

Together

magazine

DEC 2020 / JAN 2021 #111

Personal Development

Fitness Immunity v Stress
Brave heart, universal energy
Effective communication
Public speaking

Luxury yachts
Politics

*Finance,
real estate
Motoring,
Marie's Corner*

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Tokyo, Skiing
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Palmer
Teresa

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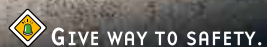
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LIGHT ART

KNOKKE-HEIST



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Light ART brings a wide audience together during the darkest days of the year and creates a unique atmosphere. The connection with art movements and renowned artists lifts the light art on display to a higher level.

But the key words for visiting the Light Art Festival remain the same: wonder and admiration, surprise and emotion. For viewers, this means coming together, sharing, participating and dreaming.

**5-6, 12-13, 19-23, 25-30 December
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Editor's LETTER

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

THE POWER OF SOLIDARITY

This will be the weirdest festive season. No carolling, no brightly-lit markets and restrictions on with whom and where we celebrate the closing off a very difficult year. I, for one, will be glad to see the back of 2020. But with all that comes renewed hope for the coming year, and not just because we hope that pandemic will be blown away in a gale-force wind. I reckon isolation and homeworking has made us think differently. There some of us were, just bowling along in life, and then along came COVID. I get the sense that many are feeling - irony upon irony - more connected with our fellow humankind. There's an old saying that absence makes the heart grow fonder.

Light up your festive trees or candles in the window if you prefer and be glad that you have a warm home, smiling friendly faces on Zoom and a series on Netflix that you can't just stop watching - all 130 episodes, with actors without masks, without distancing, as if from another world. Pandemic aside, many folks have suffered last year and many years before that. Go to our charity pages and see if you can't help out Solidarité Grand Froids who are in the front line helping the homeless all year round.

Happy Christmas and a Guid New Year!

ON THE COVER



Teresa Palmer stars in
A Discovery of Witches

Paul Morris

Editor



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do your thing

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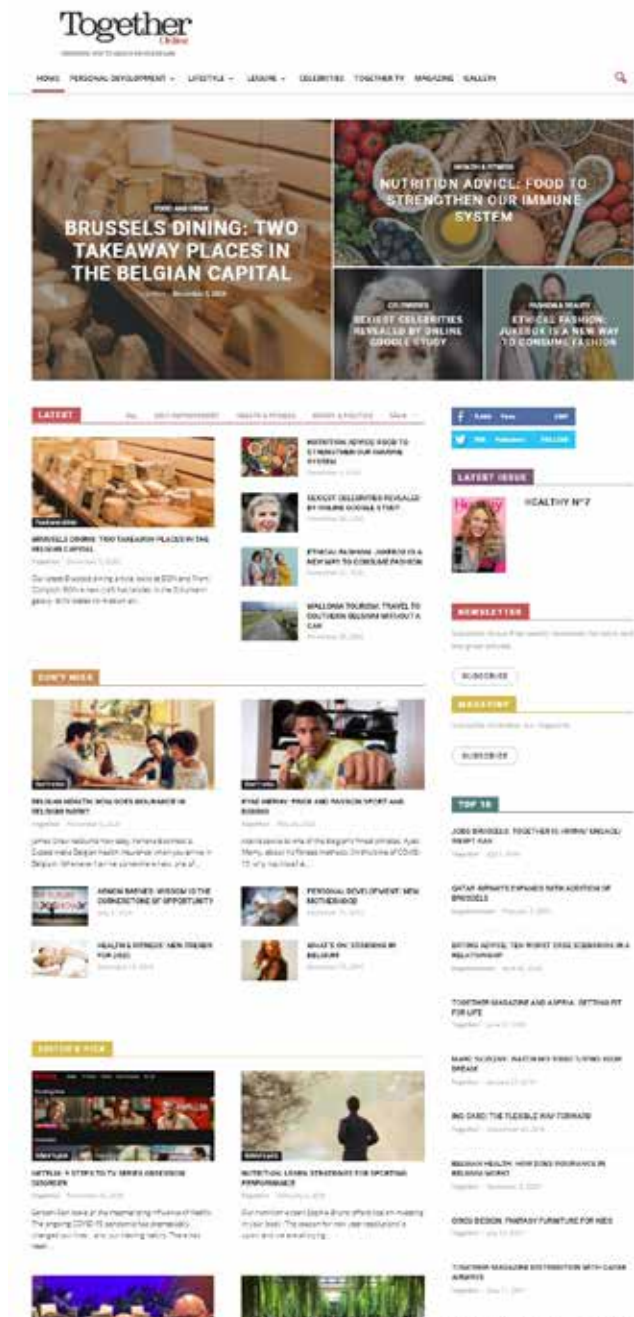
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And happy reading!

Brussels dining: Two takeaway places in the Belgian capital

A new craft has landed in the Schumann galaxy. BON states its mission as: "Our goal is to be an alternative to traditional fast-foods by offering quality, balanced, tasty and affordable products." All their products are freshly made on a daily basis, using the best quality of ingredients.

Ethical fashion: Jukebox is a new way to consume fashion

Imagined by three young entrepreneurs from Brussels who are aware of the colossal carbon footprint of the fashion industry, Jukebox offers a dynamic Ethical fashion alternative to the challenges imposed by fast fashion and over-consumption.

Wallonia: Travel to southern Belgium without a car

Discovering Wallonia in slow tourism mode is the new project set up by Wallonie Belgique Tourisme in collaboration with Hike Up and Railtrip.travel. We have put together some slow getaways by train, by bike, or on foot. 📌

