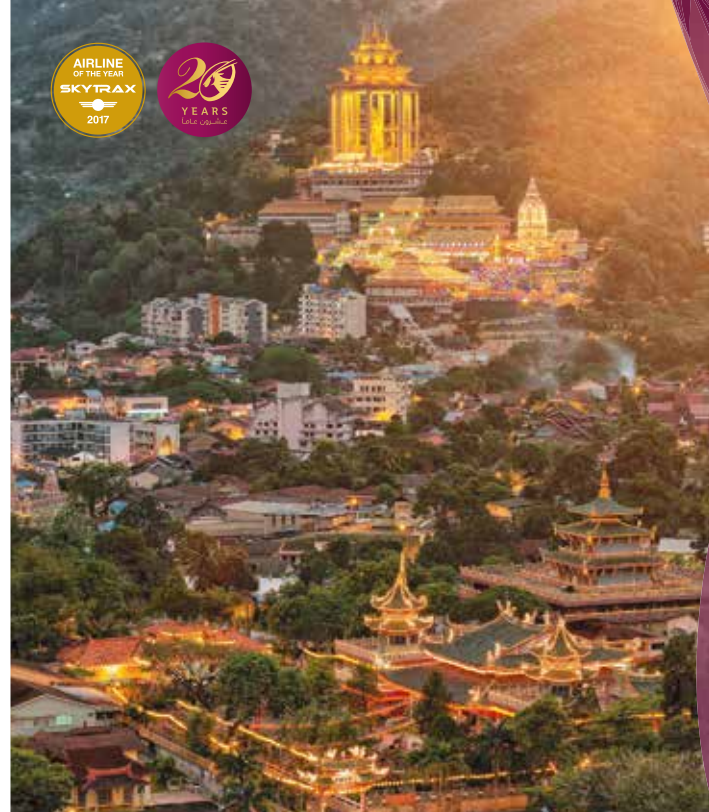
Are you rooting for her in a way?

Of course, I'm rooting for her. She's amazing.

Over everyone else?

I'm rooting for all of them. I root for every woman in this industry. I'm all about women.

1



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Club Med: Exclusive and unique

Whether in sunshine or in the snow
Club Med offers something for
everyone



In 2018, Club Med continues to move upmarket by offering its *Gentils Membres* (clients) more exclusivity and unique experiences. In the Sicilian sunshine or under the snowflakes of Savoie, the Club is more than ever delivering on its promise of 'surprising you'.

As the third 5-Trident Resort in the world and torch of the Exclusive Collection by Club Med, Cefalù will open its doors in June 2018 and offer its guests 14 hectares of heaven on the northern coast of Sicily. Italy is a return to the Club's roots which involves rediscovering them

by adding the right touch of luxury and modernity. Cefalù invites epicureans, gourmets and art lovers to celebrate the Sicilian Dolce Vita in the heart of a breathtaking natural environment. The resort is located at the top of a cliff offering a 360° view of the Mediterranean and its endless shades of blue reflections. Direct access takes travellers to the sea where they can enjoy the spray and the sun on the landscaped wooden pontoon, making use of the solariums and swimming areas.

The Franco-Italian duo composed of interior designer Sophie Jacqmin and architect King



Rosselli marks out a resort where tradition and modernity intertwine: works of art dot the interiors, bungalows are restyled to blend into the landscape while the sumptuous buildings of the Palazzo and the chapel testify to the place's history. Among the resort's 308 rooms, two suites stand out with their unique character: the Baia suite, a charming one-storey house with panoramic views of the bay; and the Canonica suite, built on two floors and adjacent to the chapel.

with the Parco delle Madonie nature reserve, the classic heritage of Palermo, the famous volcano of Etna and more. Numerous exploration options are offered and may be personalized. Lovers of art, sports or relaxation will thoroughly enjoy themselves in Cefalù -without forgetting a touch of friendliness and celebration which underpins the Club Med spirit.

**“ LOCATED AT THE
TOP OF A CLIFF
OFFERING A 360°
VIEW OF THE
MEDITERRANEAN ”**

Three good reasons to escape to Cefalù:
- The immersion in a ruggedly beautiful natural environment
- The cultural heritage of the site and the region
- The teak pontoon leading directly from the resort to the boundless Mediterranean

To take care of your body and mind, Cefalù offers three bathing experiences to choose from: the large main pool, the natural zen pool and the beach club by the sea. The resort spa is signed by Carita and offers 700m² dedicated to wellbeing. From fitness to tennis to snorkelling, numerous activities await athletes with the exclusive opening of a hiking school and the possibility of testing electric surfing. The region is rich in history and nature,

Nestled in the heart of a beautiful alpine forest at 1,750 metres above sea level, Les Arcs Panorama will welcome families looking for nature, space and pampering from December 2018. Just a seven-minute shuttle ride from Bourg St Moritz via the Arc Express funicular,



the resort combines the charms of medium altitude with access to the Paradiski® ski area (one of the largest ski areas in the world). Les Arcs Panorama is aptly named: large windows are all over the resort and offer breathtaking views of the valley and peaks of the Tarantaise both in the rooms and in common areas. Its curved external architecture integrates perfectly with the mountain. Inside, the decoration guiding guests through the rooms echoes the neighbouring mountain with the theme 'Nature beautifies the resort'. This Club Med 4-Trident Resort has a 5-Trident area which offers 24 splendid 69.5m² suites for ultimate comfort. Welcoming family gatherings, the Bread&Co restaurant gives pride of place to children. The Petits Chefs can invite their parents to a dinner rich in delicacies and fresh products, perfect for awakening a taste for good things from a very young age and sharing fun times together.

