

Together

magazine

NOVEMBER 2018 #93

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DINING

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DAVID GOFFIN

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**PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

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Mind is a muscle
Netflix disorder
Meaningful work
Being inspired
Be successful

Emily
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WHY WAIT FOR THE NEW YEAR?

More than good resolutions; discover how the latest fitness innovations of Aspria Arts-Loi will enhance your wellbeing on a sustainable way.



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Editor's LETTER

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

HEAD IN THE CLOUDS

At *Together* we like nothing better than finding ways to inspire people. Our personal development pages are jam-packed with advice and the little tricks of the trade from coaching experts from around the world. But all of our articles touch in some way on the twin notions of inspiration and self-improvement.

Our fitness pages lead you on the path to health and wellbeing. In our celebrity interviews we invariably hear movie stars talk about how they got where they are today – with many a winding road all the way – and how they work incredibly hard at staying at the top of their profession. For many of them the arrival of a young family is an amazing blessing and although the juggling act with stardom is far from a given, family life seems to help them stay balanced, grounded in the real world. As the old saying goes: 'Keep your head in the clouds but your feet on the ground.'

Albert Einstein urged us to "believe in intuition and inspiration. Imagination is more important than knowledge. For knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire world, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution. It is, strictly speaking, a real factor in scientific research".

And Albert knows best.

Paul Morris
Editor



Emily Blunt stars
in *Mary Poppins*



/togethermagazine



@together_Mag

Why Christmas shopping is so

Does thinking about finding the right present for your mother make you nervous? Are you about to recycle last year's party outfit because you're running out of time? Maasmehelen Village might just be the right place for you! 'Christmas stress' is not mentioned in their dictionary. You will find everything you need in one carefree shopping spree. On top of that you can sense The Joy of Christmas everywhere!



SPREAD THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

When it's the holiday season, Maasmehelen Village is the perfect place to enjoy precious family-moments. Just follow the aroma of hot chocolate, then gather around the gigantic Christmas tree and enjoy this wonderful time of year. Did you get inspired by all of the astonishing Christmas decoration and impressive lights in the streets of Maasmehelen Village? At the boutique "It's All About Christmas" you will shop everything you need to take the magical feeling home with you.

GLAMOROUS LUXURY BRANDS

Let's be honest, during the holiday season you're allowed to wear an outfit that shimmers a little bit more. The boutiques at Maasmehelen Village make sure you will be wearing an eyecatcher. Shop all of your partywear, bottom to top, at high end boutiques like Ted Baker, Essentiel, Stijn Helsen, Escada and many more. What's even nicer: there's up to 60% off on the recommended retail price all year round.



relaxed at Maasmehelen village

GIFTS FOR YOUR LOVED-ONES

From small gifting to presents that will impress even your most fashionable friend, at Maasmehelen Village there's something marvelous for everybody. Maybe you want to surprise someone with a Swarovski bracelet or a Furla purse. Maybe you would like to purchase a Gift Card that's valid in all of the boutiques... It takes just one shopping spree to find everything!

A DINING TABLE TO DIE FOR

While preparing a lovely, festive meal, you're already looking forward to your friends' reactions to the delicious food you will be serving. Secretly you get even more excited thinking about their reactions when they will get a glimpse of your tableware. Where did you get that beautiful decoration? Boutiques like Le Creuset, Villeroy & Boch and Anne de Solène at Maasmehelen Village, of course!

JOYFUL EVENTS

When spending a day in Maasmehelen Village, make sure you take a rest in the fur covered chairs of the Christmas chalet and taste the traditional Grand Cru waffle at the pop-up boutique by Marcolini. There's always something to do, starting December 1st! The event and animation program will surprise you. Read all about it on www.maasmehelenvillage.com or check the Maasmehelen Village Facebook and Instagram pages for updates. A hint? There's a gift wrapping service, Santa's elves taking pictures, street animation that spreads warm winter vibes, Santa visiting on 22 and 23 December and much more.



Good to know: Maasmehelen Village, Zetellaan 100, Maasmehelen. Only an hour away from Brussels. Enjoy free parking or sit back and relax: the Shopping Express® runs from the centre of Brussels to Maasmehelen Village and back every Saturday, Sunday and on Bank Holidays. Reserve your seat now at www.maasmehelenvillage.com

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EVERY DAY


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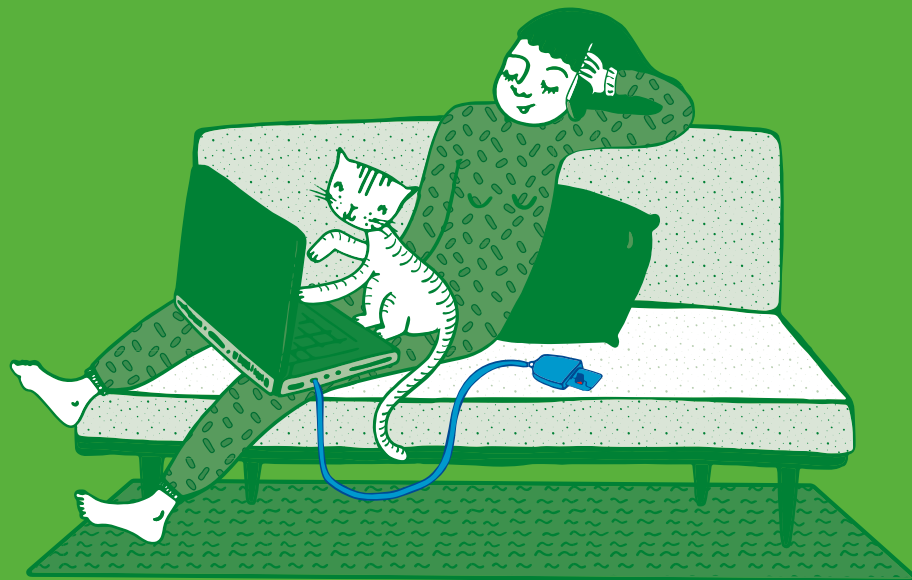
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magazine

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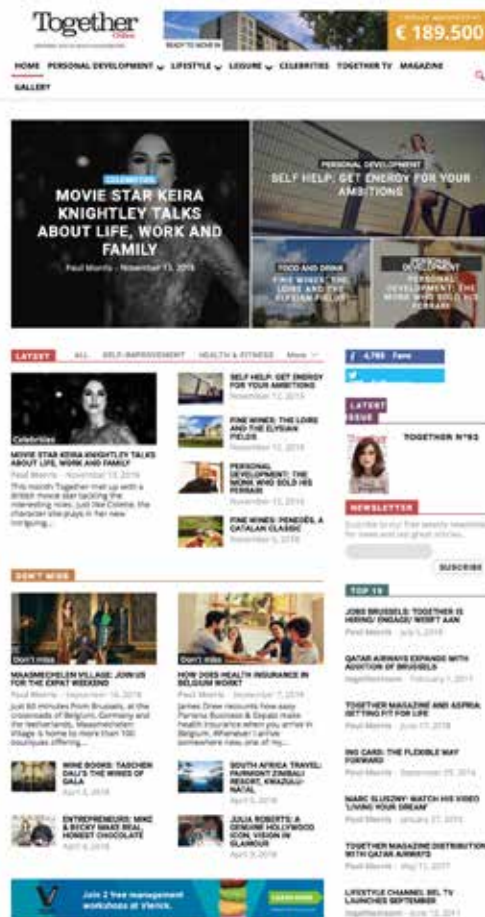
Be inspired on www.togethertmag.eu

Self-help: Get energy for your ambitions

In our self-help pages Anna Boroshok offers five actionable to help you find your energy. Have you ever realized that energy is a top factor in reaching your goals? We painfully feel its scarcity when we run out of batteries for what really matters for us: going an extra mile at work to get that promotion, organizing quality and fun time for your loved ones or building a business you always dreamt about. What if I told you that energy is manageable and you can have it at your disposal every day?

Fine wines: The Loire and the Elysian fields

In our fine wines section we look at a region that is very much in the pink. The market share from rosé wine doubled between 1997 and 2007 from 14,8% to 32,2%. Today, France is the biggest rosé wine consumer in the world just ahead of the US. Rosé is the only colour that holds onto its customers. In other words, the purchase of wines per year per household tend to decline except for rose wine. Among non-sparkling wines, rosé wine contributes more in the value in the market in comparison to the average non-sparkling wine.

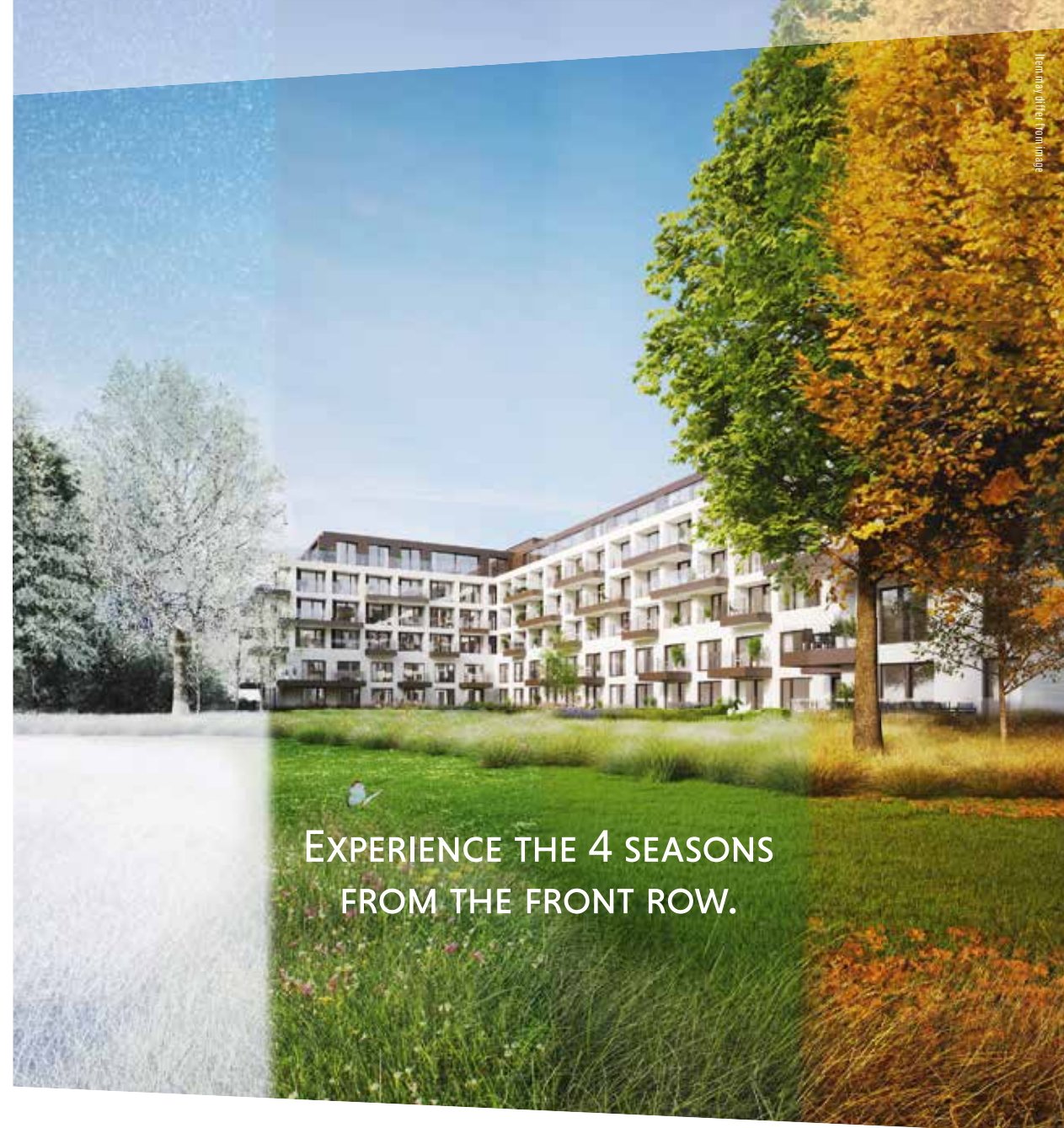


Personal development: The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari

Our latest personal development recommendation is quite unusual. Subtitled *A Fable About Fulfilling Your Dreams & Reaching Your Destiny*, *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari* by motivational speaker and author Robin Sharma is an inspiring tale that provides a step-by-step approach to living with greater courage, balance, abundance and joy. *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari* tells the extraordinary story of Julian Mantle, a lawyer forced to confront the spiritual crisis of his out-of-balance life...

Movie star Keira Knightley talks about life, work and family

This month Together met up with a British movie star tackling the interesting roles. Just like Colette, the character she plays in her new intriguing biographical drama, Keira Knightley struggled to express herself as a youngster, unable to read or write to a recognised standard and, although never officially diagnosed by British Dyslexia Association, the actress battled to overcome the learning difficulty her early teens, with acting the one thing that she found salvation in.



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Lily Allen

Lily Allen is an English singer, songwriter, and television presenter. Her new electropop album, *No Shame*, takes influence from dancehall and reggae, and features confessional lyrics that discuss the breakdown of Allen's marriage and friendships, maternal guilt, substance abuse, along with social and political issues. Upon release *No Shame* was met with generally positive reviews from music critics, who praised the album's mature lyrical content and themes, Allen's artistic evolution, the composition and production. The album peaked at number eight on the UK Albums Chart. **5 December.** Ancienne Belgique. **€32** www.abconcerts.be/en



Clutch

Clutch has been an integral part of the international rock for 25 years now. Their unique mix of blues, metal & rock and their cast iron live reputation have already had many a concert venue and festival stage explode. Brace yourself for a wonderful musical trip in which both recent tracks and classics. "A danger-fuelled but stoner-friendly gem that reminds the listener of the days where the hippie and biker culture intermingled in psychotic harmony." *Rolling Stone*. **12 December.** Ancienne Belgique. **€27** - www.abconcerts.be/en



The Prodigy

With their new Album *No Tourists* English electronic music group from Essex are back on the road. They earned titles like "the premiere dance act for the alternative masses" and "the Godfathers of Rave" and remain one of the most successful electronic acts of all time. They have sold an estimated 30 million records worldwide. Songwriter and producer Liam Howlett wrote the new songs with their live performance a priority in their style and arrangement. **7 December.** Forest National. **€41** www.livenation.be 



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 **GIVE WAY TO SAFETY** Environmental information RD 19/03/2004: www.volvocars.be. The model pictured here is only for the purposes of illustration. *Recommended catalogue price V60 D3 Eco Man; standard model: €34,950 incl. VAT. Offer valid through 30/11/2018. Includes all benefits offered by Volvo Car Belux and its participating dealers.

The Osteoarthritis Foundation


The Osteoarthritis Foundation awarded the International Prize Elise Jourdevant to the Swedish researcher, Professor Martin Englund, for lifetime achievement in his scientific career. The Osteoarthritis Foundation was established in 2015 by health professionals and scientists, as well as patients. Its purpose is to combat arthritis through educational, scientific, philanthropic and humanitarian initiatives. It organizes campaigns to provide information and raise awareness, supports basic research and advances the interests of patients with the relevant authorities in healthcare matters.