Your Home, Your Life, Your City

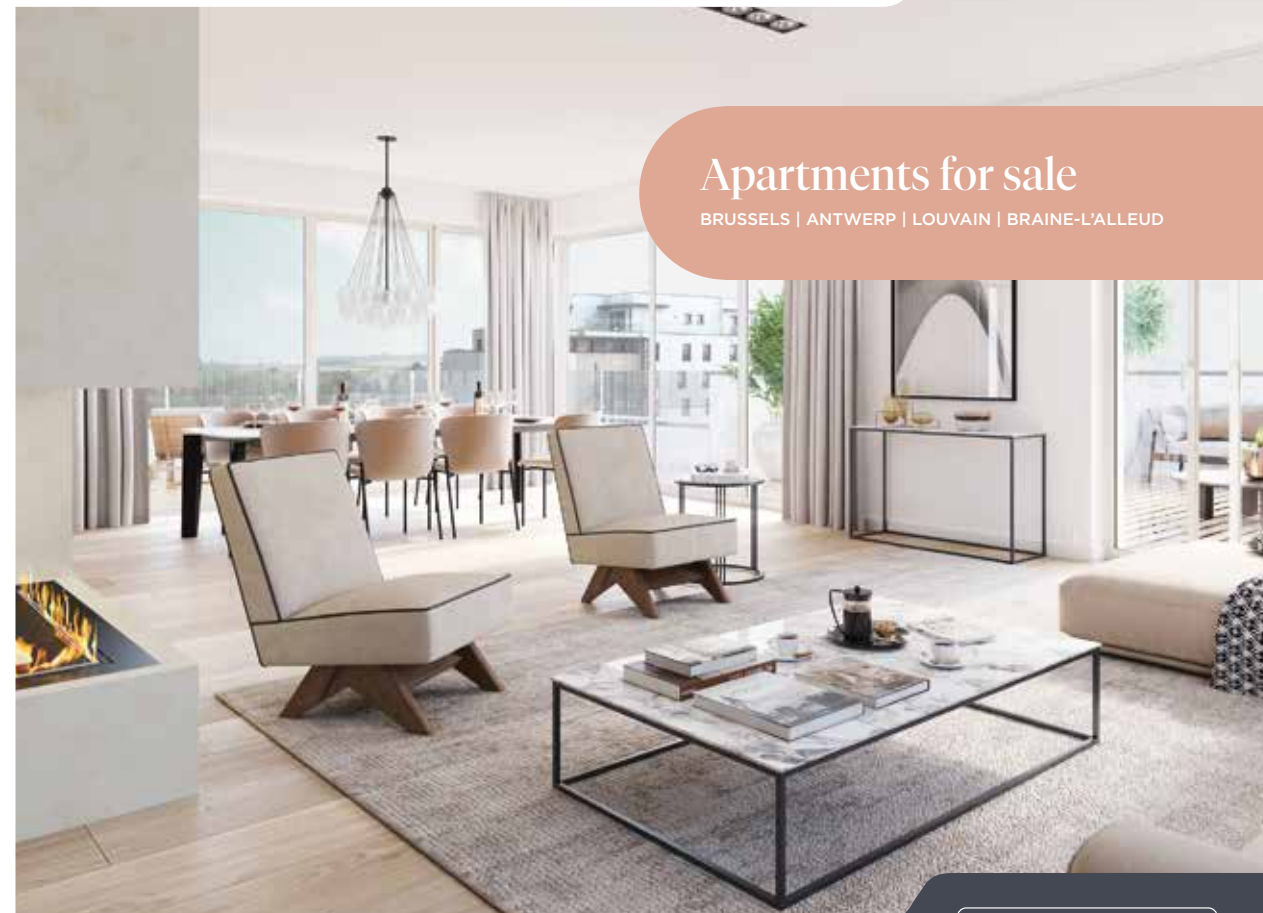
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Starring in Belgium



Ádám Tabajdi

The talented Hungarian Ádám Tabajdi has already played the organs at the Chapelle Royale in Versailles and Notre Dame in Paris. Now his dexterous hands will also grace the keys of BOZAR's organ. Check BOZAR website for tickets conditions. **17 January 2021**. Tickets: **€12**
www.bozar.be



ABnormal - Meskerem Mees

'Joe' made it straight to pole position in Studio Brussel's De Afrekening and then smoothly moved on to the final of Humo's Rock Rally. Leading foreign media like Consequence of Sound (US) and FIP Radio (FR) fell for the youngster from East Flanders too. Her enchanting debut will be released in 2021, and we're eagerly looking forward to it. **2 February 2021**. Ancienne Belgique. Tickets: **€15**
www.abconcerts.be



NEW DATE: Lucas Santtana

Lucas Santtana is a brilliant Brazilian singer-guitarist. Now on to his eighth CD *O Céu é Velho Há Muito Tempo*, and this time he resolutely combines things like protest against president Bolsonaro with the most subtle of music. That resounds in the best Tropicália or bossa nova traditions from the sixties, but in an intensely relevant way. **22 February 2021**. Ancienne Belgique. Tickets **€15**
www.abconcerts.be 📍

All good decisions were
always made in a swivel chair

marie's
corner



Solidarité Grands Froids

A non-profit organization dedicated to helping the homeless and the helpless

**Bruxelles
prend soin de vous
et des lumières.**

Help the homeless

Solidarité Grands Froids' motto is 'Improving life in the streets'.

From November to March, this operation allows the holding of two weekly social changing rooms in collaboration with the Brussels Samusocial, making two premises available Tuesday and Friday evenings.

Volunteers sign up for the distribution, and the calendar manager oversees all registrations in collaboration with leaders of the social changing rooms.

Solidarité Grand Froid's Cynthia Simpson explains: "Basically, our core business is to provide clothes to the homeless and try to be there for them to make their everyday lives a little 'warmer'. We believe in educating homeless children by giving them the correct tools, such as school books, as well as giving access to books in one of the three bookshops we have set up. We also organize events such as Saint Nicolas and other Christmas activities."

Recycling

– Collection of items such as dishes, furniture to assist organizations helping people reintegrate into life.

– Libraries: The books are distributed to organizations such as children's homes, and those that need aid with literacy.

– Plastic bottle tops are collected to help the Belgian Centre for Guide Dogs (le Centre Belge pour Chiens-Guide).



Cynthia adds: "In addition, we act as 'wholesalers' to various associations, since we have noticed that many people want to help but no one takes care of organizing it. We donate to any association that makes a request and also organize team-building events for large

corporations."

Social Reintegration

Two very strong strings to Solidarité Grands Froid's bow are Mamy Douceurs and Solidarifemmes. Mamy Douceurs' task is to help homeless children living in the street through donations of clothing, diapers and school supplies.

Solidarifemmes is a group with the very specific remit of helping women in distress. A number of them have fled their homes and often arrive with their children to protect them and rebuild their lives in a refuge. After intense psychosocial work done by professionals, these women have to find a home and rebuild their lives but they often have nothing.