From age three, the youngest can take

advantage of ski lessons and enjoy incredible adventures at the Kids Snow Garden. The Spa, by Cinq Mondes, contains 600m² of care spaces reserved for parents, including a swimming pool and heated outdoor Jacuzzis. The Zen Lounge is accessible for relaxation or reading by the fireside.

Three good reasons to escape to Arcs Panorama:

“ THE YOUNGEST CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SKI LESSONS ”

- Its modern architecture which blends with the mountain
- The 600m² Spa Cinq Mondes
- The outdoor heated pool to enjoy the fresh air and the view of the snow

In the sun or in the mountains, Club Med combines exceptional sites with unique services, so you can enjoy a magical holiday.

Information and bookings:

www.clubmed.be - 070 660 660



ACTIVEZ

votre énergie du printemps !



www.arc1950.com

Radisson RED Brussels

Together visited a Brussels hotel that is much more than just a place to sleep

Embracing 'bleisure'

In recent years, a new generation of establishments has emerged. No more dusty carpet and cheap watercolours on the walls. These lifestyle hotels are modern and connected, free from the shackles of traditional hotel codes. The border between places intended for a business clientele and those dedicated to leisure simply fades away in favour of an experience where all the stops are pulled out to combine business with pleasure.

Welcome to the 'bleisure' era which heralds business stays that become a pleasure and the hotel on-the-corner becomes a meeting-point for an afterwork with colleagues or a yoga class. In the heart of the European district, the Radisson RED Brussels hotel brings a breath of fresh air to both travellers and locals.

An uninhibited spirit

Nestled a stone's throw from Place du Luxembourg and a short walk from the city



centre, the Radisson RED Brussels embodies this evolution. The hotel illustrates the transition to a more contemporary, informal and relaxed style where the service is professional without being too narrowly defined. The attitude of the young team bears witness to this: 'casual' outfits and a warm, spontaneous welcome.

Do not expect to see a groom or waiter dressed penguin-style, let alone a maid sporting a Peter Pan collar. The team is made up of versatile creative young people trained in catering, reception and event management. They come from all walks of life, as do the clients and residents of this multi-lingual neighbourhood.

A friendly café

Just like in London or New York where it's not banal to meet at the bar of a hotel, the OUIBar + KTCHN at the Radisson RED Brussels is very outward looking. As is the case with coworking spaces, this is one of the few places that is open continuously from morning to evening, seven days a week, where you can come to work on your laptop, nibble a bite between colleagues or have a drink and play billiards after you've left the office work behind. Of course, there is convenient, high speed Wi-Fi – and it's free.

In addition, social events are regularly organized: afterworks, parties, yoga classes or the barter of second-hand clothes. The agenda can be found on the hotel's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/RadissonRedBrussels/>

Innovation and fun

New hospitality brands such as Radisson RED are aimed at a clientele whose expectations have evolved with time. They offer all the essentials: space, comfort and functionality. The icing on the cake is brought by something fresh and authentic: the human touch.

While some services remain unavoidable, others such as valet parking, concierge or room service disappear. Meeting rooms become flexible 'Events & Games Studios' in which the offices are transformed as ping-pong tables arrive so you can take a well-earned break.

The large erasable walls invite participants to unleash their creativity by engaging in freehand mind-mapping - saving paper is one of the keys to preserving our environment. On the lookout

for waste, the hotel offers 100% paperless rooms: all relevant information is written directly on a sticker on the back of the door and can also be viewed on the TV screen online via the Radisson RED mobile app or on the website.

In the Studio rooms, everything is done to make it feel a bit like home. Comfortably seated at the bottom of the king size bed, you can pair your smartphone to the TV to listen to your favourite playlist or watch the latest video podcast. Well-placed USB plugs ensure that you never run out of batteries.

A setting packed with vitality

On the architectural side, spaces are allowed to breathe: open and flexible, they allow everyone to appropriate the place in their own way - meetings are prolonged in the lobby renamed Hi All, around a game of improvised foosball or around the large communal table.

On every floor, the modern, unadorned decor combines clean Scandinavian-inspired furniture with large wall illustrations by Belgian comic writers Wauter Manneart and Max de Radigues. In a subtle

tribute to Surrealism, the bathroom mosaics are a nod to René Magritte's work.