Nowadays, we know that arthritis is not only a disease that can affect young adults, but that it is also a risk factor for other diseases like diabetes, heart disease and obesity. In other words, a person suffering from arthritis of the knee, for example, has a higher chance of dying of heart disease, diabetes or kidney disease. We must act to improve patients' quality of life,

and especially their general health. Prevention is the gold standard and it must be applied. Getting proper treatment for joint injuries, losing weight and exercising regularly are effective measures to protect and treat painful joints," says Osteoarthritis Foundation Chairman Yves Henrotin. "Research is advancing, but more progress is needed. It's only through the generosity of benefactors like Elise Jourdevant that the Foundation can award prizes to researchers, and therefore support research.

Each gift matters and is another step towards a cure," says Céline Mathy, Executive Director of the Foundation. Making a living by playing the piano means learning to count on your fingers (Darry Cowl) Jean - Claude Vanden Eynden, pianist and sponsor of the Osteoarthritis Foundation, explains his reasons for taking on the sponsor role: "I have agreed to sponsor the Osteoarthritis Foundation because this disease is poorly understood within my profession, and musicians are often among its victims, which interrupts their careers, or, in the worst cases, ends them for good. In addition, prevention should be a priority for art education institutions, and this is not currently the case."

www.fondationarthrose.org 

It was also an opportunity to announce the 2019 World Arthritis Day in Brussels - a day dedicated to patients and healthcare professionals organised in partnership with MCI and supported by visit.brussels. Arthritis is a disease that must be taken seriously. It has long been considered to be a degeneration of cartilage associated with aging and an accumulation of excessive mechanical strain. It used to be seen as inevitable and received very little attention from researchers and doctors.

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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

My guides, my angels, the ones who care for us all from the other side of life



PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Fitness

Ryad Merhy: Passion for his sport

Aspria spoke to one of Belgium's finest athletes about his fitness methods



Ryad Merhy is the pride of Belgium when it comes to boxing. Ryad turned professional in 2013 and won 18 consecutive fights before winning the WBA Inter-Continental cruiserweight title. He would improve his record to 24-0 before getting a shot at the vacant WBA cruiserweight (Regular) title against Arsen Goulamirian. Ryad would end up losing for the first time as a professional as he would go on to get stopped in the 11th round by Arsen.

“ THE CLUB IS ABOUT TIME TO RELAX MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE ”

The boxing bug has clearly taken hold of this talented young man who has gained a formidable reputation, and he spoke to us about his passion for his sport, about the intensity of his training, as well as about how he benefits from the clubs Aspria Brussels Arts-Loi and Royal La Rasante.

The welcome

"When you arrive at the club, you're always given a really warm welcome, the receptionists are so friendly and they're always smiling. When I visit, my primary motivation is to relax. I spend a lot

of time training at the boxing gym, and those workouts are noisy and intense. So that means that, for me, the club is about time to relax more than anything else. I do a bit of cardio – mostly on the treadmill and the bike – and some abdos. Then I head off to the sauna and hammam.”

The perfect gym for an athlete

“When it comes to activities, I really like the functional zone. I always spend some time in that area to do my abdos and my stretching. It’s functional cardio – cardio exercises where you’re moving – and that’s the perfect combination, getting closest to the ideal conditions for an athlete. I’ve also tried out the ‘MILON’ zone at Aspria Brussels Royal La Rasante: it’s great for when you want to vary your exercises. I really like the timed circuit, where you move from one activity to the next after each buzz.”

The boxer’s goals

“For a boxer, the most important thing is good physical fitness (cardio), and focusing on muscle-strengthening. It’s essential to know how to take punches, and how to deliver them too... Obviously the ideal thing is to avoid them by staying highly vigilant! When you do take a blow, it could be to your heart or your head: that’s why it’s important to work on your abdominal belt, abdos and lumbar muscles. The neck is really important too, with the trapezius and upper back muscles.

Building up the muscles in your legs is

essential for a boxer, and most people don’t really understand how important this is in this discipline. When you take a blow to the head, its power is distributed throughout the body. It’s essential that your legs give you a good foundation to help you deal with the blow, so that its power can be distributed correctly throughout the whole body.”

**“ IT’S ESSENTIAL
THAT YOUR LEGS
GIVE YOU A GOOD
FOUNDATION ”**



Relaxation above all

“My coach, who also coaches me outside Aspria, is always in shape! Each time, we do a little bit of cardio, a short 20-minute run, followed by some swimming and then we make the most of the hammam and sauna. Aspria really represents a place where I can come to unwind, even with my coach. Certainly, coming here isn’t linked with my work or my training in the true sense. I come here for me. The club is soothing, there’s always a Personal Trainer available to explain to you how the machines work or how to do the exercises. I’m totally satisfied with my club - it’s wonderful and welcoming.”

www.aspria.be 



David Goffin: The keys to getting into great shape

Together caught up with professional tennis player dedicated to his sport

Lège-born Belgian professional tennis player David Goffin boasts a world career high ranking at No.7. He is currently the highest ranked Belgian male and the first to reach the ATP top 10. Goffin has won four ATP titles, and has reached seven other ATP finals, most notably at the 2017 ATP World Tour Finals.

Goffin's breakthrough occurred during his first appearance in the main draw of a grand slam, at the 2012 French Open. He reached the fourth round where he lost to Roger Federer in four sets. Goffin has reached the quarter finals of the 2016 French Open and the 2017 Australian Open, losing to rivals Dominic Thiem and Grigor Dimitrov respectively. At the 2017 ATP World Tour Finals, Goffin defeated Dominic Thiem, world No. 1 Rafael Nadal and world No.2 Roger Federer en route to the final where he lost to Grigor Dimitrov.

Nicknamed 'La Goff', he states that his idol when he growing up was Roger Federer.

Can you give us three nutritional tips to get into great shape?

Mobility, the dietary supplement for my joints, that I take every day, a healthy lifestyle with lots of water, a diversified and balanced diet and a good night's sleep.

What does a typical day look like in the life of David Goffin?

It depends if I am in tournament or not, but in



tournament, I take a good breakfast. I will warm up, then I wait for my match. I try to concentrate, to move well when my turn approaches, and once the game is over, have a little dinner with my team and get to bed not too late. Outside tournaments, I have at least one tennis session and one physical session a day, and sometimes two, depending on the coaching programme.

What are the keys to success to reach a top sporting level?

Regularity, tenacity, determination and hard work.

What kind of vacation do you prefer to take at the end of the year? And what is your favourite activity? Adventure or relaxation?

A bit of both! For this year, it will be safari in South Africa, followed by a few days in the Seychelles. 📍



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*Curcuma extract contributes to maintaining joint flexibility. Chandran B. & Goel A. (2012)

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Being inspired: A forgotten art

International Speaker, Peak Performance Trainer and Business Mentor **Arnon Barnes** asks us to stay inspired



There are inspiring people all around us. People that have come from great challenges, overcome obstacles and gone through incredible difficulties to soar to the top and leave their energetic signature written in the history books.

So why is it so important to be inspired? What is it about being in the presence of an inspirational person that makes us feel uplifted and make us want to reach for our own full personal potential?

**“ THEIR ABILITY
TO INSPIRE
OTHERS TO JOIN
OR SHARE IN
THEIR VISION ”**

From my experience being 'inspired' is a forgotten art. Something that often goes underrated. Watching and working with some of the most committed and driven business leaders on the planet, one thing that they all have in common is their ability to inspire others to join or share in their vision.

Over the years, having overcome many challenges and obstacles, as I'm sure you have too, one of the secrets I learned about overcoming

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Self-help

those 'hard times' was to incorporate the concept of short term inspiration and long term inspiration.

What does that mean? Simple: I look at legendary people that inspire me, my role models, from Nelson Mandela to John F. Kennedy, Mother Theresa to Leonardo Da Vinci, to the Michael Jordans of this world and then visualize 'What would he/she do?' We all, in my humble opinion, can benefit from choosing and studying a few inspirational role models. People that embody our true values and that we can learn from to use as an extra source of strength, to help us get unstuck, climb and soar to new personal bests.

However, there is a challenge with having those kinds of 'public, or famous, role models'. Sometimes we start to compare ourselves with these role models we look up to. Doing that can hurt us, lower our self-esteem by causing us to think; 'I'm not good enough' or 'I'll never be as successful as him/her'. These and other disempowering, self-imposed, sabotaging internal conversations that we create stops our own growth and ability to achieve the new high levels of personal and professional success.

OK, so what to do?

What really works for me are two things. Firstly, have the Nelson Mandela, or famous, role model. This is what I call my long-term role model: people that 100% embody my values vision and mission and have achieved absolute mastery in their fields combined with the global recognition and fame for their achievements. Keep that role model simply because it is inspiring. Secondly

and simultaneously, find yourself a short-term role model. Someone that is excelling in the arena you want to excel in. Someone that has the same values as you and goes through life and business with similar mission and vision and possibly even a similar product. The only difference is that this person, this short-term role model, might just have only a two to three year 'head-start on you' and 'you can catch' that person. To catch a 'Nelson Mandela' would seem ludicrous, after all you probably didn't sit in a jail for 27 years, nor overthrew the apartheid regime or become the first democratically elected head of state of South Africa. To be inspired by his commitment to his personal values, dedication, perseverance and relentless authenticity is beautiful. By doing enough hard work, having commitment and perseverance, you know you can achieve your short-term role model's level of success, achievement and wealth within a matter of two to three years. And that is what lights my fire - that is what drives me to get up every day and take at least one more step and stay fully focused on my goals. I know I will get there. All I must do is stay inspired.



“ AND THAT IS WHAT LIGHTS MY FIRE ”

Would you like to meet and work with Arnon Barnes live? Join his next upcoming Business Rebel Masterclass in Belgium or The Netherlands. For more information on the event, dates and details check out www.businessrebelmasterclass.com or contact his office for more information on coaching via info@arnonbarnes.com 📧

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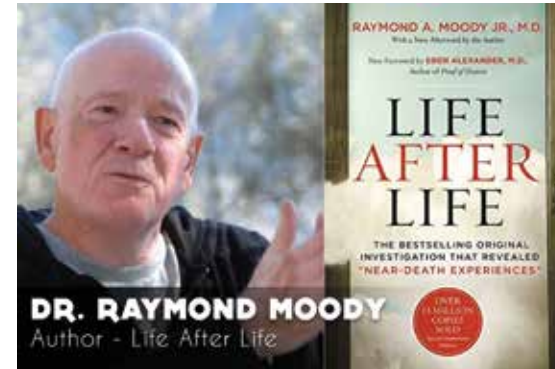
To be inquisitive is part of who I am, and curiosity has brought me answers to many questions over the years. The answers have come through my own experience, through other people and through messages from my guides, my angels, the ones who care for us all from the other side of life.

**“ I DID A DEEP
DIVE INTO
MY OWN
PSYCHE ”**

Approaching middle age, I admit there has been quite some time for serious reflection. As a teenager, I investigated the selfish gene theory, the idea that everything in nature is based on the survival of the gene. Then I did a deep dive into my own psyche and its hidden corners. Doing time travel to other realms and seeing visions from out of space about the future of humanity, I saw people waking up all

over the planet. There were beautiful trees everywhere, and as each tree cracked open there was a person walking out of it. It was a beautiful vision and it happened everywhere.

For me, the message was clear, everybody who has authentic wisdom will start speaking up, and we will wake up to the truth of our nature, a nature of compassion and care for everything that is living. Part of my mission in life is to help people find more happiness by guiding them to listen to their essence. To listen to the one part of them that is hard to hear when there is too much noise on the outside. The one part that it is difficult to hear when there are blockages built around the heart and the essential self - when what the



heart desires is not heard. The heart holds more truth than we can ever imagine. It is the essence of our existence, it just keeps beating to keep us alive. The question is how alive do we want to be? Is it enough to just keep our hearts physically beating, or do we want our lives to have more meaning?

The pulse of life is constant for as long as you live. It is then we can ask ourselves more questions that give us answers to an inspired life. A life close to your heart, a life full of inspiration.

Before long, when it is closing time and your heart stops, it will be too late to ask questions about how to live. People who have been dead

and brought back to life claim that their questions have been answered, even if they never asked. The stories that they all tell are the closest we have to a glimpse of the afterlife, and from these accounts it seems we

**“ WHEN WHAT
THE HEART
DESIRES IS
NOT HEARD ”**

are all made the same. Some people have been dead for as long as twenty-five minutes before being brought back to life. This has been documented by Raymond Moody, the ‘father’ of the modern NDE (Near Death Experience). His pioneering work *Life After Life* has been

said to transform the world. But how many have heard about this book and his research?

They say that there will be a picture flashing in front of your eyes and you will see your entire

life in one single image. All your life experience will be shown to you in one picture. Amazing, right? To see an entire life in one image is beyond human comprehension; it is an expansion into a limitless realm. When you see your life flashing by, you will understand how people were touched by your presence.

If we can trust all these people, if we all have the same experience after death, doesn't that mean that we all belong to the same conditioning? We are all floating on a small planet in an infinite universe. Mother Earth is a living breathing organism that makes us have life on earth. Life is a mystery, and to solve this mystery we have created an infinite number of Gods and Goddesses, while the mystery is not to be answered - it is to be lived. If we knew everything, how interesting would life be then? I find it fascinating that even a word, however beautiful, is a description of something that is beyond description.

To understand that we are all connected, we just need to see that the air that goes into your lungs also goes into mine - the air belongs to us all.

“ A LIFE FULL OF INSPIRATION ”

With my deep inner conviction that we all belong to each other I have been saddened lately by people around me looking at the chaos of the world and saying: “This is just how things are, people are animals.”

If you really think about it, are animals causing the chaos in the world? Surely, animals live in harmony with nature. Of course, I see what people mean by this phrase. They mean that our animal instinct or primal selves are programmed to cheat, corrupt, compete and win on any terms with no consideration of the long-term consequences. But is this true?

No, it isn't. The good news is that our primal instincts are to support and help each other in a crisis. The primal instincts of nature are to sustain life, and in difficulties, nature is persisting by mutual benefit. The truth is that the more difficult the living conditions are, the more mutually supportive we become of each other. Survival is enhanced by helping and

supporting each other; when there are natural disasters, people forget about themselves to help each other. That is our true nature, that is our primal instinct, to jump in and save each other.

If you would like to add more joy to your life, find someone to help and the sun will immediately shine brighter. Can't we all relate to that? You feel a bit low, and unexpectedly somebody needs you and then your spirits change in a heartbeat. Suddenly, you feel good because your existence mattered to somebody else. Our emotional and psychological wellbeing is increased by mutual benefit, and in the end, it outruns competition and separation. How much fun is it to be alone on the podium and have nobody to celebrate your victory with?

How much fun is it to win in a society that loses? What about being the only one standing when everybody else has fallen? How nice is it to be a winner when you can't breathe and there is no water left? How powerful is that?

After all, the key to a happy life is not to struggle and compete on your own, certainly not to win when everybody else is losing. The essence of who we are is love, and to experience love we need each other.

To exist, to be human, let us be of help to one another this winter. Let us all reverse the trend of the law of the jungle and embrace the natural law of altruism. So that we can see, touch and feel the essence. The essence of that we only truly exist in the reflection of each other. And that we exist more fully when we are helping one another.