"Our specificity is that all our donations toward any beneficiary are free of charge," says Cynthia. "You can donate directly to: Account Number (IBAN): BE82 6511 5585 6168."

Volunteers

Join us in our distribution of warm clothing to the homeless and our other projects:

info@solidaritegrandfroid.be

Tel: 0477 33 85 47

www.solidaritegrandfroid.be 

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visit.brussels 

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Grandmother played a significant role in your life with love and care



PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Fitness

Stress management and the immune system

Aspria continues its series of articles about our immune system



The latest is related to health and the impact of lifestyle choices on our immune system, with an exploration of yet another factor that has a decisive effect on our overall wellbeing: our ability to manage stress.

Our daily habits are linked to varying degrees of stress that ultimately have an impact on our health and, by extension, on the resilience of our immune system. Regular physical activity, meditation, relaxation and a proper control of your breathing are all helpful in successfully managing stress levels.

We all take breathing for granted – something our body does subconsciously, adapting its

patterns to our environment and to our ongoing activities.

Let's take a step back. As babies, we naturally breathe abdominally – that is, breathing in such a way that our belly moves

in and out. This deep breathing is very relaxing. However, the way we breathe tends to change as we get older. We switch to shallow breathing, and that's because the short, fast breaths we usually associate with feeling

scared are also brought on by stress. The result? We end up only ever breathing into the top third of our lungs, and we aren't getting the oxygen we need to keep our brains and bodies operating optimally.

**“ YOUR BODY
WILL RE-
LEARN HOW
TO BREATHE ”**



Once these bad habits are ingrained, you have to consciously reverse them, teaching your body how to breathe again. How can you do that? It's easy, actually. While you're sitting at your desk, every hour or two, take a moment to focus on your breathing. Take 10 slow, deep breaths right into your belly, so that it expands when you breathe in; if in doubt, place your hand on your belly to feel it move. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth. Over time, your body will re-learn how to breathe!

Breathing is a central part of meditation practice as well, and this too has powerful effects in combating stress. With a variety of solutions available, from professionally led sessions to dedicated apps, meditation is an ideal option for those with hectic schedules, in great need of clarity and calm.

For those days when you prefer a more engaging activity, regular and moderate physical exercise is a perfect option; whether it's a yoga session, a spinning class or weight training, the physical effort forces you to rebalance and refocus your energy.

Your stress levels can also be managed by allowing yourself moments of relaxation. It is no longer the case that a spa treatment, a sauna session or a

massage are considered unattainably luxurious. Today, such activities can easily be incorporated into a healthy lifestyle, and they provide you with both mental and physical benefits.

Do you also want to take care of your health and strengthen your immune system? Find advice from Aspria experts. ❶

“ WE NATURALLY BREATHE ABDOMINALLY ”

The gift of a brave heart

Intuitive Healer **Katarina Winslow** reflects on the truth



This year I would like to say that there is a new wind blowing across our planet, and that wind does not only contain a deadly virus. It also includes an extraordinary quest for truth. With more and more confusing directives from the authorities of this world, we start to ask more questions about truth. A long time ago, I attended a class with Neale Donald Walsch called 'Living from the Source,' and one of the gifts I took away from that course was a more enlightened view of the truth. I grasped a

more refined version of the different kinds of truths that exist in life on our planet.

Neale said that there are three elements of truth, and I can align with that idea. We know that the myriads and labyrinths of lies can be extreme – far-fetched. Certainly, this year, we have become more aware of the lies behind the theatre curtains as the spotlight is switched on with an intensity of a cabaret spotlight in a dark and troubled world.

Enough ranting about lies. Let us go back to the truth and the three versions of it. So, the first one is the factual truth, which is easy to understand. It is like, 'It is raining'. If this is not an hallucination, or an obnoxious conspiracy theory, if it is raining when you say it is raining, this is a factual truth. Then we come to the second aspect of truth, and that is our personal truth. How can a truth be personal, you might want to ask yourself? Yes, indeed, that is a helpful question.

It means that depending on your personal inner reality and the life experience you have, you will see an event in the outer world from a completely different perspective than someone who has a different personal view on reality. For example, if your grandmother played a significant role in your life with love and care, you would hold the truth of a loving elderly woman in your heart. You would be able to recall the scent of cinnamon buns in the kitchen and her compassionate ears listening to your youthful worries. Her expansive heart would be a companion on your path in life? long after she left this earthly dimension.

If, on the contrary, your grandmother played a cold and distant role in your life, and you feared her as a child, you would have a completely different experience with your grandmother.

Based on these two different personal experiences, the view of an old woman slowing down traffic while crossing the road would not be seen in the same light. The first person would possibly take a moment to reconnect with love in their heart and pause in the traffic jam to recall the beauty of their grandmother, maybe even the aroma of the cinnamon buns and the warmth of her golden heart.

The second person would most likely get agitated, reflect on this world's coldness and

curse old people slowing them down on their busy passage through life. Maybe even curse and shout and become infused with anger and frustration in a stressful morning traffic jam. This is what is called our personal truth – the way how we interpret things depending on our own personal experience and state of heart and mind.

Then we have the third truth, which is the higher, and which we may call spiritual truth. This kind of truth is most easily understood by those who have some sort of faith and believe there is a deeper meaning to life. At least something more meaningful than just eat, work and die.

The higher truth means that even though we do not see clearly that something magnificent is about to happen as we go through a difficult period of transition in life, the higher truth holds a gift. Hidden in a seemingly

“ AN EXTRAORDINARY QUEST FOR TRUTH ”

disastrous event, the higher truth keeps a gift for you, me and humanity at large. It is no coincidence that we have the expression 'a blessing in disguise'. I would like to say that the

higher truth is equal to a blessing in disguise as it is God's plan, the divine agenda that will always be for the good of life and for us all.

So, if it is not all right, it is not the end of the world. That is why this year reminds us all that reality goes far beyond fiction. The Hollywood dreams have finally moved into the mainstream reality of our daily lives. Wow, how exciting could it be? Let us all hold our fingers crossed for more truth and pray that the good, the true and the beautiful will prevail. Let us all breathe to the drum beat of truth as we reclaim our birthright to breathe freely, deeply and lovingly.