A successful model

In 2016, Radisson RED Brussels was the very first property to open worldwide. Since then, new properties have flourished in Minneapolis, Cape Town, Campinas while Glasgow will be launched in April. Stay tuned, there are more openings yet to be announced.

www.radissonred.com/fr/brussels



“ DO NOT EXPECT TO SEE A GROOM OR WAITER DRESSED PENGUIN-STYLE ”

Dining

Nueva Buenos Aires

Close to the famous Chatelain Quarter, this restaurant is a real invitation to travel. As the evening glides past, our taste buds travel through the Pampa to the bottom of Patagonia. It all begins with the warm welcome of the hostess Bouchra and Carlos who is very useful when it comes to explaining the gourmet choices on the menu.

After our typical South American cocktails such as pisco-sour (pisco, egg white, lemon juice and a dash of angostura), we taste the appetizers: 'provoletta parillada', a grilled provolone type cheese that reminds you of the strong Italian presence in Argentina, then we taste the Empanadas... to die for! As well as an incredibly delectable



ceviche, there was cod marinated in lemon juice with ginger, red onion, celery, Espelette pepper, mango and fresh coriander.

The dishes that followed were irreproachable in the tasty meat department. Of course, a very good Argentinian wine accompanied everything.

Suddenly, it was already getting late, and we had to leave this cozy place where the kitchen invites you to dream - but not

before trying the desserts with the famous 'dulce de leche' and sabayon marsala (great!). No question about it, we will come back to taste other specialties of the house and spend some more exquisite moments!

www.nuevabuenosaires.be

eFarmz

Another side of dining altogether – at home and, yes, you have to some work with the wonderful ingredients that have been dropped chez vous. eFarmz is a 100% Belgian internet platform that makes it possible to buy online from a wide range of carefully selected organic products, most of them coming from Belgian farms - have them delivered to your home, the office or pick them up in a local depot.



meat from animals raised in the open air, to artisan cheeses made from raw milk, bread straight from the fields or and organic Belgian meal boxes. Box content changes weekly and is updated on Wednesday afternoons for the following week's deliveries. There are Veggie or Original box (Meat, Fish, Veggie), from €5.60 per meal/person, with all the ingredients in exact quantities and recipes to prepare a fine dinner for three.

www.efarmz.be

The choice ranges from

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A new estate in Pouilly-Fuissé

This month we focus on the Vignoble du Mâconnais region

The Domaine des Boutires, which was acquired in 2016 by the owners of the Château du Moulin à Vent, has produced three Pouilly-Fuissé wines that will hit the market for the first time in 2018.

"The Domaine des Boutires gives us the opportunity to fulfil our desire to take control of every stage in the winemaking process from the vines to the wine itself," explains Edouard Parinet. "Pouilly-Fuissé is an appellation in the making, producing wines that fit perfectly with current drinking trends, and which offers a wonderful challenge to me and my young team," he adds.

Of the estate's three cuvées of Pouilly-Fuissé, two are plot selections: Pouilly-Fuissé En Bertillonne and Pouilly-Fuissé Aux Bouthières. All three came to market in January, with the 2016 vintage, the first of the new owners. In 2016, the Domaine des Boutires in Solutré (Saône-et-Loire) was purchased by Jean-Jacques and Edouard Parinet, along with Brice Laffond. This acquisition represents a key part of their trio's project as it brings together five hectares of old vines across the Pouilly-Fuissé appellation.

Pouilly-Fuissé

From the wine-producing region of Vignoble du Mâconnais (Saône-et-Loire).



Elegant and full of charm, this white wine has a colour ranging from pale to deep gold, flecked with green. Different families of aromas make up the bouquet: mineral notes (silex), almond and hazelnut, citrus notes (lemon, grapefruit, and pineapple), white fruits (peaches), bracken, acacia, breadcrumbs, buttered brioche, and honey. In the mouth it is possible to discern the differences between wines from different plots. The texture is opulent, and the structure,

thanks partly to the wine's natural richness, is full of flavour. It is by nature delicate and distinguished. This wine is not to be confused with the Pouilly-Fumé, which comes from the banks of the Loire River.

According to the Bourgogne wine steward

Straightforward, rich and complex, it has a characteristic hint of minerality which allows it to partner noble crustaceans (king prawns, lobster, crawfish) as well as foie gras. With acidity and smoothness so nicely in balance, it goes well with white meats such as veal or poultry in cream sauce, as well as many varieties of goat's cheese. Its aromatic power means it can also match spicy and perfumed exotic dishes such as couscous, fish tajines, or sweet-and-sour prawns. Sushi is also enhanced by its minerality.