Let us stay Together.

Find out more:
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The mind is a muscle

Karen Northfield looks at a muscle that can be an asset or a liability



The mind is not just any muscle. The mind is our body's most powerful muscle.

There is a proverb that says "fall down seven times, stand up eight". This is a good lesson for obstacles that life throws at us. Often when we are stuck in a pit or when we feel we can do no more, we actually can. We may think we are at the end of the road or think there is no solution, we are in fact wrong. We can always try one more time or approach things differently. Not only are we more capable than we think, but we can overcome life's most

challenging obstacles too. Our minds can be our greatest liability or our greatest asset. Our minds are so powerful that they can make us sick or when used as an asset, improve our health.

It often depends on choice and our self-belief. Often, we go through many situations in life feeling subordinate to the mind. The trick is learning to train the mind to make it our greatest asset - at all times. By training the mind as you would a muscle, you can learn to adapt to situations to overcome life's many challenges.



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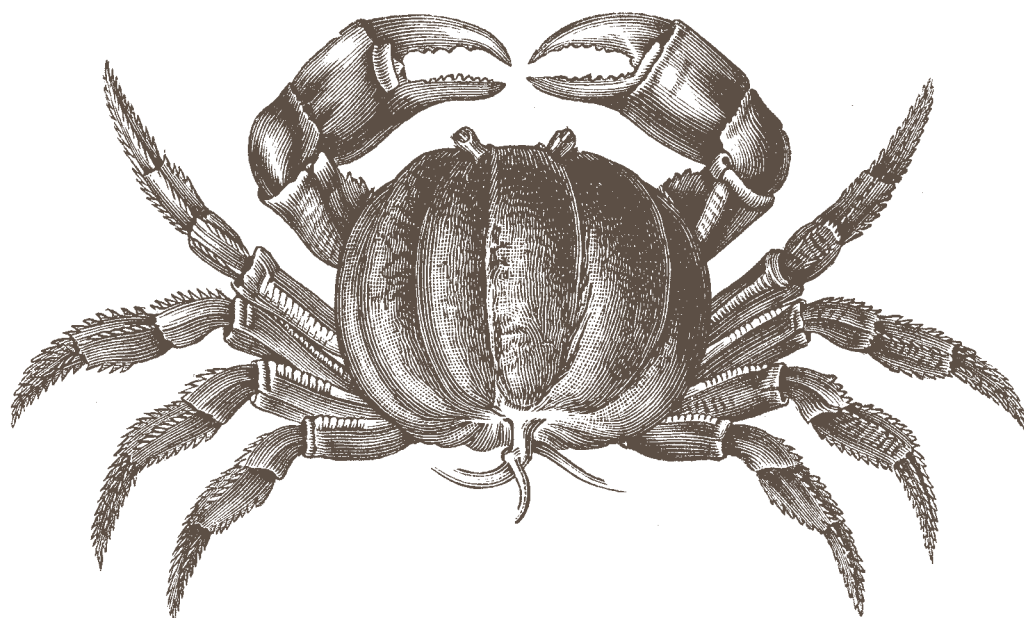
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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Self-help

Napoleon Hill once said: "Our only limitations are the ones we set up in our own minds." Often our minds are our barriers. The difficulty of the mind is controlling the negative and self-limiting thoughts. Thinking you can or can't do something is synonymous with belief. And belief is a powerful, powerful thought. Henry Ford once said: "If you believe you can, you're right; and if you believe you can't, you're also right." Either way you're right. Here's the catch. The moment you give up is the moment you stop believing in yourself. However, if you train your mind to create positive beliefs, you enter the realm of possibilities and can learn mechanisms to overcome these (self-) imposed limitations. Belief is like opening the door to a forest. You have to first open the door in order to discover the depth and richness of the forest. Unless you open your mind, you don't know what's there.

Our minds are machines

Our bodies are powerful machines. The body is made up of over 640 muscles. Of all the muscles, the most powerful one is the mind. But the mind isn't just any muscle. The mind is a muscle of its own. It is the powerhouse of the body. Its capacities are beyond any organ or muscle of the body. The mind commands the entire body, the other muscles, allows us to think and take action, and makes sense of the world. No other organ or muscle is as multifunctional and can do so much at the same time. If a computer can process one piece of information at a time, the mind can process information up to 11 million bits per second. Inside the mind we have up to 80,000 thoughts a day and a single thought can travel up to 400 km/h (equivalent to the fastest car in the world).

Imagine if you were to stir all of your daily thoughts in the direction of your belief or goal, how much power you would generate towards self-realization? When you get a better understanding of what the mind is capable of doing, you can learn to direct your thoughts and energy in the direction of your choice.

“ FALL DOWN SEVEN TIMES, STAND UP EIGHT ”

Visualization and the subconscious mind

In everyday life, we can become overwhelmed with situations that can have a negative effect on our mind and can turn into a negative thought pattern. The question is how do you stir a thought in the right direction? There are various techniques - one of them is visualization. Visualization is a powerful technique that deserves our time and attention. Visualization is the world you create within your mind where you can cultivate positive feelings and positive thoughts. It is like a garden where you grow the plants and flowers of your choice. Visualization has a direct effect on the subconscious mind, where muscle expansion (or change) happens. It is at this level where we bring meaning to the world, to our beliefs and create change in our habits.

How do you train the mind like a muscle?

Visualization allows you to create space for

your mind to expand. The same way a muscle does when trained. If you're in the gym and are aimlessly exercising, you will not remotely reach the same results than if you bring your attention to what you are doing. By focusing on a muscle and concentrating on the effort at hand, you allow for

it to strengthen and develop. In the same way, training the mind as a muscle, you allow for expansion and strengthening. Therefore, visualization and exercise have a lot in common. Depending on the type of exercise you do they expand, build and stretch.

When you visualize, you become the observer. You slow down your thoughts, pulse and heart rate. This allows us to be in a calmer state of mind and to be tuned in to the present. Within this realm of visualization, you enter the realm of realization. Realization leads to change. If you're not aware or convinced of something, up to that point, it doesn't exist. The moment it enters your mind, you become aware of its existence (realization) and discover the myriad of possibilities that up to that point were inexistent. What you can imagine you can achieve. This is where the expression "what the brain can conceive, it can achieve"



solidifies. It all happens in the realm of belief (once again, the subconscious mind). By imagining yourself getting somewhere, achieving something, doing something; visualization allows you to explore new possibilities.

Within the subconscious mind doors open, possibilities unfold and obstacles unfasten. This is the purpose of visualization. Have you noticed in your dreams you can do things you've never imagined or found impossible in the material world? This is your mind expanding like a muscle.

So why does visualization work? How is it that the subconscious mind is so powerful? The subconscious mind is like an ocean and is unlimited in nature. When we bring attention to it we allow for expansion. Limitlessness and expansiveness are our true nature.

There is truth behind the expression "there is

“ TRAIN THE MIND TO MAKE IT OUR GREATEST ASSET ”

always a solution". It may not be immediately accessible or what we expect but solutions there are. Finding a solution may cause us to think or act out of our comfort zone. By training the mind as you would a muscle, you develop and strengthen its capacities and tap into your belief system. By applying the first part of Henry Ford's saying "if you believe you can, you're right" you reinforce your thoughts in the direction of your beliefs. Through visualization, you train mental strength, learn mechanisms to unlock obstacles and reach goals you might never have expected. The mind is a muscle. But the mind isn't just any muscle. The mind is our most powerful muscle. Train it like one. If you fall seven times, you'll be sure to stand up eight.

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9 steps to Netflix disorder

Sarbani Sen looks at the mesmerizing influence of Netflix

Photo © Netflix HQ, Los Gatos, California



I am actually quite a spiritual person, meditating in the morning, reading a book at night before sleeping, concentrating on my goals in life, praying for my kids to be fine, etc. I used to think of myself as an informed person, with a master's degree, speaking eight languages and now starting to learn Arabic – so, not the average mass-controlled person. Until I met Netflix.

Netflix changed my life

It changed my sense of priorities. Now instead of rejoicing about going to bed with my husband, I'd rather watch the next episode of *Suits*. I've never been a TV person. Always hated cheesy uninteresting series filled with

bad acting. But here it's different, and the more I look around and talk to people, the more I realize they have got us all mesmerized. But what is it that hooks us up? What is the miracle recipe? from *The Huffington Post* to *The Guardian* and *The Independent*, and even very serious medical journals, everybody is worried about this new addiction. Some researchers even came up with some remedies. They say soon it might be on the WHO list (as is compulsive gaming disorder now). Here are the nine steps we follow to dig a trap for ourselves.

1. Stairway out of (crappy) reality

Escapism is what they call it: stepping out of



your daily stress and uninteresting life to join a family of (more) interesting people and issues. When you are in the middle of routine, or some stress related issues, it is sometimes a good thing to go and spend some time watching others go through that stress - instead of you. Sometimes their romances become yours, and their flirts make you feel alive again.

2. The cliffhanger strategy

When faced with the acute stress of not knowing what is going to happen next, the body produces an excess of CRH, a hormone that mediates the release of other stress hormones in the body. This causes the body to remain alert (our fight or flight response), which can disrupt sleep. So, when you're faced with that cliffhanger at midnight, you're suddenly not so tired and you find yourself pushing through the next show. "Our biggest competitor is sleep," claims the CEO of Netflix. I'm sure you know exactly what I mean.

3. Proud to be done

Did you realize how proud we are at social events to relate the various shows we've watched to the end? Is it an 'accomplishment' (while still having a life)? I even think the latter is the most important: the real achievement is "how the hell do you have a normal working day after those nights finishing season 8?"

Here we are stepping into the reward centre of our brains... welcome dopamine, exit sleep! Bragging about how much we can take in and still be at the top (so we think). I'm not sure the body feels very happy afterwards though. Having lack of quality sleep most certainly will drain us, make us become negative and exhausted. This can surely turn into depression - sooner or later it does.

4. Quality and education

If you look around today, there is hardly anything that competes with Netflix. For ten to fifteen euros a month you can share it with the whole family - you get quality programmes addressing almost any interest in life (from design to travelling, to interior architecture, to Asian stand up, extreme sports, law firms, sex and other addictions). Their acting is amazing too: all these next-door boys and girls stepping

into our lives for the weeks or months are either sexy, villainous or bright. They all have something. We almost live with them in our heads, hurrying home to find out what happened next. It's intelligent scenario writing - it deals with all ages, all styles, and most of the time you even learn something.

5. The time trick

Apparently, our brain works in chunks of 30 or 60 minutes, say medical studies, whereas

“ WHAT IS THE MIRACLE RECIPE? ”

Netflix episodes use a 40 min pattern. This does not fit in - hence we usually watch two episodes in a row, and even indulge in a third to make it two hours all told, a round figure our brain can relate to. Sounds familiar?

6. The serotonin boost

What if screen light had a positive effect on our brain cells? According to *The Huffington Post*, even though it keeps us from sleep it nevertheless makes us happy.

7 Netflix vs Insta

Is it really true? Well I see it for myself. Instead of going to check what amazing holidays my friends had, or crazy party I wasn't invited to, you don't put yourself in danger and it has more quality content. Finish sneaking in other people's lives, hurting yourself or comparing - here it's just 'take in'.

I also realized I actually experience something different from my daily life when watching. For example, with *Sense 8* I totally got myself into the personas. The message was totally oriented to the international spiritual crowd as the scenario incorporated various beings in different continents, connecting to each other through their brains or vibrations, while collectively fighting a witch hunt. It combined stress and pleasure of seeing them happily connected (probably a new age soul fantasy).

8. The acceptable addiction

Unlike voyeurism (FB addiction) or hard drugs, soft drugs and alcoholism, Netflix watching is kind of the 'acceptable' addiction. You can make fun out of yourself in public conversations, and even share your suffering with fellow addicts. This is how they actually get you into it... you can share your account to new future addicts.

9. The seconds to the next episode

This is how they get us all. I mean how can



you say No to the next episode? Unless they messed it up and the last seconds were dull, you probably want to see what happens next. And now you don't even need to look up the next episode it comes up for you in seconds!

So how to get over it?

First of all I'd like to share a sociological fact: we either have an addiction or we don't. I'm not the addictive type in general. I've done pot, and even wilder drugs back in the days but never got addicted. I've seen friends who had serious trouble trying to quit, and even today I get angry when my husband cannot spend a day without coffee or a cigarette. I quit smoking quite easily when I was 40 and can leave pretty much anything I decide to.

“ I'M NOT SURE
THE BODY FEELS
VERY HAPPY
AFTERWARDS ”

So, for me, even though I'm writing about a Netflix addiction, I'm actually happy to have the pleasure of watching something intelligent and worthwhile created by another mind. I'll

probably just watch another season of *Suits* now and then retreat to the normal me again, and go back to bullet journaling and writing on my own topics and books in my spare time. But for more vulnerable people, there aren't various solutions, I'm afraid. As in many addictions, specialists advise a cold turkey strategy: that is stop for a while, or forever. ❶

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Meaningful work

Gemma Rose wonders how to find meaning in the modern workplace



For this magazine, I previously wrote about how we seem to be working harder than ever - despite technology supposedly making our lives easier - and yet are unhappy (*The Task Ahead*, *Together Magazine* issue 64). I also referred to a category of jobs called 'bullshit jobs'. This category was identified by David Graeber, an anthropology professor at the London School of Economics. Graeber had first written the essay *On the Phenomenon of Bullshit Jobs* for *Strike! Magazine* in August 2013. Needless to say, it chimed with many

people: it went viral immediately, the huge amount of traffic to the article caused the *Strike!* website to crash repeatedly, and it was translated into a dozen languages including

Turkish, Latvian and Korean. Graeber expanded on this theme in the book *Bullshit Jobs: A Theory* (Allen Lane, 2018).

According to Graeber, a 'bullshit job' is "a form of paid employment that is so completely pointless,

unnecessary, or pernicious that even the employee cannot justify its existence even though, as part of the conditions of

employment, the employee feels obliged to pretend that is not the case". Some examples could be hedge fund managers, marketing gurus or corporate lawyers. Others could be a receptionist that is paid simply to front an office without actually having anything to do, or an administrator responsible for processing forms which could easily be automated (or may not even be necessary to do in the first place).

Many of these jobs are located in middle management, are usually well paid, and are common in both the public and private sectors. The jobs that provide real social value - cleaners, nurses, teachers, social care workers - are usually poorly paid and often derided or scrutinized. Graeber believes that the employee knows instinctively whether his job is bullshit or not. In his book, he delves into why people who do these types of jobs are so unhappy, why they put up with them, and why there has been a proliferation of such jobs.

To curb the amount of bullshit jobs, he argues for a universal basic income. The idea is that everyone gets the same amount of basic income, regardless of whether they are employed or not (e.g. an employed person would receive a basic income on top of their salary). It separates livelihood from work. Having this safety net (Graeber doesn't enter into the specifics of how such an income programme would work) liberates people from their bullshit jobs to pursue a more meaningful life. It's a wonderful idea that I strongly support, and Graeber notes a successful pilot in India (and there have been similar pilots or at least proposals in Canada, the Netherlands, Finland and Scotland). However, because our society places so much value on having a job, as well as the fear mongering placed upon giving people money for free ("It will make them lazy"), I can't ever see a government actually implementing it nationally.