So, why is it then that truth is so far out of reach? It is worth reflecting on the love of truth versus the fear of lies. Or should we call it the love of lies? Paradoxically, this has



been one of the central enigmas to crack this year for anyone interested in human psychology. Why do we, as humans, love and become attached to lies more than we love and stick to the truth? A tough question to answer as most people who cling to - and love - lies believe those lies to be true. Or at least it is a soothing place to rest your thoughts, your life and your breath in the hands of others.

“HER EXPANSIVE HEART WOULD BE A COMPANION”

Why is it then that there is more security and a sense of comfort in giving your all to a source of lies outside yourself? And why is it that so many people reject, curse, condemn and are even outraged by the freedom embedded in any truth? Could it simply be that in lies there is fear, and in truth there is love? I would like to say that yes, this is a simple truth. We have been programmed, conditioned, fed by fear for so long that we feel the safest in fear. It is as if fear contained security. It is as though

when you embrace fear you are safe from danger.

On the other hand, truth is a whole other scenario. Truth is a rare commodity, and we have not been accustomed to the truth. The truth has been hidden, mystified, cursed, made ugly, and, most of all, the truth is unknown territory. Anything unknown makes us feel shaky and unsafe. The irony is that the truth is so rare that we do not know the hidden gift it holds, the most magnificent gift of all,

the gift of a brave heart. So, let us all raise our voices and call out for a world free of lies. Let us join the chorus of freedom

Together. **1**

Where I'm curious about the world around me

Alice, aged 4

BSB offers a safe, secure and green environment where children are curious about the world around them.

Putting it off until tomorrow

Reetika Gupta-Chaudhary tackles the monster that is procrastination



How many times have you had an experience where you wanted to get something done, but you could not gather your thoughts to action it, and consequently, you decided to put it off for later or, in some cases, not do the task at all?

If you are a business owner, you might have to make sales calls, and for most business owners making sales calls is a daunting task. Since this is a difficult task, you are now either avoiding it or focusing too much on making this call perfect - in both cases you end up either delaying the task or not doing it at all.

What is this type of behaviour normally called? This is procrastination. Does that ring a bell? So, why do we procrastinate? Are we inherently built to operate this way sometimes? Or is there something wrong with the way we're approaching work?

Before we talk about it any further, just remember one thing: if you are experiencing procrastination, there is nothing wrong with you. Procrastination does not distinguish a smart person from a non-smart person. It certainly does not mean you are less hard-working than someone who does not

procrastinate. In fact, the smarter or more hard-working you are, the more you experience it.

Procrastination can show up in our personal life as well, for instance when say you want to buy a new house, but you have been postponing it for the last five years. Why do you think we resort to this kind of behaviour? The reasons could be many, but one of the biggest reasons for procrastination is perfection. In this instance, we are procrastinating for years because we want to own the perfect house, for the best price possible and in the best possible area.

Let's revisit the sales-call scenario. We procrastinate and think we are putting off the sales call because we need to learn more skills, so that we could perfect the technique of calling (making it perfect). However, in essence, what is happening is the longer we wait, the greater the risk that we end up making it more complicated than it really is. This could result in not taking the first step because fear has pulled you out of the game, or perhaps when we procrastinate for too long we actually end up underperforming, simply because of the performance pressure we have created for ourselves.

Step one is better than step none

If we take some time to organize our thoughts and find out our drive and our passion to do the task at hand, then it becomes easier to break through our need for perfection.

Understanding the concept that whenever we undertake a new task, the best way to break away from overthinking is to just do it! This is such an important lesson that I learnt from my mentor who said 'step one is better than step none'.

We often hear that experience is the only teacher in life, and I always give this example

to my clients: when a child learns to walk, they do not get up one day and start walking straight away. They crawl, they hold sofas and tables, and they fall before they can actually walk one meter without falling or holding on to something. Now, imagine you are that child who now wants to walk, what will you think?

The following thoughts will bombard your mind, such as: 'I am not ready to walk, maybe I will try when I am five years old as this will give me more time to observe how adults walk'. You will also inevitably create a lot of performance pressure as you will be thinking 'what will my parents think if I fall' or your mind will think: 'Oh my god I am, going to disappoint my parents in front of other parents.'

So, as a result, you will either give up or leave it till later, and your parents will be running from doctor to doctor trying to solve the

“ PROCRASTINATION IS PERFECTION ”

problem with your walking while they are unaware that it's nothing but procrastination. Does that sound

crazy? Well, that's how crazy it is. When you grow up, it is just that your clever mind has now understood how to make really sophisticated excuses.

Uncertainty leads to procrastination

As adults, another thing that leads us into procrastination is uncertainty. We have been told that we should be in control of our lives, and with this limited understanding of life we venture into controlling every aspect of it. Although planning can be a very powerful tool that helps us to organise our life, when we endeavour to control every part of our lives problems start to creep in. In order to take a step forward and break the vicious cycle of procrastination, we need to train our mind to get comfortable with a bit of uncertainty since it brings an element of surprise and newness to our lives and also helps us grow to the next level.



A few handy tips to beat procrastination

1. Let's go back to basics. Clarity of your goals is the first thing that you need to establish before you can do anything else. How does clarity help? Imagine sitting in a car and not knowing where to go, or perhaps you have a good idea to go in a southerly direction but you don't have the exact address, or you have the address but have no idea of the best route to get you to your destination. Will you sit in the car and start towards the destination or will you sit back and wait until you have more clarity? This example illustrates the importance of knowing exactly what to do from the beginning, which helps us take important action.

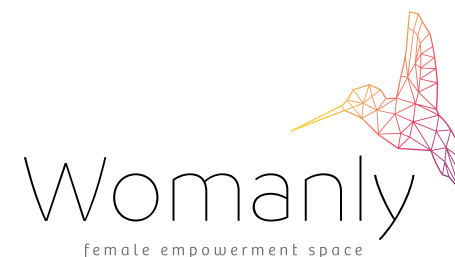
2. Next, you want to break your task into bite-sized chunks. Going back to our sales-call example, if you break down a 100-sales-call goal into doing a minimum of five sales

calls a day, it sounds more achievable to the mind and so there is less procrastination.