Serving temperature: 11 to 13°C.

www.bourgogne-wines.com

AU REPOS DES CHASSEURS



Située aux abords de la forêt de Soignes, cette auberge restaurant comble de bonheur les papilles des gourmands et des amateurs de gibier. Dans son restaurant aux allures de brasserie ou sur la terrasse, une des plus belles de la capitale, vous savourerez des spécialités italiennes et françaises, comme les anguilles au vert, le foie gras, et, en saison, un grand éventail de produits de la chasse. Le restaurant propose toute l'année, le menu du chef à 24,50€ et le menu du Patron à 41,50€. De plus, l'établissement offre plusieurs espaces complémentaires tels qu'une taverne avec petite restauration l'après-midi, 6 salles de banquets ou de séminaires et un hôtel *** Logis de Belgique (le seul à Bruxelles). et 6 appartements hôtel de 45 à 60 m2 entièrement meublés et équipés.



info@aureposdeschasseurs.be

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Ouvert tous les jours de 11h à 23h

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CICCIO BELLO



Ce restaurant, situé au coeur de la commune de Watermael-Boitsfort, propose une cuisine italienne aux saveurs du sud, un large choix de pizzas cuites au feu de bois et de délicieuses pâtes maison. En été, vous profiterez d'une vaste terrasse au soleil pour vous échapper le temps d'un repas. Chaque midi, optez pour notre lunch à 12,50€ (une entrée + un plat). Pizza Party de 15 € pp. Pour vos fêtes familiales telles que mariage, communion, fêtes d'anniversaires ou autre, le Ciccio Bello dispose d'une lumineuse salle de banquet, pouvant accueillir plus de 40 personnes, avec une agréable vue sur la place Wiener.

4 Place Léopold Wiener, 1170 Watermael-Boitsfort - 02 672 32 30

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www.cicciobello.be



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The Plaza welcomes families with the utmost care and leaves nothing to chance: stroller loan, baby bottles, emergency teats, baby cosmetics, high chairs and cribs, kids-menu, welcome gift and many more!

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MORE INFO & RESERVATION: WWW.LITTLEGUESTCOLLECTION.COM

LIFE OF
LEISURE

What's on

What's on Belgium

ADAM Brussels Design Museum: Permanent and temporary

The design museum in Brussels invites you to (re)discover design in a new and surprising way



The permanent exhibition Plasticarium shows the impact of plastics in art from the fifties to today; the temporary exhibitions explore the design world through other themes, materials, techniques and times.

The ADAM Brussels Design Museum was opened in December 2015 and proposes:

- the exceptional collection of the Plasticarium as the permanent collection
- different temporary exhibitions about design from the XX century until today
- group visits, activities, conferences, rooms for private usage, a shop and café.

Temporary exhibition - Soviet Design: Red Wealth

An exhibition depicting Soviet lifestyle from post war USSR until the Olympic Games of 1980 through design in all its facets.

In collaboration with the Moscow Design Museum, *Soviet Design: Red Wealth* is the first retrospective showcase bringing together daily

objects and graphics designed in the USSR in the past century.

The exhibition will feature iconic pieces of the Soviet lifestyle, examples of graphic and industrial design, technical drawings and prototypes made by Soviet designers from the Moscow Design Museum and private collections. The exhibition is divided into sections, each representing a certain aspect of a Soviet citizen's life and material culture: childhood and leisure, sports and public events, visual communication and packaging design, furniture and household products, precision engineering and industrial production, as well as unique projects of the All-Union Research Institute of Technical Aesthetics (VNIITE). Now, when Russian design of the 21st century is being formed it is important to look back at the achievements of decades past and unveil the names of the designers who shaped the lifestyle of Soviet people.

Until 25 May. ADAM.

www.adamuseum.be

What's on

STAR WARS: Identities

What forces shape you? Get to know the characters of STAR WARS™ on a whole new level and learn more about yourself in the process. Pick up your lightsaber. Your adventure into identity awaits. Immerse yourself in this legendary exhibition to discover the story behind this legendary saga. Featuring hundreds of costumes, accessories, drawings and models. Two heroes share the same genes. They come from the same planet. So what makes them so different? Follow Luke and Anakin Skywalker, cinema's preeminent father and son duo, from their origins on Tatooine, to the friends and



mentors they meet during adolescence, through the choices they make that will define them as adults. **2 April-2 September.** Palais 2, Brussels Expo. Tickets: check online www.starwarsidentites.com

BIFFF – Brussels International Fantastic Film Festival

Welcome to the Hall of fantasy, gore, science-fiction, thrillers and surrealism. Welcome to a world on its own, a dreamlike portal rooted at the heart of the capital of the European Union. This is where, amongst exhibitions, ghoulish entertainment, magical creatures who haunt the place or the famous Vampire Ball, more than 150 movies are shown for the first time in three heated and comfortable screening rooms. Welcome to an arena entered by Peter Jackson, Terry Gilliam, William Friedkin, Park Chan-Wook and many more. Welcome to a magical site where more than 50 000 people gather together each year to enjoy an experience that is unique in the world!



Enjoy the presence of the actors and directors, a body-painting and make-up contest, a manga market, a zombie parade and a vampires' ball. **3-15 April.** BOZAR. Tickets: check online www.biff.net
Photo: BIFFF.net



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Four generations at your service...