For now, I have a couple of suggestions on how to deal with such a job. The first could simply be to quit your job and do something more meaningful, with the full

acceptance of lower pay, possibly higher stress, yet higher satisfaction (Graeber argues that society, in particularly the evolution of puritanism, has imposed on us this notion to accept lower pay for more meaningful jobs because meaning is a reward within itself). Or as Tom Hodgkinson of *The Idler* recommends, start your own small business. He quotes the Yale professor James C. Scott's book *Two Cheers for Anarchism* (Princeton University Press, 2012): "I believe that the petite bourgeoisie and small property in general represent a precious zone of autonomy and freedom in state systems increasingly dominated by large public and private bureaucracies." However meaningful, starting a business is not without its struggles: Hodgkinson recounts his nightmares in *Business for Bohemians* (Portfolio Penguin, 2016).

If you can't afford to quit/retrain/start a business, how about trying to find ways to make your job as meaningful as possible, no matter how little? In *The Age of Absurdity* (Simon & Schuster, 2010) writer Michael Foley believes that it's possible to enjoy almost any task, stating that "and a sensible work strategy might be: surrender to the task but not to the task master, become absorbed in the work itself but never absorb the work ethos". Find niches in your job where you can claim as your own and who knows where it may lead?

One reason why so many of us may be disenchanted these days is because we fail to or cannot see how our work contributes to the bigger picture. Take making biscuits – once

upon a time, an individual would bake the biscuits, package them and sell them – seeing from start to finish the contribution he was making. But with commercialisation, making biscuits has become big business. In *The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work* (Penguin, 2009), the philosopher Alain De Botton examines the industry of

biscuit manufacturing. He doesn't question whether making biscuits in itself is meaningful, but whether it can still be meaningful "after it

**“ IT
SEPARATES
LIVELIHOOD
FROM WORK ”**



has been continuously stretched and divided across five thousand lives and half a dozen different manufacturing sites?" And yet, this biscuit manufacturer was providing a livelihood for an entire community; its plant manager felt the weight of such a responsibility.

De Botton makes a noble point: that some of the greatest wealth generated has come from products or materials that appear to be detached from meaning. He says: "Amsterdam was founded on the sale of raisins and flowers. The palaces of Venice were assembled from the profits of the carpet and spice trade. Sugar built Bristol." And from this wealth, universities, hospitals and schools were built and standards of living improved.

“ SUGAR BUILT BRISTOL ”

I have often struggled with the quest to find meaning at work. I've certainly done bullshit jobs. Today, I try to make meaning at work, no matter how small, and with any extra income I have, I support meaning in other people's jobs by subscribing to newspapers and magazines, buying books, going to concerts, donating to charity, paying my taxes. By supporting others, meaning flows and I'm contributing actively and positively to this world. 🍬

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Drawing on his wisdom and knowledge of the Bible, the author reveals the clear link between making money and spirituality, and urges listeners to focus on self-discipline, integrity, and character strength in order to achieve personal prosperity. Special emphasis is given to establishing positive attitudes toward making money and adopting effective Biblically based strategies.

The book demonstrates how earnings and profits are God's reward for forming relationships with others and serving them,

while stressing the importance of service, sharing, change, leadership, and creating boundaries and structures. It encourages readers to focus on other people's desires and teaches why and how to make connections with many people. Finally, it suggests ways for us to transform ourselves and continue toward success even in the face of fear and uncertainty

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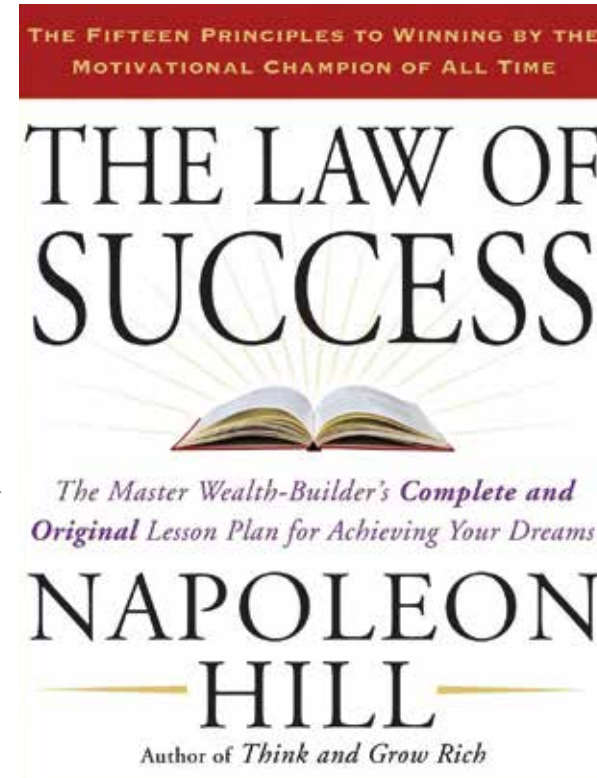
Napoleon Hill was an American author and impresario from the 'new thought' tradition of the 20th century. He went on to become an early producer of personal-success literature. At the time of Hill's death in 1970, his best-known work, *Think and Grow Rich* (1937) had sold 20 million copies. His works insisted that "fervid expectations are essential to increasing one's income". Hill was an advisor to two presidents of the United States of America, Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

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As Hill saw it, these lessons work as a "mind stimulant" that "will cause the student to organize and direct to a definite end the forces of his or her mind, thus harnessing the stupendous power which most people waste".



While future classics of Napoleon Hill would inspire millions of readers, there is no substitute for *The Law of Success* for everyone who wants to grasp the full range of Hill's ideas and tap their transformative power. ❶

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“ THE GROWTH, DEVELOPMENT, AND UNFOLDMENT OF YOUR SOUL ”

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Economics: The ‘greed or fear’ cycle

Our money expert **Dave Deruyter** looks at the current state of the financial markets

European Central Bank, Frankfurt



What goes up must come down. What comes down must go up... one day.

There are many cycles in the investment markets and when they all converge downwards you have a crash. The financial markets have come down substantially lately in all markets. If one does not call it a crash, it is an important correction for sure.

If you remember the many years of continuous increases in the stock markets, you know that a correction was kind of overdue. Still, as companies were very profitable and interest

rates low, the high price levels of stocks were not abnormal. Price earnings ratios were high, but not excessive.

Today the world economy is still going strong, but growth is slowing and should slow down further in the coming years. However, there is no recession on the horizon. International trade is under heavy pressure because of the tariff war launched by the US. That is hindering economic growth and, because of the uncertainty it creates, also the investment plans of companies.

Interest rates are going up in the US. In Europe



the asset buying by the European Central Bank (ECB) is coming to a standstill, leading to less liquidity in the markets. That means that it becomes more expensive to speculate on the financial markets. It also leads to a slowdown in property buying.

Both the macro-economic cycle and the liquidity cycle are looking somewhat down. On the micro economic side, the profitability and growth picture of companies, the signals are mixed. Digitalization is still aiding efficiency, so profits are good. But the international trade picture is bleak, leading to worries on the growth side.

Political instability is not helping the markets either. Brexit keeps dragging its heels. The US policies are unfavourable. The euro's stability is under pressure again, particularly with the developments in Italy. China is strengthening its 'Big Brother' control on Chinese citizens. Wars keep going on in the Middle East. And, last but not least, the 'bad debt' ghost is haunting the financial system again. That is

not only the case in Italy, but also in the US and China. In the latter two countries mainly because of excessive lending to real estate projects.

If one looks at investor behaviour, there is the 'greed or fear' cycle to look at. Greed has been in the financial markets for many years now and it has led, until a few months ago, to complacency: the market will keep on going up. The cold winds of the past months have at least surprised investors and some

have moved to the side lines to watch and not buy. If nobody buys, even a few sellers can bring the markets down, slowly but surely, but still substantially. It is only when fear enters the markets that a crash can happen. Fear is when

nobody looks at the figures anymore, and so selling increases and buying freezes.

The recent important correction in the market has brought price earnings to healthy levels in most, if not all, markets again. If there is no fear, buying should resume at least for

**“ TODAY THE
WORLD ECONOMY
IS STILL GOING
STRONG ”**



companies with healthy earnings and a good outlook. But if the overall outlook turns really gloomy, that may not happen.

Investors could do with some positive news - preferably on subjects of importance such as a real deal on Brexit and an important step in improving the international trade scene again. Such news would make a big difference. In the meantime, markets could slide further. Still, with every drop the - at least technical - facts improve for buying again. For the long-term investors, there shouldn't have to worry as time is on their side. The same applies to traders as he can change his play from bullish to bearish and make gains as the market goes down. Anyone in between may be squeezed, particularly those with high debts. As interest rates increase, the servicing of debts gets more expensive. As markets go down, the collateral has to increase which leads to more debts...

All of this only confirms the basic rules of investment: do not borrow to invest. Do not

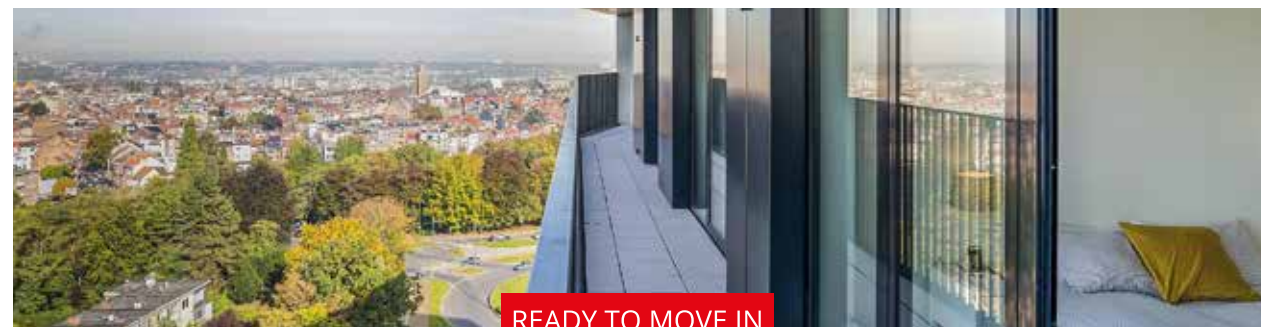
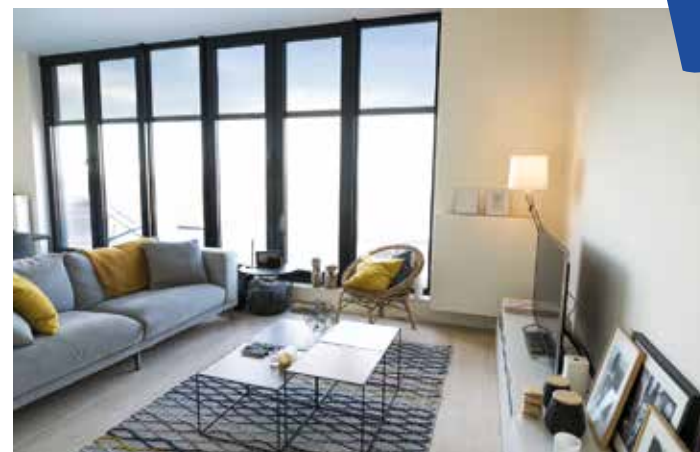
put all your eggs in the same basket. Buy products that you understand. But also: buy when the price is low, sell when it is high. Forgetting to buy when prices are low is probably worse than forgetting to sell when they peak. For sure, neither greed or fear will help you, and certainly not the latter as you could forget to buy when prices are low.

Real estate may look as a safe haven, but it is not. As interest rates increase, borrowing gets more expensive. As economic growth

decreases, so does the capacity for renters to pay higher rents or even to pay rents at all. Be sure to stay on the safe side but, at the same time, do not miss a bargain that only passes by every 5 to 10 years. Timing is important but only really in the short

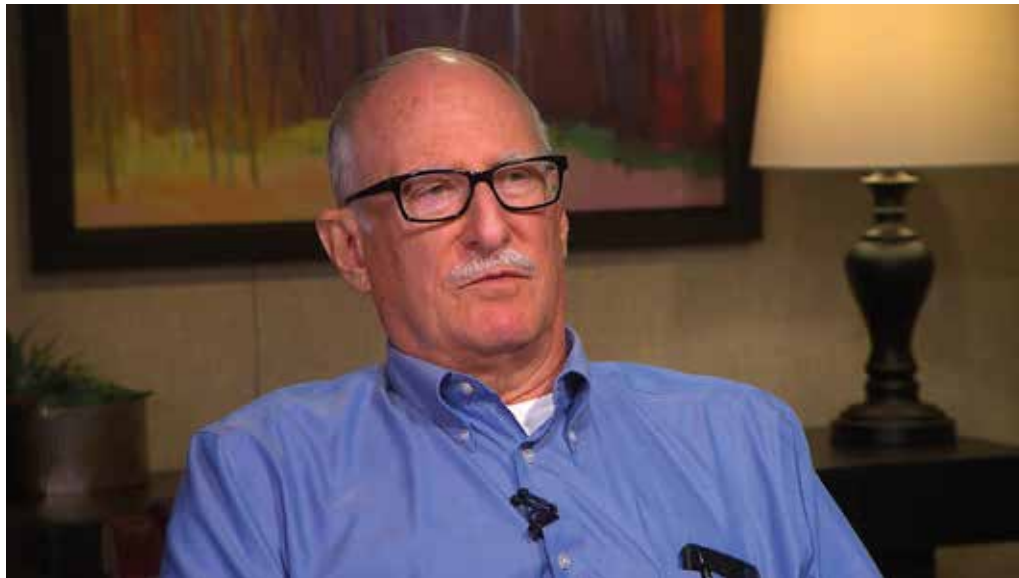
term. In the long term it is only important that you are not buying near, or at, the peak of the market. And that is something you cannot do today, given the important correction we have just had. There are no secrets when picking stocks, sectors or countries: buy growth or profitability potential. ❶

“THE EURO’S STABILITY IS UNDER PRESSURE AGAIN ”



None shall pass

Our resident tech guy **Colin Moors** delves into the murky world of passwords



Bill Burr on CBS News

Passwords: Hate them or ignore them, you can't love them. The time will be upon you soon to change your password, whether as a New Year's resolution to make your online presence safer, or because your IT department forces you to. This month, I shall be taking a look at those little words we all love to hate.

We're all painfully aware that when you create a password, you need to supply a capital letter, a number or two, have at least one special (non-alphanumeric) character and it needs to be at least 9 characters, leaving you with a hard-to-remember combination such as Gl4d!4tor? It turns out that's some of the worst advice in the world. The man who is ultimately responsible

for the directive issued by the US National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), one Bill Burr, has gone on record as having deeply regretted forcing this on us.

Burr, who is now 72 and probably just trying to enjoy retirement, wrote the snappily titled *NIST Special Publication 800-63 Appendix A* in 2003. This directive was pretty soon adopted by most organizations, providing the backdrop for the nightmare everyone has nowadays trying to craft something both unique and memorable. He's on record as saying "much of what I did, I now regret", also admitting that he based a lot of his research on a white paper from the 1980s, way before we had anything like a

“THOSE LITTLE WORDS WE ALL LOVE TO HATE”



public internet. "In the end", Burr said, "[the list of guidelines] was probably too complicated for a lot of folks to understand very well, and the truth is, it was barking up the wrong tree".