3. I read a book called *Eat That Frog* by Brian Tracy. It emphasised the fact that if you think you have an important task that you might procrastinate about, do that task first thing in the morning as this eliminates any chance for your mind to make an excuse to stall or put off this task.

If everything above fails, the one thing that always helps me achieve my goals is having an accountability buddy. I generally have a business coach and a life coach to help guide me through my journey. However, this role can also be fulfilled by your parents, your friends or your siblings as long as they understand what you are trying to achieve. They will give you some hand holding and some support that will help you overcome your blocks. ❶

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THAN IT
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The secrets of Whole Brain Speaking

Matthew Cossolotto offers more expert advice on how to improve your public speaking



If you want to become a more comfortable, compelling and charismatic speaker, you should learn about the secrets of what I call 'Whole Brain Speaking'. This involves balancing elements of both the Left Brain and the Right Brain in every presentation. Striking the right balance is key to speaking success.

The most successful speakers master a well-balanced combination of being present in the moment, on the one hand, with high-level preparation and performance skills on the other. Put simply, successful speakers find ways to pack authentic presence into every presentation.

Every speech or presentation is a real-time relationship between speaker and audience.

This is true whether you're speaking on stage, in a crowded ballroom or online in a Zoom-assisted webinar. As a speaker, you show that you value the relationship by being prepared, but not overly programmed.

Yes, it's essential to prepare, to organize your material effectively and to rehearse. It's not a good idea to simply go out on stage and 'wing it' every time. You don't want to just say the first thing that pops into your head. That's not what being present in the moment means. That's not what authentic speaking and connecting with the audience are all about.

Combine Left and Right Brain attributes
As you'll see in the chart below, preparation, performance and rehearsal are classic Left

TRADITIONAL APPROACH <i>LEFT BRAIN DOMINANT</i>	WHOLE BRAIN APPROACH TAP INTO THE RIGHT BRAIN
Content	Connection
Preparation/Rehearsal	Presence
Speaking	Listening ("to hear with eyes" - Sonnet 23)
Performance/Projecting	Receiving (receive support from audience)
Logic	Emotion/Passion
Separate	Relationship
Intellect	Intuitive/Imagination
Programmed	Spontaneous
Substance	Authenticity
One-Way Street - Focus on Facts	Two-Way Street - Tell a Story
Scripted	Let go of the trapeze (the magic of letting go)
Result: Stilted, Stiff, Boring, Forgettable	Result: Joy, Exciting, Creative, Memorable

Brain functions. Presence, connection and authenticity reside on the right side of the brain.

In this chart, the column on the left summarizes the traditional Left Brain

approach to public speaking. These qualities are important to any successful presentation, but total reliance on them will produce an unsatisfactory experience for both the speaker and the audience. Depending too much on these Left Brain qualities turns speeches and presentations into nothing more than boring, stale, uninspiring data dumps. My revolutionary Whole Brain Speaking

approach is more holistic, interactive and relational. The idea is to take the Left Brain qualities as the bare essentials and then go the extra mile by tapping into the Right Brain. Whole Brain Speaking is the Value Added approach to speaking. The qualities in the left

**“ BRING ALONG
YOUR
PERSONALITY ”**

column get you part of the way there. To really wow your audiences, however, you need to add the Right Brain attributes. The goal is to transform a merely

competent, informative speech into something truly moving and memorable.

The best way to use this chart is to pick any quality on the left side of the page and then consider ways to also incorporate the

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Self-help

corresponding Right Brain quality on the right side. For example, once you've developed, rehearsed and mastered the content of your speech, give some attention to connecting with the audience.

Similarly, now that you've prepared your remarks, remind yourself to be present in the moment. While speaking to the audience, remember to also listen - with your ears and your eyes. Practice the art of hearing with your eyes, as Shakespeare refers to it in Sonnet 23. Don't just project outward. Remember to receive the audience (especially the support from the audience). Don't rely on logic and facts alone. Include an appeal to passion, emotion and imagination.

Let go of the trapeze

If you watch trapeze artists at the circus, the real excitement begins when they let go of the trapeze bar. There isn't much interest in watching someone swing back and forth hanging from a trapeze bar. The magic happens between the bars. For speakers, being too scripted and programmed, anchoring your talk in Left Brain attributes, is essentially the same as clinging to the trapeze bar and just swinging back and forth.

You – and your audiences – deserve more than that. That way boredom lies. Don't be overly programmed. Demonstrate some degree of spontaneity. Tell a personal story. Bring along your personality and let it shine. Make sure the real you shows up. Let go of the trapeze once in a while. Mix healthy doses of authenticity with your great, finely honed substance. Turn your talk into a two-way relationship instead of simply a one-way information transfer.

In short, study the right-hand column carefully and incorporate many of these elements into your next speech or presentation. If you routinely feature this



Value Added approach in your presentations, you will find yourself enjoying the experience much more—and so will your audience.

Remember this: audience members bring their whole brains – both the Left and the Right Brain – when they attend your presentations. And their Right Brains crave some attention. As a speaker, you should give it to them by using your Whole Brain. Let go of the trapeze. Pack presence into your presentation.

The result of a Left Brain only approach is predictable: a stilted, stiff, boring, forgettable presentation. If you tap into the Right Brain, your presentations will be more joyful, exciting, creative and memorable.

The choice is yours.

About the Author

Matthew Cossolotto is a former NATO speech-writer. Author of *The Joy of Public Speaking*, Matthew conducts public speaking workshops and other Personal Empowerment Programs (PEPTalks) in Brussels and beyond. www.ThePodiumPro.com, Matthew.Cossolotto@gmail.com



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Energy is information

Axel TRINH CONG looks at the energy of the universe as a tool for personal development



The term 'energy' is emerging more and more in everyday language, especially in the areas of personal development and spiritual openness. While this subtle dimension of reality is beginning to be made evident, it is still difficult to grasp. The reason is very often the ignorance of the rules and laws that govern its circulation, its deployment and its fulfilment. Energy is information, and so it is ordered and structured according to a meaning and a universal harmony.

Welcoming energy is a first step, but it remains insufficient. In order to be able to fully enjoy it, other than by chance, it is essential to know, perceive and feel within

oneself the laws according to which it acts and circulates.