A stone's throw from the leafy Bois de la Cambre and just off the ultra-chic shopping of Avenue Louise, Callens Café has become a firm favourite of diners steeped in the Brussels culinary tradition and newcomers to the town.

If you had told Jean Callens back in 2004 when he opened the doors that it would still be thriving - and evolving - in 2018, he would have planted a big bisou on your cheek. And it's Jean himself who is at the heart of this well-oiled machine, ensuring that the kitchen is fired up day and night to conjure up cosmopolitan dishes that always respect local produce. And, while he enjoys the challenge of never standing still, he keeps an eagle eye on guarding the heritage that is synonymous with the name.

Just one of the things you'll love about Callens is: the space. It's wide and airy and there's enough room between the tables for leg room but not so much that you can't raise a friendly glass to your neighbouring diners.

Definitely worth mentioning: at Callens they love it when you come to have a party!

Avenue Louise 480, 1050 Bruxelles
+32 (0)2 647 66 68 www.callenscafe.be

Melancholia

"Those who have been eminent in philosophy, politics, poetry, and the arts have all had tendencies toward melancholia," states Aristotle. A melancholic disposition – when it is predominant in a person's character – doesn't necessarily lead to a dark temper, but manifests itself as a need for solitude. It is not so much a desire to be isolated from others, but more to hide away from the turmoil of the world around us.

Melancholia, the Boghossian Foundation's exhibition at the Villa Empain, examines a feeling – manifest in both the East and in the West, and in every era since ancient history – which unrelentingly reminds us of a lost origin, and instills in us a sense of mourning for a past world and its bittersweet charm.

This feeling of melancholy remains at the heart of the problems we are confronted with today – irreversible climate change, alarming humanitarian and migration crises, for example – because the world we face is an inevitable cause for concern. The earth we know will

LIFE OF LEISURE

What's on



never be the same – the digital revolution in the 2000s has marked the beginning of a form of dehumanisation of human relationships, questioning how a person can remain a unique and irreplaceable being.

Today's and tomorrow's children of Saturn remain inconsolable beings, haunted by existential problems. Works by modern and contemporary artists presented in the exhibition explore issues such as nostalgia for ancient forms and a bygone era; for the depiction of solitude, ruins and passing time.

Photo © Claudio Parmiggiani, *Senza Titolo*, 2009 –
Courtesy: the artist and Meessen De Clercq, Brussels

Artists : Manal Al Dowayan, El Anatsui, Farah Atassi, Yto Barrada, Barbara Bloom, Joseph Beuys, Pascal Convert, Eli Cortiñas, Giorgio De Chirico, Paul Delvaux, Saliba Douaihy, Marlene Dumas, Elger Esser, Lionel Estève, Jef Geys, Alberto Giacometti, Geert Goiris, Jafar Islah, On Kawara, Martin Kippenberger, Marwan, Mathieu Mercier, Melik Ohanian, Claudio Parmiggiani, Giuseppe Penone, Constant Permeke, Félicien Rops, Kiki Smith, Léon Spilliaert, Tatiana Wolska, Samuel Yal, Rémy Zaugg, Lamia Ziadé.



15 March- 26 August. Villa Empain, Brussels.
www.villaempain.com/en

What's on



Hugo Claus, Con amore

Ten years after his death and fifty years after May '68, BOZAR is devoting an exhibition to Belgium's most celebrated author: Hugo Claus. The multidisciplinary exhibition, curated by Marc Didden, presents the master in all his facets: poet, novelist, painter, theatre and film director and socially engaged artist. Claus was a regular visitor at the Centre for Fine Arts and was already presenting his plays and exhibitions in the 1950s. So what better place to pay homage to this *monstre sacré* of Dutch-language literature? Curator for the occasion is the Brussels film director, screenwriter and writer Marc Didden. Claus wrote thousands of poems, dozens of plays and many novels, the most famous of which was his 1983 masterpiece *The Sorrow of Belgium*. However, *Hugo Claus, Con amore* is not a traditional overview of the life and work of Claus. It is with great love – *con amore* – that Marc Didden has compiled a highly personal and associative exhibition. One that is not so much about Claus as for Claus. Until 27 May. BOZAR. Tickets: €8 www.bozar.be



Wonderland or the Art of Rebellion

A playful attempt to combat the routine, *Wonderland or the Art of Rebellion* is the work of two Swedish artists who have emerged from the graffiti world and go by their pseudonyms of Akay & Olabo. They've gained access and had keys made to half a dozen abandoned properties around Stockholm. They've gone into places where teargas still lingers from

police practice drills, where water leaks have transformed rooms into blue-green mold marshes. The exhibition takes us headlong into their urban adventures, which consist of forbidden explorations of abandoned locations. To reach the end, visitors to Wonderland must solve puzzles all the way through. **Until 15 April.** MIMA. www.mimamuseum.eu