The real issue with these kinds of password is that they are - surprisingly - relatively easy to crack, leaving your site or system less secure, not more. Why would this be? Simply put, it's a question of pure number-crunching. Hackers will most often use what is known as a *brute force* attack, using their computer or a network of computers to try to guess your password. The main issue with using a plain word like the non-encrypted 'Gladiator' in the example above makes it a cinch to crack. "Aha", you may think, "I'll just use some special characters or numbers in the place of letters." Good thinking, except for the fact that any hacker worth his or her salt also knows you do that and will have adjusted their hacking programs accordingly. Yes, it'll take them a little longer but they aren't going anywhere.

The answer to this too simple/too hard to

remember quandary is surprisingly easy. Use more words. If we look at the computing power available today, and the complexity of the password, research has shown that our 'Gl4d!4tor' example would take somewhere around three days to guess - not to mention the trouble you may have remembering it. On the other hand, the password 'gladiatoromnibuslighthousechop' or any combination of four words of a decent length written as a single phrase would take around 550 years, given the possible permutations. You can more easily remember four seemingly random words than a complicated set of squiggles, so your data are safer. None of this

“YOU ONLY NEED ONE PASSWORD TO OPEN THE WHOLE THING”

protects you completely from attack but the idea is to make it complicated for them and easy for you.

Do we still need passwords, though? I would guess 'yes', at least for the foreseeable future, because most of the

different authentication systems either rely on passwords as a backup or provide a mere brokerage to accessing the device or data in question. A few things doing the rounds at the moment are:

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Technology

ZIA (Zero interaction authentication): This works by providing you with a token on a device you might carry about a lot. The obvious candidate here is the mobile phone. Using Bluetooth, NFC or a few other short-range communication tools, the computer you were trying to unlock (for example) would 'see' this token on your phone and unlock itself automatically. This merely provides someone with the opportunity to steal your phone as well as your bank details.

Fingerprint: This one is probably the most popular and useful currently. Android and iOS both have the tech built in and it works well so far, with a very small margin of error. The problem, of course, is that they all rely on a PIN or a password as a backup in case you've been in the bath and your finger has gone like a prune. Or worse. A chain is only as strong as the weakest link, after all.

Two-factor authentication: This uses two factors, unsurprisingly. The most common way is that once you have supplied a user name and password, the site will send you an SMS with a code to fill in on the site. Only if your ID and SMS match will you be given access. In my personal experience, this works well and it does mean that the potential criminal would need to have both your password and your phone.

I am pretty old-school when it comes to looking after my passwords, as I have been on the internet since forever and have a hundred of them. Quite literally. For me, the simplest option is a copy of KeePass (*keepass.info*) that I keep on a USB stick and back up to my Dropbox. Simply, you only need one password to open the whole thing - so make it memorable and secure - then you'll have access to all your other passes, plus the ability to make notes, enter site login links and lots of other stuff I don't use. Best of all, it's free. Now there's a happy note to end on. 📌



NIST, Boulder, Colorado



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A vote for Blockchain?

Gerry Callaghan looks at Blockchain and how it may in the future be used in democratic elections

Blockchain is a technology that allows users to share a public ledger which makes the agreed upon information almost impossible to falsify or hide. Its these properties that have allowed it to be the foundation of many virtual currencies, the most famous example of which is Bitcoin.

Bitcoin came into existence in October 2008 when a cryptography expert under the pseudonym, Satoshi Nakamoto, published a white paper entitled *Bitcoin: A Peer to Peer Electronic Cash System*. The very first coins were mined in 2009 and set into motion the very first blockchain.

The list of potential uses for blockchain technology spans many sectors into almost every aspect of life, from finance, technology, economics and sociology. However, it is in politics, and elections in particular where there is most excitement about the potential of blockchain technologies. Elections have been subject to much scrutiny and corruption for so long that



many in the tech space, as well as electoral committees, are viewing blockchain as the future of fair elections.

Blockchain systems base themselves on the general agreement between the people within them. Their strength comes from the fact that everyone can confirm whether something is true or not. This is as true for a virtual currency as it is for a vote. Since its birth, no individual has ever succeeded in fabricating a single Bitcoin. Shouldn't we expect the same of our votes? A properly built Blockchain electoral system would allow for safe and verifiable online voting. Would people who would then be able to vote from the comfort of their own home be more likely to vote? Could this reduce the ability of political groups to create disincentives for other groups such as students from voting? It would surely help those who are unable to travel to a polling station and make the process easier for those outside of the country.

However, the elemental principles of creating a

digital voting systems. "Blockchain can reinforce voting systems one day," he said. "It can create less error and less fraud."

Max Kaye, CTO of the Australian firm SecureVote, a blockchain-based voting platform said Europe must modernize its elections if it is to ensure the security of its elections. "Traditional voting systems are merely secure-by-coincidence. There's no sensible way to deal with a potential infiltration as soon as it is detected. The biggest problem with the integrity of elections is the fact that they are not verifiable. Electoral commissions can't guarantee their own results."

Electronic voting systems currently in use today are often based at polling stations during an election and are supervised by volunteers. These systems have historically been regarded as highly vulnerable to hacks. Earlier this year at the world's largest hacker conference, DEFCON, in Las Vegas, an 11-year-old boy managed to infiltrate an imitation Florida state voting website and modify the results of a



secure and unhackable architecture online survive in companies willing to actually develop them, such as IBM. Even the European Union has created a Blockchain Observatory to inspire more European firms to innovate. As recently as October this year EU Energy Commissioner, Maroš Šefčovič hailed the future of blockchain technologies across the continent, citing the importance they may have in future elections, as cybersecurity experts warn about the vulnerability of the current

**“ ELECTIONS
HAVE BEEN
SUBJECT TO
MUCH
SCRUTINY AND
CORRUPTION ”**

mock election within 10 minutes.

"There's no ability to react in real time," Kaye added. "If a system is compromised, you already find out about it too late, if you find out about it at all. With a blockchain-based voting system, you can find out about potential infiltrations immediately and deal with the threat as soon as it is identified."

According to the UK Treasury, parliamentary




elections within the country have cost over £100 million since 2005. The 2017 election cost the British taxpayer seven times more than its 1997 counterpart. This trend is not only clearly visible in the United Kingdom but an international phenomenon observable across many European countries and the United States as well. Estonia has managed to reduce the rise of electoral costs through online voting. According to Estonian Public Broadcasting, an electronic vote costs almost ten times less than a vote in a local polling station.

However, in Europe, the development of a

comprehensive blockchain infrastructure is behind that of China and the US, but the EU is making strides in attempting to bridge the gap. It has stated its intention to pursue blockchain

“THE EUROPEAN UNION HAS CREATED A BLOCKCHAIN OBSERVATORY”

as a means of overhauling Europe's voting system in the future. As part of its endeavours in blockchain development, the European Commission launched the EU Blockchain Observatory and Forum to promote usage of the technology on the continent. How long til this becomes a reality is anyone's guess, and the

EU is unlikely to be one of the forerunners of this technology - at least until all security concerns are addressed. 



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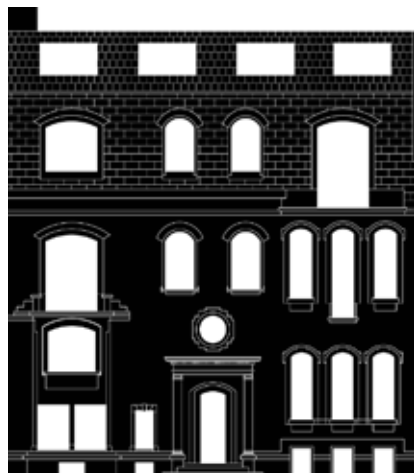
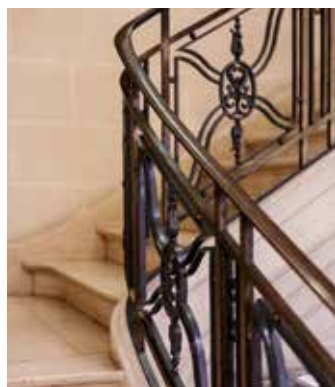
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LIFESTYLE

The aim of the biennale was to put contemporary design and interior innovations on display and on the map



LIFESTYLE

Luxury

Luxury: A stunning villa in Capri

This amazing property was once owned by Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia, the director who launched the great Totò



This wonderful villa is in a great position offering a 360-degree view and is surrounded by a botanical park with over 150 species of plants

The magnificent villa where Totò felt at home is in one of the island of Capri's most exclusive areas; it is surrounded by nature and overlooks the sea, Naples, the Vesuvius and Ischia. Sold by Lionard Luxury Real Estate for over 10 million euros, this villa was commissioned in 1942 by Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia, the director who launched the great Totò in the movie

theatres: they made a total of six films together, including the famous *Totò le Mokò* (1949), *Totò Looks for a Wife* and *47 Morto che Parla* (1950).

Totò commonly referred to as the most popular Italian comedian of all time. Totò spent a lot of time in this villa, either during shooting or when he was on holiday, so often that he even had his own room, which has been kept the same, with its original flooring and furniture, including a big wrought-iron bed, a beautiful painted corner cupboard, and a quaint round table with



“ STATELY HALLS WITH PERIOD FURNISHINGS AND ROMAN ARTEFACTS ”

some newspaper clippings of the period painted underneath the glass.

It is said that Totò was so disturbed by children making noise while he was napping, that he would open his bedroom windows and throw some water at them to make them stop.

The fruitful collaboration between Bragaglia and Totò ended due to personal and family matters after shooting *47 Morto che Parla*. Carlo Ludovico Bragaglia, who had not only launched Totò but also Anna Magnani, would go on to direct some of Italy's most important actors: from the De Filippo family (Eduardo, Titina and Peppino), to Vittorio De Sica and

Aldo Fabrizi, who were also often guests in this wonderful villa.

Surrounded by a botanical park with over 150 species of plants, this property is composed of two buildings: the main villa, which measures 800m², and an outbuilding measuring 400m²; they are independent and feature an architecture typically found in Capri, made of limestone walls of a typical bright white colour.

The two buildings were completely renovated by the current owners, who have restored some beautiful floors made of hand-painted Vietri ceramics, marbles and chestnut parquet. The main villa has four floors; the ground floor



“MADE OF LIMESTONE WALLS OF A TYPICAL BRIGHT WHITE COLOUR”

features some stately halls with period furnishings and Roman artefacts; it overlooks porticoes and three patios.

A wooden staircase connects the ground floor with the first, which is home to four bedrooms for guests, each with a bathroom and a walk-in closet. On the second floor there is the main apartment, which is composed of two bedrooms, bathrooms and a big hall. The third floor is also home to a bedroom with a bathroom and a closet room, a loggia and a big terrace.

The latest domotics and air-conditioning systems guarantee all comforts and complete

this villa's great features. The second villa is smaller but has the same impact; it is for guests, has three floors and was built in the 1950s.

The park surrounding this property has been designed with great attention to detail - it features relaxation areas, a stunning swimming pool with Jacuzzi surrounded by nature and decorated with blue Bisazza mosaics, a tennis court and a five-a-side football field.

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Blouse: Anonyme
Trousers: Modetrotter
Bracelet: Dinh Van model Seventies
Ring: Bucheron model serpent Bohème

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Shirt: Michael kors to Zalando
Ring: Bucheron model serpent Bohème
Sunglasses: Dior model colourquake



Dress: Christian Wijnants
Boots: Sarenza



Dress: Marciano Los Angeles
Bracelet: Dinh Van model Serrure
Boots: Sarenza



Top: Natan
Jacket: Massimo Dutti
Trousers: Modetrotter
Socks: Calzedonia
Ring and necklace:
Bucheron model serpent Bohème



Total look: ERES
Necklace: Messika model Choker

November: A month of colour and softness!



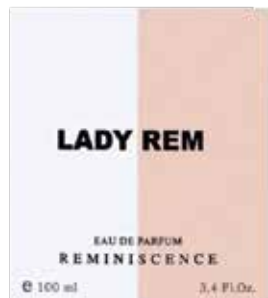
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The Gstaad Palace is one of the last family-operated hotels in Switzerland and now managed by the third generation of the Scherz Family. With stunning views over the surrounding mountains, it is only a walk away from the centre of Gstaad.

The hotel disposes of 90 stylish equipped rooms and suites, 5 different restaurants, the alpine Walig Hut and a Spa on 1800 m2 including a private spa suite, an outdoor pool with jacuzzi, a state-of-the-art gym, an activity room and a unique hammam experience as well as an Olympic outdoor swimming pool and four tennis courts in summer. The nightclub GreenGo is the place to be in Gstaad.

The Gstaad Palace places the family at the center of its concerns. A varied program is offered to children from 5 to 12 years old, and children from 3 to 5 years old are welcome to participate under the supervision of an adult. In addition, a great babysitting service is dedicated to the youngest.

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Muslim Fashion Forum

In our fashion news we look at the first-ever 'modest' fashion forum



Searches for 'modest fashion' are up 500% since the beginning of 2018, according to Pinterest UK. Modest fashion in its essence describes varying degrees of covering up on purpose due to ethnoreligious fulfilment or to attain a certain aesthetic due to personal preference. The fastest growing fashion trend after having gained mainstream traction from the likes of Uniqlo, Zara and many more – is still somewhat a mystery to many.

Muslim in partnership with MoMu-Fashion Museum in Antwerp, will hold the inaugural launch of the first Modest Fashion Forum on 23rd November 2018 at Arenberg. A one-day conference from 09.30 to 17.00 with seven speakers providing insights into the modest fashion industry within the European context.

The schedule for the day features talks by some of the biggest names in the industry. Some of the sessions include:

- First hijab-wearing model featured on H&M, Mariah Idrissi explaining "How influencers catalysed the modest fashion movement".
- A panel moderated by Director of MoMu with panellists: fashion editor from Marie Claire, co-founder of Nesci and influencer, Sagal Shire - discussing the future of the modest fashion industry and its respective challenges in Europe.

MFF18 will bring some of our favourite designers, influencers, retailers and media- to shed light into the modest fashion industry in a way that's never been done before.

Head of Strategy at Muslim, Richa Shah, said: "This forum is really for anyone interested in the fashion industry, particularly to gain expertise into the \$44 billion industry through expert speakers sharing business practices and their outlooks based on experience and research. It's going to present a chance to connect with hard-to-reach industry leaders."

MoMu Director Kaat Debo, director said: "MoMu has strong assets to be a meaningful museum for everyone. With creative partnerships like these, we build a network of diverse partners that are crucial for a global perspective and integrate the operations of the museum in our super diverse society."

Muslim is a media platform that has been pioneering to change the narrative of Muslim millennials, through positive storytelling. The platform publishes articles and videos that reach millions of millennials globally. 23rd November 2018. Arenberg, Antwerp.