The approaches to perceiving and channeling energy are diverse and varied. It is up to everyone, according to their sensitivity and their background, to choose the channel with which they will feel the most affinities.

In the West, astrology is one reading grid among others of energy and its flows. For example, the sequence formed by the twelve signs of the Zodiac constitutes a staging in image and symbol of the deployment of energy from its emergence until its return to the undifferentiated.

Therefore, astrology offers a fine reading of energy in the sense that it sheds light on what is currently in play and in action. In other words, it makes it possible to give meaning to a situation which until then could seem incomprehensible and so paralyse us, because we lack the means to understand it. Thanks to this astrological reading, we can stop undergoing situations because these are part of a framework and a movement within which we will be able, enriched by this awareness, to recover our free will and capacity for action.

Astrology allows us to connect to our inner microcosm (individualization) in order to find our place and interact at the level of the macrocosm (others, couple, family, society, nature, the world). Its dimension is both individual and collective. The wellbeing of both goes hand in hand. Astrology reminds us that we are all made up of the same energy. Each of us has the energy of Mars, Venus, Aquarius, the 5th house, etc within us. At this level, there is no distinction, no difference. We are all cut from the same beam. At this level, we are in unity... and it would be good sometimes to remember that and cultivate that feeling. What sets us apart from each other is how this energy is distributed, how it is articulated, its configuration.

Though a birth chart corresponds to the chart of the sky at the time of birth, there are no good or bad charts. At this level, it is necessary to get out of this very earthly form of duality and conceive the configurations rather in terms of ease and challenge.



Planetary aspects, arrangements or combinations carry a specific energy that will reason differently from one person to another. For one person, it will be relatively easy to assimilate, while, for another, it will take more work. A sky chart is a manifestation of Nature, of the Intelligence of the Living. It is never good or bad, but always absolutely right. Nature does not make mistakes. It just happens that in the eyes of men it sometimes offers situations that may seem out of the ordinary or unexpected.

It's worth remembering that Nature pre-exists mankind. It is not a human creation. On the contrary, Man is a manifestation, a

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Astrology

production, a child of Nature. Man therefore only discover things over which they have no control but, above all, which precede them. Earth's gravity and fluid mechanics existed before humans (Newton and Bernouilli, respectively) discovered their laws. Everything that Nature offers is also meaningful. Here again, Man prefers to speak of inconsistency or error, either to conceal their incomprehension or to avoid questioning it.

A birth chart is, therefore, always correct in relation to the person. Especially if we accept that nothing happens by chance and that I am the author, the actor responsible for my life. All of us choose the time and place of our birth, the souls with whom we will live, the culture within which we will grow, etc. As well as the experiences we intend to carry out during our incarnation.

A birth chart is like a sheet of music, a score that everyone is absolutely free to interpret as they wish, how they feel, varying the modes along the way if that is their desire or need. What magnifies a Bach fugue is not so much determined by the choice of instruments as by how the musician renders the spirit of the work. It doesn't matter whether he chose the romantic, hard rock or electro route. It's a matter of spirit and vibration.

An astrological chart can also be compared to a seed within which lies a whole budding tree. This tree is inherently a species, and an oak seed cannot give rise to anything other than an oak. However, its appearance and growth will be determined by its reaction to the nature of the soil in which it will take root, to the storms, droughts and floods it will experience. How will this shoot will be able to

use its resources and its achievements to become a magnificent tree in harmony with the rest of the forest?

If astrology reminds us that we each have within us the 10 planets, the 12 signs of the zodiac and the 12 astrological houses, this means that we have within us all the forces and energies of the universe. And when it comes to the expansion of consciousness, it is simply a matter of becoming concretely aware through life experiences of all the facets of universal energy in order to integrate them into oneself... and thus regain completeness.



Aries



Taurus



Gemini



Cancer



Leo



Virgo



Libra



Scorpio



Sagittarius



Capricornus



Aquarius



Pisces

We are born complete, but we are unaware of it. On the contrary, we think we are missing, deprived, bereft or unworthy of this or that. But this is not fair. We have everything within us. We are simply cut off from it. We are in a state of inner division. The goal of the incarnation is to reconnect with all that we each are. And the only possible way to do that is to experience ourselves, experience

this inner whole in all of its facets in our flesh, mind and soul. Because it is only by living something that one can truly become aware of it. In this way, we rediscover our integrity, our completeness and, therefore, our universal and spiritual dimension.

Next month, I propose that we explore together the mandala of the 12 signs of the Zodiac and so penetrate into the heart of the laws of the Universe that we each are.

Axel TRINH CONG Medium - therapist (Brussels)

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Communicate effectively

International Speaker, Peak Performance Trainer and Business Mentor **Arnon Barnes** says effective communication = more sales



Sales is the lifeblood of a company. Without it, a company simply cannot exist. Studies have shown that the top 20% of salespeople generate 80% of the total sales. What are these people doing that others are not? That's where I come in. Over the last years, I've had the privilege to teach entrepreneurs and their sales teams, from across the board, about effective offline communication. How do you go from 'shaking hands' to signing the deal? Keep reading, because in this article I'm going to share my top five keys you can apply today and generate more sales.

Listen

Great sales people are excellent communicators. The smooth, slick, fast-talking salesperson might come to mind. However, from my experience, the opposite is true. In actual fact, great sales people are excellent listeners. A conversation you've walked away from thinking, 'wow, what a pleasant conversation' was most probably because the other person genuinely took the time to listen to what you had to say. Make gestures, such as nodding, looking in their direction and when appropriate repeat what they've said, so they understand you are truly hearing what they say.

Ask questions

That segues straight into my next point. Whilst listening acutely also strive to enter into a dialogue with potential clients to understand their needs even better. Your chances for a successful sale increase when you ask direct questions that evoke a concrete response from your prospect. Instead of responding to their story with your own experiences or stories, ask them specifically about their experience. A simple tool to use is to repeat the one or two key words from their sentence into your question. So, when your prospect is telling you the story of how their new analysis tool has revolutionized their business, ask them about that new analysis tool. Invite your potential client to elaborate on their story. By doing so, you will not only create an enjoyable dialogue, or get more insight into what your client finds important, you may even learn something new!