A | D | A | M

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MOSCOW DESIGN
MUSEUM

An exhibition about Soviet lifestyle from post war USSR until the Olympic Games of 1980

WWW.ADAMUSEUM.BE · Place de Belgique, 1020 Brussels



What's On International

Crypta Balbi Museum

The Crypta Balbi offers its visitors a historical trip through Rome's past thanks to the excavations carried out on its site. Originally, the Crypta housed a theatre, a block of four apartments and a patio. Built between 19 and 13 BC under Lucius Cornelius Balbus, the theatre had a crypt where people would go during the intermissions of the different plays. Over time, the theatre was forgotten and buried under other constructions. Excavations on the site started in 1981 and twenty years later the remains were opened to the public. The upper floor features objects from the Antiquity and the Middle Ages, and the ground floor presents what was found during the excavation but the basement is the most surprising part of the Crypta, housing the



remains of the Theatre of Balbus, which can be explored while walking down the damp and dark passageways...
www.rome.net/balbi-crypt

The Treasure of Antiquity Winckelmann and the Museo Capitolino in eighteenth-century Rome

An exhibition to celebrate the anniversaries of the birth and death of the founder of modern archaeology, Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717-1768).

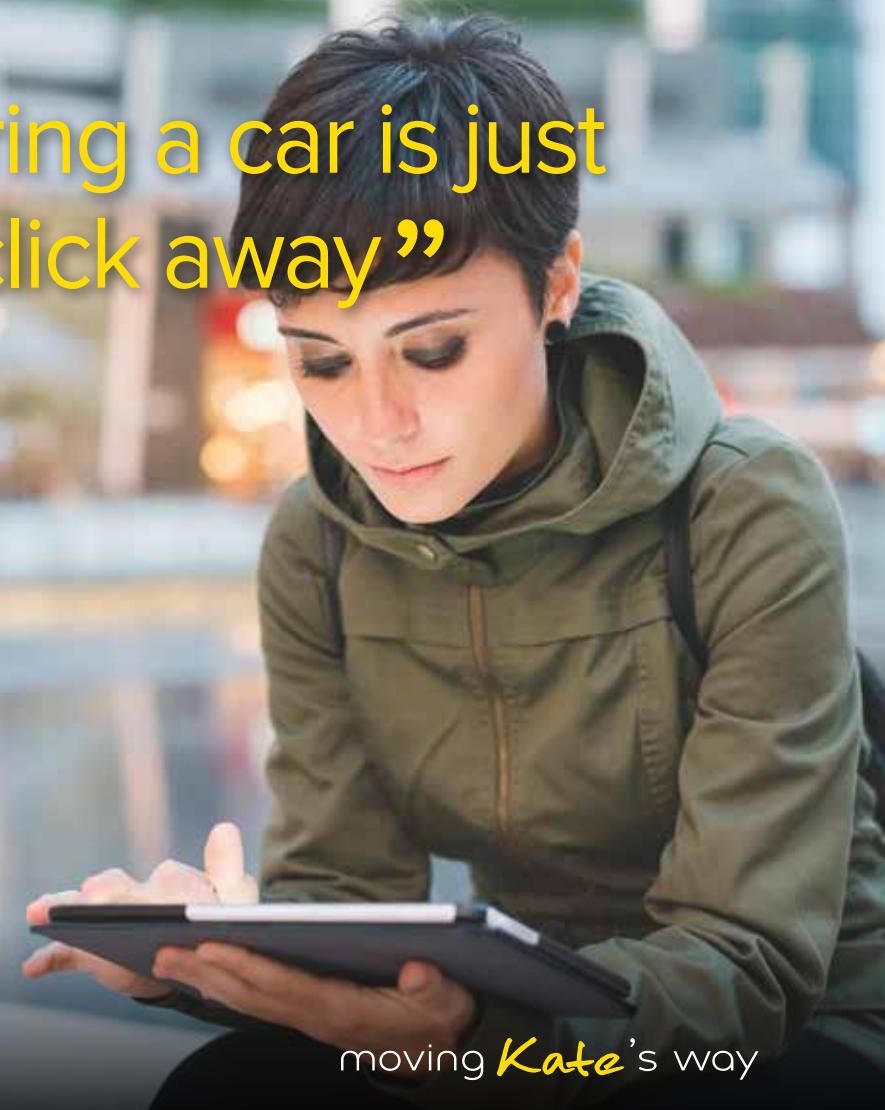
The exhibition *The Treasure of Antiquity: Winckelmann and the Museo Capitolino in 18th-century Rome* intends to celebrate the important winckelmannian anniversaries of 2017 (300 years since birth) and 2018 (250 years after death) and fits into the context of the European events coordinated by the Winckelmann Gesellschaft of Stendal, by the Germanic Archaeological Institute of Rome and by the Vatican Museums.