To register check the website.
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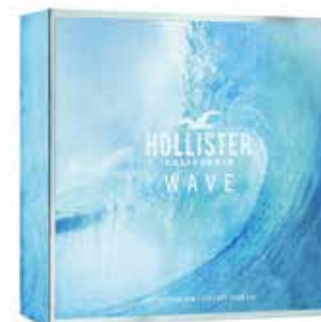


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A stone's throw from the leafy Bois de la Cambre and just off the ultra-chic shopping of Avenue Louise, Callens Café has become a firm favourite of diners steeped in the Brussels culinary tradition and newcomers to the town. If you had told Jean Callens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

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Design

Biennale Interieur: Contemporary and creative

We mark the runaway success of the 26th Biennale Interieur with a photo montage

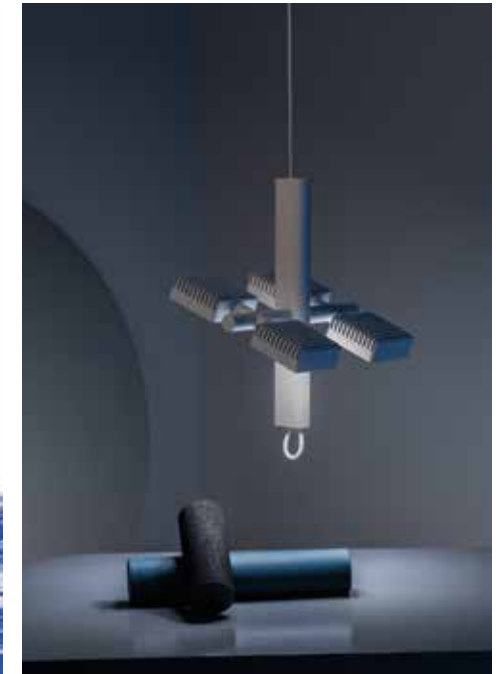
This year marks the 50th edition of the Biennale Interieur. The first edition in 1968 was entirely rooted in the reigning ideas of that time: challenging tradition, looking for innovation and taking a stand. Founded in 1967, the aim of the biennale was to put contemporary design and interior innovations on display and on the map. This would also be shown to the general public and not only to professionals, as was the custom at other major fairs at the time. Design in the context of the interior was new in a time when 'design' was still perceived as cold, elitist and at odds with the idea of 'comfortable living'.





**“ ‘DESIGN’ WAS
STILL PERCEIVED
AS COLD, ELITIST ”**

This new initiative could be linked to the motives and ideals behind the student and worker uprisings in the late sixties in France, Europe and later in the US. The founding members of the Biennale Interieur dreamed of creating a place where the prevailing ideas about what a furniture fair should be were not valid. Whereas other fairs brought a mix of old, new, kitsch and design, the Biennale Interieur resolutely opted for a contemporary and creative form of interior design. The first edition in 1968 was an instant and unexpected success. And 2018 followed in its footsteps... www.interieur.be



**“ CHALLENGING
TRADITION,
LOOKING FOR
INNOVATION ”**

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LIFE OF LEISURE

A long weekend in Hong Kong is full of variety



LIFE OF
LEISURE

Interview

Emily Blunt: Flying high

This month we are delighted to welcome an actress who now takes everything with a spoonful of sugar



Following on from the huge commercial and critical success of *A Quiet Place*, opposite actor-director husband John Krasinski, Blunt returns with the incredible honour of reinventing *Mary Poppins* for a 2018 audience. And in this interview, she explains how circumstances have come together, and says, undoubtedly, this is the right role at the right time. Blunt has two daughters with Krasinski - Hazel, four, and two-year-old Violet.

Together: This movie has been a while in coming...

Emily Blunt: You shouldn't rush a good thing. We all know the industry likes to keep the

momentum going when it feels it's onto a good thing, and I think in that respect it's amazing that *Mary Poppins* has been left alone for so long.

But it's the right film to do...

Oh it has certainly been long due a comeback. And I feel we're in a much more respectful era now where we can celebrate and build on a character or a concept without simply trying to remake it with new technology. I feel audiences really want a bit more out of movies nowadays, and that's why I'm so excited to be doing this now.

People have asked me if this is a role of a lifetime – if I say ‘yes’ to that it makes it sound a bit final... like I should be releasing my autobiography or something. But to say it is special, certainly; and that it feels different from any other – yes.

Is this a career-defining role?

I don't think you ever know that until the cinemagoing public make their verdict. What I will say is when I think about where I've come from – a stuttering 12-year-old, a nervy teenager, a young woman with total uncertainty over what to do in life... when I consider how much I've achieved having at one point feared making any decisions, I can only be confident for the future.

Does it feel like a good time to do this, given the ages your children are now at?

You want to protect your children as much as possible, and at times being an actor seems a strange way of doing that, as, clearly, they want to see you playing ‘let's pretend’ with different characters. But very often the sorts of roles you're taking are a world away from what you would want to put in front of them. But every film is different, and where *Mary Poppins* is concerned, I'm very happy for them to watch it. That's exactly the kind of film right now that I'm so proud my children will be able to see and understand very soon.

You and your husband appear to be incredibly well suited?

I think beyond simply being best friends, we also have a very easy way of being together and having a lot of fun. We trust each other and care for each other very deeply, and that means we can enjoy our lives together and believe in building a future together with our children. In today's society people are bombarded with images that constantly point to perfection, and that makes us believe that there is always that perfect partner for us.

So, a lot of people find themselves in a relationship thinking they and should do better, instead of building on what they already have. Previous generations were more willing to work through difficulties, whereas today I don't think



**“ WE TRUST
EACH OTHER
AND CARE FOR
EACH OTHER
VERY DEEPLY ”**



people are as willing to be as patient or forgiving. I would always look at the future and be positive with what I have.

What really appeals to you about Mary?

For me, she offers great hope and comes at things with a new different perspective, and these to me all feel like the right ingredients for moving forward. When I heard Julie Andrews was glad I was taking on the role, I was close to crying. That was such a wonderful thing to be told and it gave me so much belief and encouragement to take it forward and do my own thing.

It's clearly an American film set in London. It leans on all the British 'stiff upper lip' and *Oliver Twist*-type stereotypes of the era, revealing a society where the bullish rewards of Victorian ambition are gradually giving way to rather more socialist values in the reign of King Edward VII. It's the idea that everyone can profit, even the desperately poor, such as chipper cockney Bert (Dick Van Dyke), the chimney sweep and general jack-of-all-trades.

**“ IT’S A FITTING
TRIBUTE TO
JULIE AND TO
THE ORIGINAL ”**





It's a fitting tribute to Julie and to the original, but hopefully it's very different too and people will see and like that. It's a musical and has all the components you would expect, but it's been beautifully updated and is a real celebration of the original with plenty of new twists. I'm very excited, I think it's going to be incredible.

How much of yourself is in the character?


I think there is a good proportion of me in her, and I always try to find little traits and idiosyncrasies in my characters that will hopefully make them distinctive and add some depth. When I observe people, I am always fascinated by small things and aspects of human personalities that make us all unique. I am like a sponge when I spend time with people although I never let them know which character trait I might happen to be stealing from them or exaggerating for a role; but this all adds to the mix, and I think we should all look outside in taking qualities of others to improve ourselves.



And of course this is a great film for the kids to watch?

Yes – it is definitely something we can all share in. I think becoming a mum has changed so many things in my life – it's made me more vulnerable and more emotionally aware than I ever was before, but it's also given me more strength because I see things more clearly. I actually think I am much more confident as an individual and I feel that I am able to not just live more intensely but also take on roles that I might have been reluctant to play before.

How do you think the #MeToo movement has evolved?

I think it's a slow burn. I don't know if we've had a tsunami-like change, more like a gentle baby wave. But I think this is a topic that has entered the Hollywood vernacular and I hope that it sticks around because women are proving time and time again that they make money and that's really a lot of what Hollywood is geared towards. 

“WOMEN ARE PROVING TIME AND TIME AGAIN THAT THEY MAKE MONEY FOR HOLLYWOOD”



Hong Kong at the crossroads

Dave Deruytter looks at a country which will soon be half-way through its 50 years' transition period

Photo © Dave Deruytter

View from Tsim Sha Tsui on Hong Kong Island (Central)



In 1997 Hong Kong became part of PR China as a Special Administrative Region (SAR). In order to facilitate the transition from being a colonial crown jewel of the UK to an integrated part of PR China, after the end of the 99-year lease of its New Territories, Hong Kong received a lot of local power and liberty thanks to the 'One country two systems' approach of the People's Republic of China government for a period of 50 years.

The hand-over was masterminded a long time in advance, in 1984 with Deng Xiaoping, to guarantee a smooth as possible transition. Still, there was important migration out of Hong Kong in the run up to 1997. Plus, the

Asian financial crisis of the same year led to a recession. Eventually Hong Kong overcame all of the uncertainty and is today a very developed, wealthy and thriving part of China, particularly strong as a finance hub, with its special status guaranteed until 2047. As it is about half way through the transition period to become a full part of China, it is good to look at where Hong Kong stands today, and contemplate on what the future may bring.

When I visited Hong Kong in September, after about 20 years of absence, a very powerful typhoon passed by and had me locked up in my hotel for a full day. Nothing has changed on that side, except perhaps that the typhoons

Old and new buildings on the Kowloon peninsula



have become more powerful. The waterfront skyline from Tsim Sha Tsui towards Hong Kong Island, and the one from Victoria peak down on Central, have evolved, but have not changed dramatically. But there are even more high-rise buildings.

'Central' is still 'Central' though it has positively changed to make it even more liveable, but it is now very expensive hotel wise. Kowloon, particularly Tsim Sha Tsui (TST), has probably developed the most and the fastest, and also for the better. Luckily, the Star Ferry between both sides is as efficient, convenient and affordable (not to say cheap) as ever. A long weekend in Hong Kong is full of variety. And if you want to do more, Macao is only a short boat trip away. If you have a visa for the Chinese mainland, you can also go by boat, car or train to Guangdong province, Guangzhou, Shenzhen or Zhuhai, to see the economic miracle of that is modern China.

**“VERY
DEVELOPED,
WEALTHY AND
THRIVING”**

Still, Hong Kong itself has more than enough to offer - you don't have to venture out very far. The bustling business and exclusive shopping in Central. The dinners by escalator on the Victoria peak slope. A rope cable car trip to the Victoria peak and a stroll around it. Hong Kong park and adjacent shopping centre. The Man Mo temple. Aberdeen on the other side of the island. You are spoiled for choice. On top of that, you can discover the more authentic Chinese Kowloon peninsula, particularly Tsim Sha Tsui, followed by the many islands such as Lantau and others. A holiday here is very active and adventurous.

Did I notice much change in culture or operations given that Hong Kong has now been part of China for more than 20 years, albeit it under a separate system? Not really. Only once I noticed a small difference. My son and I were buying something in a local shop and at the end, after paying, I wanted to say 'thank you' in Cantonese. Cantonese is the



local language of Hong Kong and Southern China. The sales person gladly obliged in helping me and perfecting my pronunciation, when a lady, unsolicited, joined the conversation by saying how I should say 'thank you' in Mandarin, the official Chinese language. I told her I knew very well how to say thank you in Mandarin, but given that I was in Hong Kong I would like to use the Cantonese, or local version. To which I got a lukewarm reaction with a bit of a confused, slightly surprised, smile.

“ A ROPE CABLE CAR TRIP TO THE VICTORIA PEAK ”

That kind of 'influencing' would never have happened 20 years ago. Still, it is a very small thing and it is partly related to the fact that there are now more Chinese nationals in Hong Kong than 20 years ago, even as tourists. For the rest, all was very similar to 20 years back on the cultural and operational side.

After Hong Kong, my son and I travelled to Shanghai, where I hadn't visited for more than 10 years. Shanghai has advanced more in 10

years' than Hong Kong did over the last 20. And indeed, give Shanghai 20 more years and it could surpass Hong Kong in quality of living and general liveability, or at least equal it. In that respect the 50 years of Special Administrative Region status for Hong Kong would no longer be necessary by then. The question will be on the democratic rights' side. And for that, I do not have a crystal ball. It remains to be seen what the thoughts of president Xi Jinping and the Chinese leadership will bring.

One thing is for sure, the changeover in 2047, when Hong Kong will become a full part of China without any special regime, will have to be as well prepared as the original hand-over of Hong Kong from the UK to China in 1997, for it to be a success. That change will be accompanied by the obvious turbulence, because a new trust base and balance will have to be found. Hong Kong has weathered big change before, it will weather it again, so will China. ❶

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Tunisia: Full of character

Catherine Feore heads for Hammamet and the Great Mosque of Sousse



Hasrubal Hammamet

Tunisia is intriguing; it has everything: mountains, sea, great cuisine, cities full of character and the kindest people you could possibly meet. It is a place that blends North African and European heritage into one – in a sense, it is a cultural bridge. It is also the home of some of the world's greatest spas.

Looking out the plane window on what was a grey and mizzly morning, I resigned myself to the four-hour flight from Brussels to Monastir. A

chance to catch up on some podcasts, read a book or two and generally wind down from a busy week's work. Tunisia ahoy!

Stepping off the plane to blue skies and a balmy 25 degrees, I took a deep breath of the clear, fresh air and enjoyed the light breeze from the sea. This might not be the place for me in the mid-summer's high season, but it was perfect in early March.

Soothing Sousse

We travelled to Sousse, home of the famous Medina, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, which encompasses the Archaeological Museum of Sousse and the Great Mosque of Sousse. The Hotel Mövenpick Resort and Marine Spa in Sousse is part of the Swiss Hotel Group, and it is a five-minute walk from your room to the beach. It was wonderful to leave the window open and to be gently lulled to sleep by the sound of waves lapping on the shore.

Before starting a treatment, there is a one-to-one consultation with a doctor, who then designs a series of treatments that are specific to your needs, whether that's relaxation, weight loss or a particular concern – in my case, a very stiff neck. Though there is rigour, have no fear, the consultation is all about finding the right personalized care that meets your requirements. If there is something you don't like, it can be adapted.

Most cures consist of two or three one-on-one treatments interspersed with visits to the pools, hammam, sauna or relaxation rooms – with tisanes and TLC in abundance. They usually take around half a day and free you to go out and explore the sights and sounds of Tunisia in the afternoon or morning.

Hammamet – the St Tropez of Tunisia

The ancient fortress of Hammamet keeps a watchful eye over the town of 'the baths'. The marina welcomes the 'yacht set' from across Europe: Germans, Italians, Dutch and French all gather to enjoy the clement seas and the great facilities. The town has kept its



The Residence Tunis

The sea is the origin of life itself, full of rich minerals and micro-organisms; many swear by its healing properties. Its restorative powers have been lauded since Greek and Roman times.

Thalassotherapy, from the Greek word for the sea, 'thalassa', is tightly regulated in Tunisia – most spas adhere to a strict international standard, ISO 17680. Thalassotherapy harnesses the sea's healing properties for a range of treatments to rejuvenate, repair and restore.

character, with its careful planning of its sea front.

In the evening, we dined in 'Belle Vue', which lives up to its name. Its terrace looks out to the fortress and overlooks the main drag. A great place to people watch, while enjoying Tunisia's legendary seafood. We feasted on sea bass baked in a casing of salt washed down with one of the fine local wines – of which there are many.