Keep it short and simple

You won't achieve effective communication by adding complexity and beating around the bush. Express your message in a simple, clear and powerful way. Know your product or service inside and out. Be specific. This is crucial because specifics sell. Being vague, however, confuses the mind. And a confused mind will always say, 'No, thank you'.

Be genuine

Don't underestimate people and their ability to pick up on ingenuous acts. Prospects might not be able to articulate it, but they will feel when you are being disingenuous and pushing your own agenda. This will either cause potential clients to repel, or buy your product or service and experience something called 'buyer's remorse'. This is detrimental to the business and the brand. Be helpful and show prospects you really care. And when you experience you cannot connect to a prospect, show your leadership skills and connect them to one of your (other) sales people. Just because your energy does not match a client, doesn't mean your product or

service is no good for them. In the end, when you truly want to help your clients, it's about creating a genuine experience for both of you.

Believe and have fun

When you truly believe in the product or service you sell, you subconsciously pass this belief on to potential clients. Have fun while you are interacting. There is nothing more contagious than fun and happiness. That's because these are high-energy frequencies. And studies have shown that the person with the highest energy will always influence a person with a lower energy. Impacting prospects will thus increase their chances of buying.

Conclusion

As you can see, small adjustments make a big difference in the effectiveness of your communication with prospects. Give your communication a makeover with these five tips and experience the change in response from your potential clients.

Call to action

Want to meet and work with Arnon Barnes live? Join one of his next upcoming events online or in Europe. For more information on the event, or coaching, contact his office via info@arnonbarnes.com or check out his website www.arnonbarnes.com.

Short bio

Arnon Barnes started his first business at age 11 and built and sold his first multi-million euro company by the age of 28. In the past seven years, Arnon has personally trained and coached more than 90,000 people from well over 65 different countries, including, The Netherlands, Belgium, Poland, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, the UK, Brazil, Singapore and South Africa, to name but a few. Arnon is an explosive international speaker, author, investor and one of Europe's leading and most exciting business mentors.



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100% or nothing

Yannick Callens says you have to go all the way in the property business



My students often ask themselves lots of questions, full of doubts about the steps in their real estate buying process. This is normal, human beings are like that, they feel in danger. But if we analyze the steps one at a time, why should we doubt? We worry ourselves about things that haven't happened yet or will never happen.

I often tell my students that a good deal is a simple deal. So, for all the questions and doubts that do not arise... just forget them. Human beings only spend 1% of their life in the present, the other 99% of their thoughts are either directed towards the past or the future... and as long as we are not yet in the future, it does not exist.

Ditto for real estate deals, whether for a purchase or for a sale, we do it or we don't. It's black or white, but never grey. I often compare it to telling your loved one that you love them 60% today – try it for yourself, and wait for the reaction.

It is the same thing in real estate – it's 0% or preferably 100%, but nothing in between. If you make every effort to visit a property, look for the right deal, make offers but ultimately always finish second, it's useless. You will be wasting your time. The greatest difficulty and, therefore, the greatest opportunity in real estate is perseverance.

Finalize and finish everything you do in real estate: your search for the right deal, your negotiation, the acceptance of your offer,



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“ WHY SHOULD WE DOUBT? ”

your financing and also your work. I often find that the way a student reacts in real estate is the same way they react to everyday life. You have doubt in your life, you will have doubt in real estate. You have confidence in life, you are going to have confidence in real estate.

So, if we take that into account and look at how we react in everyday life, we already know how it will play out in real estate.

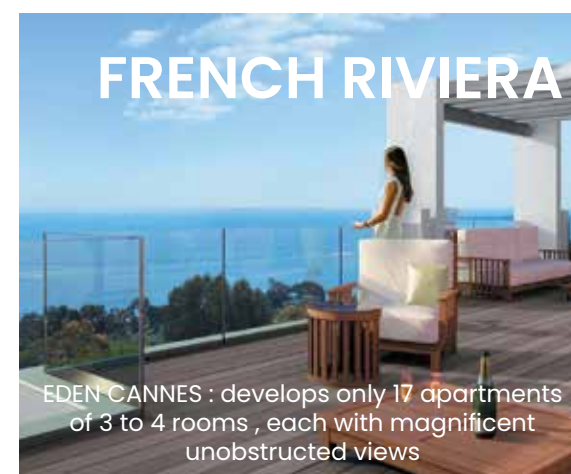
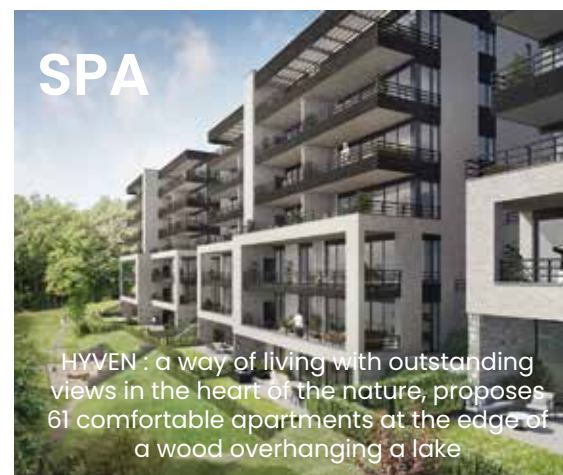
The solution to this is to anticipate. Anticipation is the key. And as I often repeat, a good deal comes before the purchase, not in the purchase itself. The bottlenecks we all have in real estate come from ourselves. We must first work on ourselves in order to be able to move forward fast and well in real estate. This is easier for some people than

for others. But as soon as we accept that, we take a step back from what is not working and move forward.

Anticipate, accept and move forward are the key words for everything.

A resolved question can help you unlock everything. Now, what is the right question to ask yourself in order to move forward? Each individual is unique. This makes it somewhat difficult. Take the time to ask yourself the right questions, because, as we know, the quality of our questions is the basis of the quality of our life... and, therefore, also of the quality of our real estate.

For any questions, do not hesitate to send an email to info@immo-champion.com ❶



Magnitsky Law

Catherine Feore looks at the awful death of an honest man

Rally in support of activists jailed, Moscow



“November 2009. An emaciated young lawyer, Sergei Magnitsky, is led to a freezing isolation cell in a Moscow prison, handcuffed to a bed rail and beaten to death by eight police officers. His crime? To testify against the Russian Interior Ministry officials who stole \$230 million of taxes paid by his employer, financier Bill Browder.”