The exhibition has a dual purpose: the first, to offer visitors the story of the crucial years that led, in December 1733, to the establishment of the Museo Capitolino, the first public museum in Europe, intended not only for conservation but also to the promotion of the "magnificence and splendour of Rome"; the second, presenting the Capitoline sculptures in a different light, or through the intuitions, often brilliant, of the great Winckelmann.

www.museicapitolini.org



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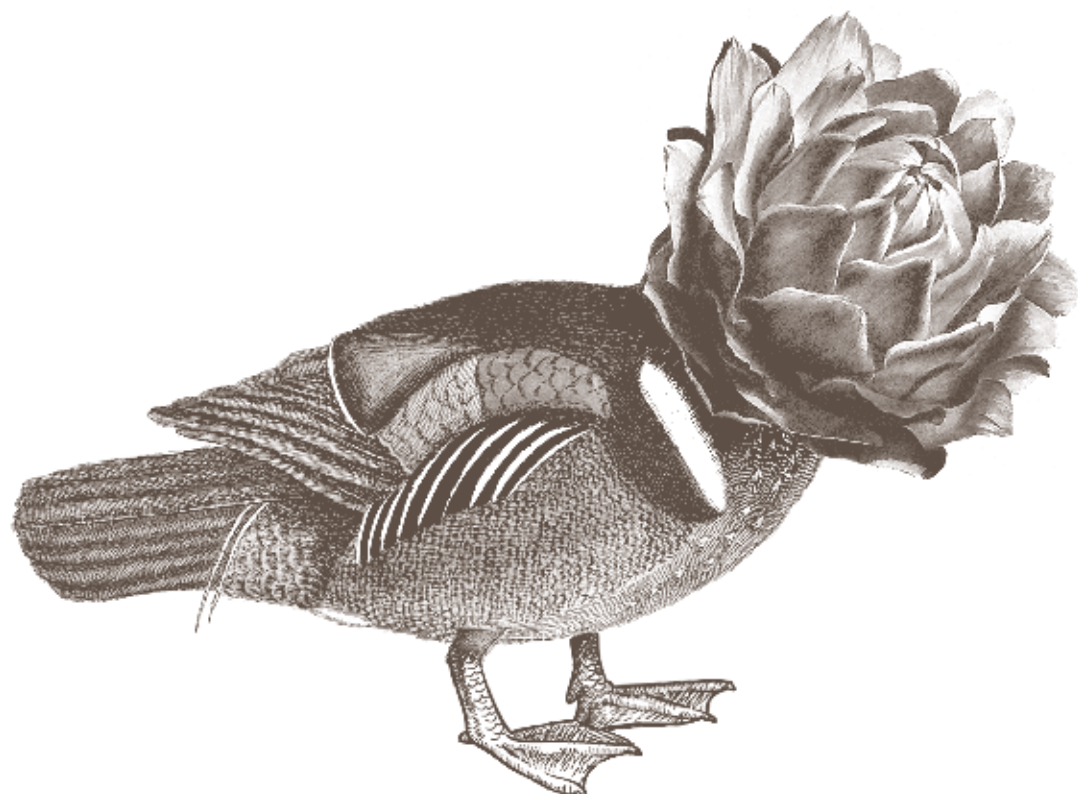


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César: Twenty years on

César Baldaccini, one of the most renowned artists of his age and one of the most misunderstood, passed away twenty years ago. He had become famous at the age of 25 when after having come up to Paris in 1944 he developed his welded iron sculpture technique. Misunderstood too, for the loquacity and confidence he affected in public hid a permanent dissatisfaction with the works that won him success.

Far from being simply the man of the welded iron, the compressions, impressions and expansions for which he was famous, César remained attached to a sculpture peopled with animals and human figures, work he hoped equal to that of the masters he admired. He



was modern in the manner of the Nouveaux Réalistes, whom he joined in the 1960s. Guided only by the logic of the material, he made and remade his art, gaining him worldwide attention. **Until 26 March.** Centre Pompidou.

www.centrepompidou.fr

Paris Illuminations & Moulin Rouge

Enjoy a magical evening in Paris: come and discover the magic of Paris by night and the famous Parisian cabaret the Moulin Rouge, a temple of the French cancan! In the first part of the evening, discover the magic of Paris at night and its majestic illuminated monuments. Admire the City of Light's most famous sites, aboard a bus with a panoramic roof, notably: Place Vendôme, the Île de la Cité and Notre-Dame, Place de la Concorde Avenue des Champs Elysées and the Arc de Triomphe, not forgetting the Eiffel Tower.



After the tour, you will be taken to the Moulin Rouge to see a performance of the show 'Féerie', which boasts 80 artistes and 1,000 costumes for a grandiose spectacle.

From €180

www.parisinfo.com

Cinema: All the latest movies playing in Belgium

Brussels' leading film critic **James Drew** looks ahead to films that will adorn the cinema screens in Belgium



God's Own Country

Francis Lee, in his feature directorial debut, helms this British drama film starring Josh O'Connor and Alec Secareanu, in the story of a young sheep farmer in Yorkshire, Johnny Saxby (O'Connor), whose life is transformed by the arrival of a Romanian migrant worker, Gheorghe Ionescu (Secareanu). The film was the only UK-based production to feature in the world drama category at the 2017 Sundance Film Festival, where it won the world cinema directing award.