In the nearby Hasrubal Thalassa Spa and



Hotel, there was another half-day of treatments, a wonderful 'Massage Pluie de Mer' (rain of the sea) that combines high-pressure jets of sea water and a manual massage. I was less sure about the 'enveloppement au romarin', which involved being rubbed with warmed wild rosemary oil and wrapped for 20 – 30 mins in a heated bath – I was a little worried that I would be served up for lunch! Most spas offer algae or marine mud 'envelopes' mixed with essential oils, afterwards the skin feels nourished and hydrated.

Cathartic Carthage

Rest and relaxation aside, I was thrilled that I would finally visit the ancient remains of indomitable Carthage founded by the Phoenician Queen Dido, home of the great general Hannibal and castigated by Cato, who saw the city as a threat to Rome's power and declared 'Carthage must be destroyed!'

**“ LULLED TO
SLEEP BY THE
SOUND OF
WAVES LAPPING
ON THE SHORE ”**

There is some trepidation when you visit a place about which you have heard so much, will it ultimately disappoint? Thankfully, it doesn't. I would highly recommend visiting the archaeological sites with one of the official guides and paying a visit to the original spa of 800 BC. The vista from the Themes, near today's presidential palace, must be one of the best in the world.

For urban chic and North African charm with a modern twist stay in The Residence, Tunis. The hotel and spa is a great base not far from the main sites. Apart from the outstanding spa, the hotel has three restaurants and a bar where you can chill in the evening and listen to some soothing jazz. On the periphery of the city, the hotel welcomes those visiting and doing business, or both. If you want to enjoy the sites, but also to revivify, this is the place for you! ❶

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LIFE OF
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Travel

Corsica – A culinary revelation

Together takes a look at the exalted gastronomic
ambience and attractions that await you in Corsica

Corsica is a culinary revelation. From the most exclusive Michelin-starred restaurant to the simplest of beach bars, motivated, passionate cooks are everywhere and they are just itching to seduce your taste buds. Using only the best ingredients from local growers and producers, the chefs prepare their dishes with an enthusiasm and devotion that is rarely found elsewhere. Food is a serious business on the island of Corsica, both for the locals and the many guests who return every year to eat like kings and queens.



And the wine, oh the wine...in Corsica, the old naturally rubs shoulders with the new, especially in Balagne, where Clos Culombu (Lumio) and Domaine Orsini (Calenzana) are only a few minutes away by car. This last vineyard is described as the 'Cathedral of the Modern Gourmandise' and the wines speak for themselves.



And Corsica is all about history and culture – the origin of the name Corsica is subject to much debate and remains a mystery. To the ancient Greeks, it was known as Kalliste, Corsis,

Along with the many hotels offered by Corsica Travel, there are many delightful small restaurants and bistros who specialize in fish, pasta dishes, grills and other delicacies. Even in the smallest villages, you will always find a good table to enjoy the most typical dishes that are a tribute to the culinary tradition of the island.

Just a few examples – try Chez Jean-Jean in Ajaccio, which has a sublime pasta with lobster, the Prunelli Inn in Bastelicaccia, where the setting, the cellar and the food are all simply beautiful, the Hotel Capo Rosso in Piana, where you can dine in front of the most beautiful sunsets, and Le Lido in Propriano, which offers haute cuisine facing the sea.

Cymos, Cernealis, or Cirmé. Of these Cymos, Cernealis, or Cirmé derive from the most ancient Greek name of the island, Σεῖρνοῦσαι (Seirinoussai, meaning of the Sirens), the very same Sirens mentioned in Homer's *Odyssey*. And in Ajaccio, the Fesch museum and its huge collection of Italian paintings (Primitive and Renaissance) awaits you, while the Eiffel bridge in Venaco is an amazing work of the Corsican landscape. Corsica Travel stand by all these recommendations – peruse to your heart's content on their website, then allow yourself a few dreams that come true in Corsica.

www.corsicatransel.be ⓘ

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Dining



Pottok

This is an address well worth discovering! The décor smacks of elegance with warm and sober colours – and you are immediately made welcome in a very convivial atmosphere. The place is conducive to culinary discovery and you will not be disappointed. Alexander officiates in the kitchen – he is none other than the friend and former partner of Matthias Vosswinkel, a recognized meat and burger specialist, who worked with him at Hemgie's.

As for the flavours, the chef selects only the best quality produce from his suppliers, which makes his homemade preparations incredibly tasty dishes. For starters we tasted the Burratina, a variation of tomatoes and the Tataki of pure marinated Argentinean beef. Wonderful treats that left us impatient for what came next: the mouth-watering filet of Argentine beef and half-cooked salmon. To die for! The wine list was up to the same very high standards and your host will be delighted to advise you what to order. Worth noting: very affordable prices! The cuisine of Alexander Pottok must not be kept a secret.
www.pottok.be



Le Chatelain Brussels Hotel

The season of gingerbread, illuminated Christmas trees and the race for the most beautiful gifts is just around the corner. The Châtelain Brussels Hotel is bedecked in sparkling lights and invites you to celebrate the end of the year with complete peace of mind. On arrival, the valet takes care of putting your car in a warm place, while the bartender awaits you with his famous mulled wine to sip by the fireplace.

The hotel's most beautiful executive room has been prepared where you will find a gourmet surprise that will delight your taste buds. The next morning, a wide selection of pastries and delicacies of all kinds will allow you to start the day in the perfect manner.

If you haven't completed your Christmas shopping yet, Le Chatelain's privileged partners Hopono, Filigranes and Careli allow you to discover great presents that will delight your loved ones. Then walk along the bustling streets of the city centre and discover the must-see event of the end of the year: the Christmas Market, with its chalets, its activities and, of course, its ice rink.

The festive season is also synonymous with solidarity, with each reservation of this special package, the hotel is committed to helping those in need.
www.le-chatelain.com



Aux Armes de Bruxelles

Rudy Vanlancker has always had a special fondness for Aux Armes de Bruxelles. He got his start in cooking there in 1972, as an intern from the Ecole Hôtelière de Namur. At the helm of Chez Lyon for 40 years, he witnessed the life cycle, rise and fall of the establishment of his illustrious neighbour. And now his dream of restoring it is complete, including a brand-new kitchen and the original leaded windows that offer a certain privacy from the hustle and bustle of passers-by.

The chef Cédric Callenaere serves up his specials and wine choices - the man is very careful about what produce he uses and is head-over-heels about Belgian gastronomy. So, we opted for starters Warm salad of lamb's tongue with shallot vinaigrette and the Coquille ostendaise (fish, mussels, prawns, mushrooms, cheese). Our main courses were two signature dishes: Mussels in white wine & cream (onions, celery, white wine and cream sauce), fresh cut fries and the excellent 'Rouge des Flandres' grilled rib steak.

My dining partner somehow found room for, of course, Café liégeois (coffee ice cream sundae) to round off a wonderful meal in an elegant, historical establishment.
www.auxarmesdebruxelles.com/en



SEMSOM

Aromas, colour and warmth. SEMSOM is on a different scale size-wise to Aux Armes... but it was also an excellent experience. As you walk in you are presented with a glass cabinet heaving with all manner of Lebanese-based delicacies - we were slightly taken aback by the range of choices so the waitress kindly put a selection together for us. However, I did ask that *falafel* be included and of course it was, alongside Lebanese yoghurt mixed up with olive oil, fresh thyme and mint, Grilled eggplant topped with a special pomegranate and garlic infused sauce, and humus: Grandma's humus made up of Crushed chickpeas mixed with Zaatar olive oil and the chef's choice humus which changes regularly.

We shared a Grilled halloumi in Manakesh, which is Lebanese-style pizza and a few Lebanese puff pastries, some stuffed with tomatoes and meat and others with goat's cheese and mint. All in a very relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Get along there soon!
www.semsom.be



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Alsace Grands crus: The terroirs, their expressions

This month, we headed for Alsatian (the people not the dog) territory or rather terroir...

Some of them have been famous for more than a thousand years, others for several decades, but all come from privileged terroirs where geology, climate and exhibition form an exceptional harmony. All of them are born from this special alchemy that unites air, earth, vines and the art of men.

Very early on, the Alsatian winegrowers noticed the specificities that certain places called terroirs conferred on the cultivation of their vines and their wines. Since the 9th century, Alsatian winegrowers have referred to the notion of Grands Crus. So, the best terroirs are born from the observation and know-how of generations of winegrowers. Over time, they have revealed the most remarkable soils, often steep and ideally exposed.

Today, 51 terroirs delimited according to strict geological and climatic criteria make up the mosaic of Alsace's Grands Crus. The resulting wines account for about 5% of production. Situated on the sub-Vosgian hills, between 200 and 400 metres above sea level, and ideally exposed, the Grands Crus benefit from maximum solar radiation and an extraordinary diversity of soils.

These advantages, combined with a judicious choice of grape varieties best suited to each terroir, favour a slow and prolonged ripening of the grapes and the emergence of aromas of great finesse.

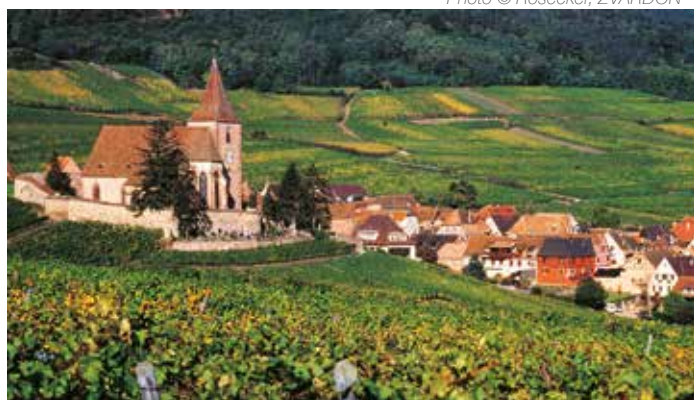


Photo © Rosecker, ZVARDON

On a smaller scale, the exposure of the hillsides, their slope, the soil's thermal storage capacities, the protection of the reliefs and the possible influence of a river induce a whole series of micro-climates, from which the 51 Grands Crus benefit in the first place.

Four grape varieties are accepted in the Grand Cru Appellations: Riesling, Muscat, Pinot Gris and Gewurztraminer. By way of derogation from this rule, Sylvaner is authorised for the place called Zotzenberg. Although the Grands Crus sometimes retain some of the

characteristics specific to their grape variety (elegant freshness of the Riesling, aromatic power of the Gewurztraminer, generous intensity of the Pinot Gris, or fruity refinement of the Muscat), they are first of all marked by

the influence of their terroir. It is expressed in a wide variety of ways, with infinite modulations. www.vinsalsace.com/en/grands-crus ❶

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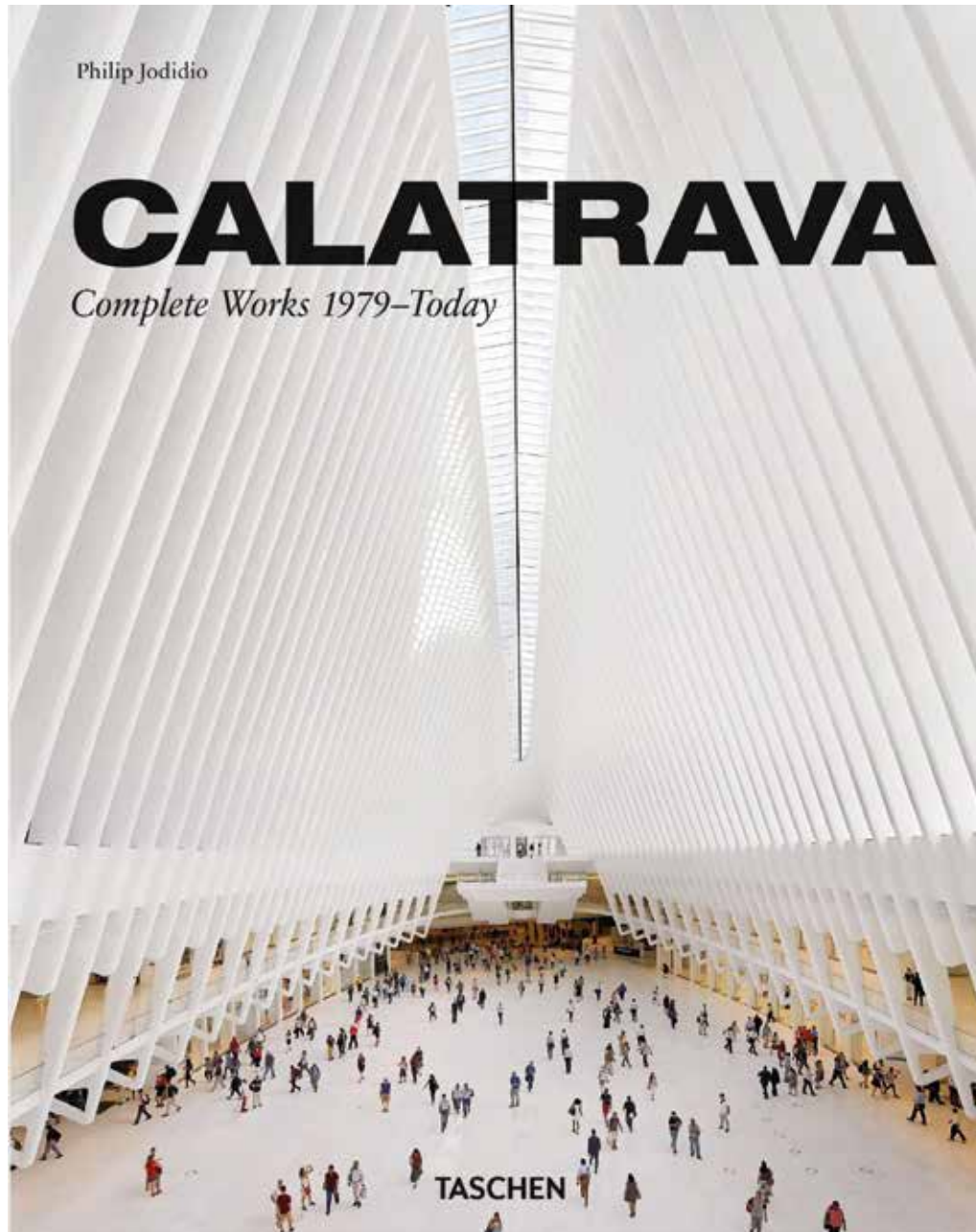
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Books: Santiago Calatrava

We look at a world-renowned architect, structural engineer, sculptor and artist



From the Athens 2004 Olympic Sports Complex to the World Trade Center Transportation Hub in Manhattan, he exhibits a remarkable aesthetic and engineering prowess with a simultaneous sensitivity for both the appearance and the anatomy of a structure.

With influences ranging from NASA space design to da Vinci's nature studies, Calatrava's creations are at once aerodynamic and organic in their associations. Natural forms and human movements inform a number of his projects, with a particular interest in the meeting point of equilibrium and dynamism.

This updated monograph gathers detailed entries, photography, and the original watercolor sketches that set Calatrava aside as a unique creative master. It includes all of Calatrava's original collaborative input, as well as new projects including the Mediopadana Station in Reggio Emilia, Italy, the Museum of Tomorrow in Rio de Janeiro, and ongoing works such as the UAE Pavilion at Expo 2020 in Dubai. Complete works 1979–Today. Published by www.taschen.com. Bookshop n Brussels at 18 Rue Lebeau, 1000. ❶

What's on Belgium

BUILDING NEW STATES AND CITIES

Immediately after 1918, newly established states of post-imperial central, eastern and south-eastern Europe embarked on an ambitious project of building new cities and national capitals. Seeking to cope with the destruction of war, driven by the desire to modernize the cities and to embody new national imageries in the landscapes of new capitals, the state authorities, together with the professional architects and urban planners, initiated a program of radical transformation of the multi-ethnic imperial cities in the interwar period. Tracing the history of competing visions for the capitals and other cities help us shed light on the multiple tensions between the quest for national identity, the aspiration to Europeanization and modernization drive nurtured by the transnational admiration of modern technology.

These numerous contradictions shaped such European cities as Prague or Bucharest, Bratislava or Sarajevo, Budapest or Kaunas. The two-day international conference aims to revisit the recent scholarship and question how the history of these different cities could be written today. **16 & 17 November.** Rotonde Bertouille. BOZAR. Tickets: check the website. www.bozar.be



Dining room Arnas Funkas, 1935, Kaunas Regional Public Library



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What's on

Michael Matthys

A graduate of the Tournai Académie des Beaux-Arts in 1997, Michael Matthys lives and works in Charleroi. He teaches comic strip art, anatomy, engraving and also lithography. Alongside a mastery of traditional techniques, his work features more unusual materials. Bull's blood blends with charcoal to paint the portrait of his home town and a cast of characters in his latest two series. *Les Nez Rouges* (Red Noses) are portraits of anonymous people in a retirement home, playing cards. Sporting red noses, they are thumbing their noses at death. In a series of rapid strokes, Matthys manages to capture the life and atmosphere of the setting. "I spent a moment with them, listening to their stories about the previous year's party, and the people, the other players who have already left for the next great party, and also the trip they're organizing to Spain with those who still remain," the artist explains. "Then I watched them play to win, always to win!" **13 December 2018–27 January 2109.**

Botanique. **Free entrance**
www.botanique.be/en



Ernest Pignon-Ernest – Empreintes

At first, he tried painting, but it rapidly occurred to him that wanting to paint like Picasso was a delusion. His encounter with *Guernica* was decisive in that regard. When, in 1966, he learned that, a few miles from his workshop in Méthamis in the Vaucluse, the French Nuclear Force was setting up shop on the Plateau d'Albion, he decided to act, to react, in some other way than painting a picture. "It took me a few months to understand the obvious fact that it wasn't possible for me to capture what was happening there on a canvas: this turning point in the history of humanity. Man can, with nuclear weapons, annihilate humanity, there are hundreds of Hiroshimas clustered under the lavender fields." Portraits of poets are a common theme, as Ernest Pignon-Ernest has always fraternised with them. From Rimbaud to Desnos, from Genet to Darwich. **13 December 2018–10 February 2109.** Botanique. **Tickets: 5.50**



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LIFE OF LEISURE

What's on

Don Pasquale

A great success with audiences past and present, Donizetti's opera *Don Pasquale* is a comedy on the theme of the eternal triangle. The composer adopts Rossini's buffo style, emulating its virtuosity and energy, and distilling from it an essential core made possible by his own crystalline style and distinctive flair. This is irresistible music: music that pours out, ripostes, caresses, beguiles, swirls, and is at times tinged with nostalgia. With Alain Altinoglu at the helm, this delightful festive epilogue to the year will be tackled with brio by Laurent Pelly, whose zest for humour is well known. Furious at his nephew and heir Ernesto, a rich old bachelor, Don Pasquale, decides to marry. To bring him back to his senses, his friend Malatesta organises a fake marriage with his supposed



sister, who is actually the clever young Norina, Ernesto's fiancée. The gentle and tender innocent turns into a tyrannical, whimsical wife. A succession of scenes and disappointments leads Don Pasquale to regret his marriage and he is relieved when the truth emerges. **9-23 December.** La Monnaie. Tickets: see website www.lamonnaie.be

Rubens Returns

A dozen masterpieces, with art historical relevance, have been added to the Rubens House's collection. Each of these masterpieces enhances and accentuates the story about the master's life and work. Definitely worth (re-)discovering the Rubens House in other words! Rubens' palazzo in Antwerp is one of the best-known artist's homes in the world. Enter the Rubens House and you literally step into the master's world. It was where he experienced family joys and sorrows, and where he welcomed princes and dignitaries and where he did most of his painting. Previously the Rubens House already welcomed a work by Tintoretto and two van Dycks. More have now joined them including several masterpieces by Italian masters who inspired Rubens, works by some of his most talented apprentices and masterpieces by Rubens himself, which have returned to the place for which they were originally created.

Rubens (1577-1640), The Massacre of the Innocents, ca. 1610



And, of course, there is Rubens' self-portrait, which revealed several new secrets during its thorough restoration. **Until 13 January.** Rubens House, Antwerp. **Tickets: €10** www.rubenshuis.be/en



Discover Wallonia! Most Beautiful Villages in Wallonia

is a guarantee that you will discover the diversity and wealth of the region's rural heritage and the noble terroirs that produce such varied flavours. The Most Beautiful Villages in Wallonia invite you to the heart of the capital in Espace Wallonie, a charming location where you can sample some of its treasures - you will be guided to these 30 villages of character through photographs and objects that represent each and every one. Every Saturday events are organized to bring to life these authentic experiences. Surprise, astonishment, discovery and delight will be the order of the day!

Espace Wallonie
25-27 Rue du marché aux herbes
Brussels 1000



Photo © Celles(c)Francois_Delfosse

December events Saturday 1 December:

A highly original **Spirit & Cheese Tasting**, with eaux de vie from the famous Biercée Distillery and a detour to the Samson cheese factory in the beautiful village of Mozet. By reservation only: info@beauxvillages.be or on 083 657 240.

Saturday 8 December: Don't miss The Ardennes and its Flavour, Taste & Traditions in the presence of Julien Lapraille - it's an opportunity to discover the very best products of the beautiful region of the Belgian Ardennes. Free entry.

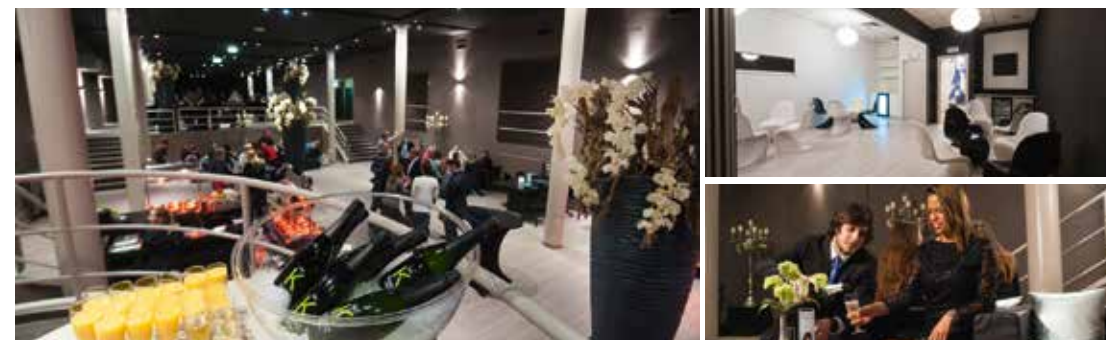
Saturday 15 December: Cheese & Wine Tasting at the foot of the vineyards and in the shadow of the Dolmens! Eric Boschman, well-respected sommelier in the world of wine in Belgium, will grace us with his presence to help you discover and taste some of the best wines of our beautiful villages. By reservation only: info@beauxvillages.be or on 083 65.72.40 📞

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LIFE OF
LEISURE

What's on international

What's On Paris

Photo © Zadkine Museum



Zadkine Museum

Located nearby the Luxembourg Gardens, the Zadkine Museum is nestled within its own verdant gardens, populated with sculptures. This was the house and workshop where Ossip Zadkine (1890-1967), a Russian sculptor and major figure in the School of Paris, lived and worked from 1928 to 1967. After a year of renovation work to ensure its accessibility to all visitors, the museum re-opened its doors for its thirtieth anniversary on the 10th of October 2012 and presented its collections, now redesigned to more closely reflect the spirit of the workshop. The new museum course was designed to

stimulate under the light of glass roofs the dialogue between earth, cement, wood and stone, referring to the intimate truth of a space that, before becoming a museum, was first a space for the creation of forms.
www.zadkine.paris.fr

Photo © Myrabella



La Musée de la Vie romantique

The Museum of Romantic Life, or Museum of the Romantics stands at the foot of Montmartre hill in the 9th arrondissement of Paris, 16 rue Chaptal, Paris, France in an 1830 *hôtel particulier* facing two twin-studios, a greenhouse, a small garden, and a paved courtyard. The museum displays on the first-floor numerous mementos of the romantic literary figure George Sand, including family portraits, household possessions, pieces of jewellery and memorabilia including plaster casts by Clésinger of the writer's sensuous right arm and Chopin's delicate left hand, plus a number of her own unique and rare watercolours called 'dendrites'. On the second floor, one can admire a number of Romantic canvases, sculptures and objets d'art. Paintings by Ary Scheffer include portraits

of oils of *The Giaour* (after Lord Byron), *Faust and Marguerite* (after Goethe), *Effie and Jeanie Deans* after *The Heart of Midlothian* by Walter Scott. Permanent collections are free. An admission fee is charged for temporary exhibitions. Paris. **Free entrance**
www.museevierromantique.paris.fr ⓘ

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



Suspiria

Tread softly, for you tread on my dreams – one can only hope that this latest horror remake/reboot/whatever is a damn sight better than the latest take on *Halloween* (1978) to 'grace' our cinemas, as this also has a notable past, based as it is on Dario Argento's 1977 classic. Susie Bannion (Dakota Johnson) is the latest student at the Markos Dance Academy in Berlin, who slowly becomes convinced that the academy is controlled by a coven of witches, Mother Suspiriorum (Mother of Sighs), Mother Tenebrarum (Mother of Darkness) and Mother Lachrymarum (Mother of Tears). Brrrrr... Luca Guadagnino (*Call Me by Your Name* (2017)) directs.
152 mins.

Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald

J.K. Rowling scripts, so it must be great, right? Hmm, we will see... the powerful dark wizard Gellert Grindelwald has been captured by MACUSA (Magical Congress of the United States of America), with the help of Newt Scamander. But Grindelwald escapes custody and has set about gathering followers, most unsuspecting of his true agenda: to raise wizards and witches up to rule over all non-magical beings. David Yates, a former Harry Potter luminary, directs.
134 mins.

The Wife

It's being touted as the best performance of Glenn Close's career to date – she plays Joan, the faithful but long-suffering wife of Joseph (Jonathan Pryce), who is set to lift the Nobel Prize for Literature. Telling everyone that 'Joan does not write', while knowing full well that it is in fact Joan who has written virtually all of his novels, Joseph's decision to embark on yet another affair could be a big mistake... Björn Lennart Runge (*Mun mot mun* (2006)) is in the director's chair.

The Girl in the Spider's Web

Another rehash – an adaptation of David Lagercrantz's continuation of Stieg Larsson's *Millennium* series, this one stars Claire Foy as Lisbeth Sander, with Sverrir Gudnason as Mikael Blomkvist, Sander's partner/lover. Federico Álvarez is directing, let's hope he does a bit better than his version of *Evil Dead* (2013).
117 mins. ①

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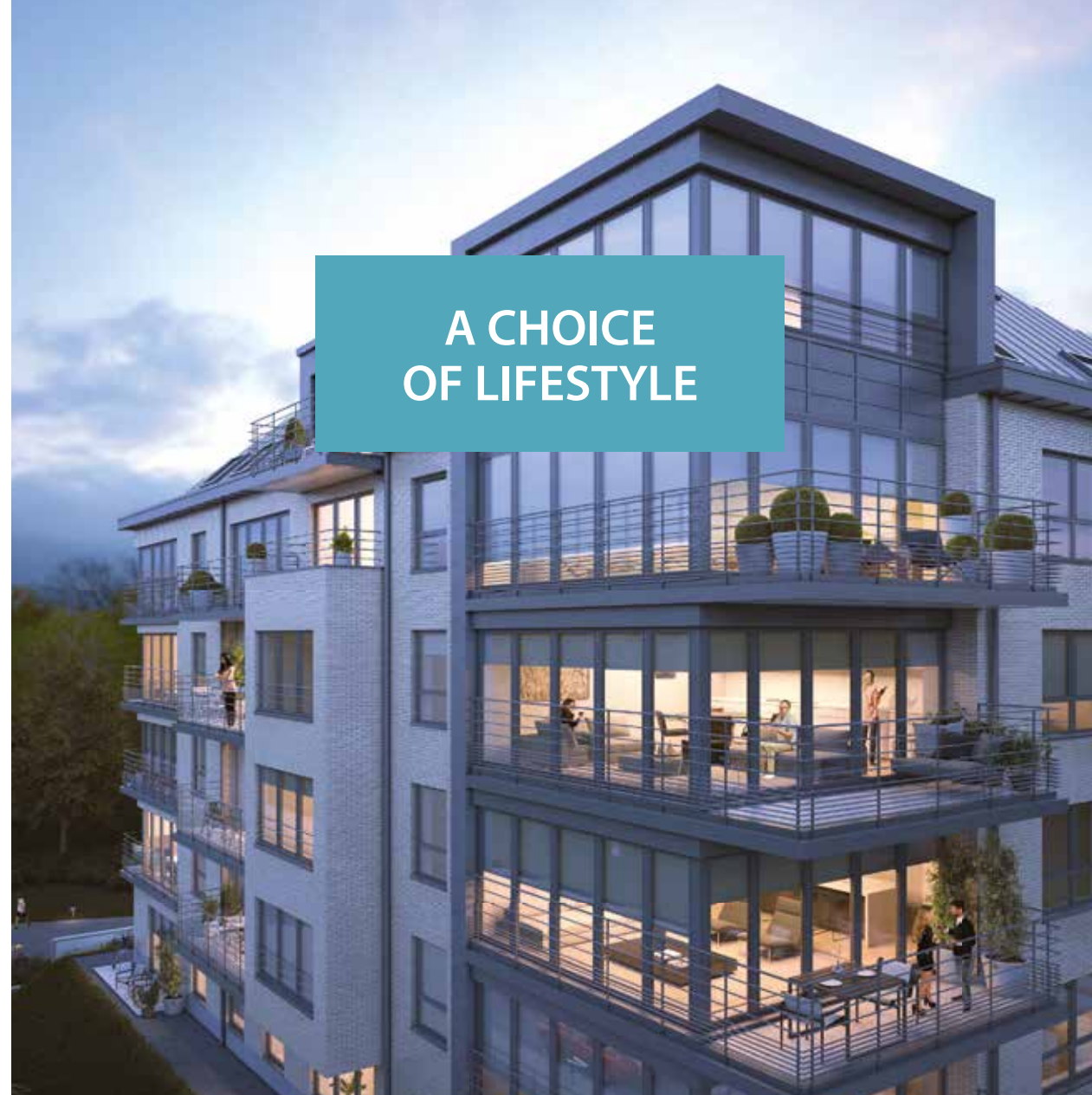
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