105 mins.

Ready Player One

Steven Spielberg is having one of those years, you know, when he releases more than one film to great acclaim (the other being the Tom Hanks/Meryl Streep-starring *The Post*) - in this adaptation of Ernest Cline's 2011-written dystopia, we are in the year 2045, where much of Earth's population centres have become slums because of overpopulation, pollution, corruption, and climate change. To escape this hell, the OASIS (Ontologically Anthropocentric Sensory Immersive Simulation) virtual reality world offers a way out - but at what price? Tye Sheridan stars, Cline co-writes with Zak Penn.

Running time TBC

Mary Magdalene

Rooney Mara plays Mary Magdalene, Joaquin Phoenix plays Jesus in this telling, re-telling of the life of Mary Magdalene who, according to whichever of Dan Brown's books you've read, may indeed have been Jesus's paramour. Will this shed any new light on the eternal mystery, one wonders? Well, it's former commercials director Garth Davis's first bite at the feature film apple, so we will see.

Running time TBC

A Wrinkle in Time

A Wrinkle in Time is a science fantasy adventure film directed by Ava DuVernay from a screenplay by Jennifer Lee, and based on the 1962 novel of the same name by Madeleine L'Engle - after the disappearance of her scientist father, three other-world beings send Meg, her brother, and her friend to space in order to find him. The film stars Oprah Winfrey, Reese Witherspoon, Mindy Kaling, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Michael Peña, Storm Reid, Zach Galifianakis, and Chris Pine.

Running time TBC 1

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Adina Pintilie Touch Me Not

Federico Grandesso sat down exclusively at the Berlinale with Golden Bear winner Adina Pintilie



Photo © Movie still from *Touch me not*

Pintilie graduated in 2008 from the National University of Drama and Film Bucharest and her film *Don't Get Me Wrong* (supported by ARTE France, the Romanian Cinema Center and the Romanian National Television) premiered at Locarno 2007.

Together, the filmmaker and her characters venture into a personal story about intimacy. On the fluid border between reality and fiction, the film follows the emotional journeys of Laura, Tomas and Christian, offering a deeply emphatic insight into their lives. Adina, with a very delicate and natural touch, shows us another angle of sexuality applied to three different complex but fascinating individuals

fighting an epic internal and external battle. The film also shows the importance of coaching in self-development.

Can you tell me about the objective of film?

The goal of the film is precisely to open the viewer's mind about how intimacy can be experienced, it's just opening a horizon. I was really happy to have such wonderful characters join me in this research, they really wanted to communicate with the audience, for example Christian has a really clear statement about his motivation for participating in the film. He said: "For me, it is important to share with a world has disabled people with different bodies who

Photo © Manekino Film, Rohfilm Productions, Pink, Agitprop, Les Films de L'Étranger 2018



have the same rights to sexuality as everyone else. So, I have the right to enjoy my body and to exist as a sexual being – even if my beauty doesn't fit the normal beauty pattern, I'm entitled and I have the right to have my own needs and desires."

How was the process on set and what difficulties did you encounter?

First of all, there was no immediate 'casting' for actors, I was searching for people who were interested in the same area of research that I am, all interested in exploring how intimacy is experienced but in a different way from how we have been educated. The process took several years. I was working more with a documentary procedure, it was more like a laboratory. By the fact that the film explores areas that are usually surrounded by taboos and the fact that the film refuses the conventions of classical storytelling, it is very challenging. It was difficult from a financing perspective – a film that defies conventions is perceived as risky.

How did the shooting of the film go?

We shot in Romania, Bulgaria, partly in Germany, and we also shot with Skype – this was a European project in every respect and the cast was very international. The shooting process was a fusion of real and fictional elements and we worked with a mix of professional and non-professional actors; there was a script which was the basis of a

process, so fiction functioned as a sort of safety net for the characters in which we could work with reality and we could explore new elements.

Can you talk about the characters? We know that Laura couldn't bear to be touched, for example. We also see in the film a kind of 'group therapy' that helps the protagonists?

The human story that the main character Laura experienced was mixed like everything else in the film – while the analytical process was real, she really worked with her own anger and met a real

escort who has a blog that expresses his progressive views about the world. Laura is a woman who is attempting to free herself – also, Tomas is in a process of self-exploration and all his interactions that you see are real – we designed the workshop and the coaching following similar real-life experiences.

①



Cathay Pacific: Hong Kong to Brussels

Brussels is among three new links set to be launched in summer 2018 by Cathay Pacific

It is all about connectivity – with pioneering non-stop routes from Hong Kong to Brussels, Dublin and Copenhagen promised for summer 2018, Cathay Pacific is linking Hong Kong to ever more of the world.

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