Rushing through an airport quite a few years ago, I picked up *Red Notice*, sitting among the bestsellers, and read the first paragraph on the back cover. A thriller would do, for a long-haul flight. Only when I got on the plane did I realize that the book was not a work of fiction, but a truly appalling exposé of the events leading to the horrible death of Sergei Magnitsky, as told by his erstwhile employer Bill Browder.

Sergei Magnitsky discovered a massive corruption scheme, involving the embezzlement of taxes paid by Browder's company Hermitage Capital to the Russian government by government officials. Magnitsky testified against those involved, and was then arrested, tortured and killed in 2009.

The story is also that of Browder and his harassment by the Russian authorities, including the many Interpol 'red notices' that have been issued against him and his long-standing campaign for justice and accountability for those involved in Magnitsky's death. Since then, Magnitsky has become an adjective to describe sanctions against individuals involved in human-rights abuses - wherever they are from.

Previously, the EU's sanctions were geographically limited in scope to individual countries, but over time a more thematic approach has developed in the areas of terrorism, chemical weapons and cyberattacks that have global coverage. The advantage of this approach is that new persons and entities can be added to an EU sanctions list without requiring a separate legal framework and Council decision for each country.

'The arc of the moral universe is long'

Martin Luther King Jr. said: "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." The Magnitsky case is an example of just how long it can take to deliver change.

Browder's first major success against Magnitsky's persecutors was in 2012 when he managed to persuade Senators Ben Cardin and the late John McCain to co-sponsor the US Magnitsky Act, which initially froze the assets of 18 Russian officials, banning them from entering the US, or making use of the US banking system. This law was expanded in 2016 to become a 'Global Magnitsky Act' that would allow similar sanctions for other human-rights abusers from any country. Canada, the Baltic States and more recently the UK have introduced similar acts,



Bill Browder World Economic Forum, Switzerland



Sergei Magnitsky in 2006

but the EU remained reticent.

Browder, whom I had the privilege to interview, made his first breakthrough with the EU institutions through the European Parliament. In 2012, the Parliament recommended visa restrictions for Russian officials involved in the Sergei Magnitsky case. In 2014, MEPs gave their full support to a resolution led by Estonian MEP Kristiina Ojuland calling on the EU to deny visas and freeze the EU assets of 32 Russian officials.

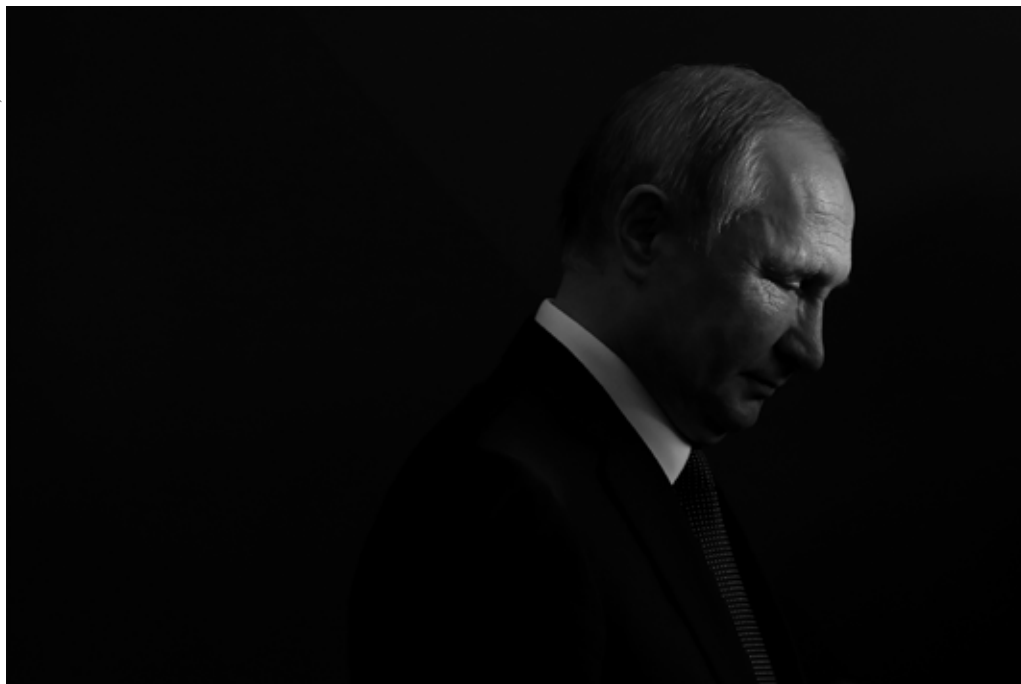
When the EU High Representative/Vice-President Josep Borrell sought the endorsement of MEPs in late 2019, MEPs made it clear what they expected. Though in some ways sceptical, Borrell announced on 9 December that

preparatory work would start on equivalent legislation to that in the United States. This was followed by what seemed to be an interminable period of reflection.

“ THE ARC OF THE MORAL UNIVERSE IS LONG ”

Putin's aggression, extra-territorial murders and election interference has hardened many EU governments. The Dutch government, in particular, has been a strong

supporter of a Magnitsky-style act, especially following the downing of flight MH17 from Amsterdam by a Russian anti-aircraft missile



when it was flying over the Ukraine, killing 298 passengers, including 193 Dutch nationals.

In September, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen called for a European Magnitsky act in her 'State of the European Union' address to the European Parliament.

In October, Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovič announced that the European Commission would finally be able to put forward a regulation on restrictive measures and sanctions against serious human-rights violations and abuses worldwide, which would be informally known as a European 'Magnitsky Act'.

The German EU Presidency is also supportive and hopes to push it through the European Council in December. It will require unanimity, and some countries, such

as Cyprus, Italy and Hungary, might be reluctant to damage their close ties with Russia. The European Commission is calling for oversight on the implementation of the travel bans, which might jar with some states.

Over ten years since the tragic death of Sergei Magnitsky, the quest for justice remains. His courage and the campaign that it inspired will help many others seek redress and accountability. ❶

“MAGNITSKY TESTIFIED AGAINST THOSE INVOLVED”



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Money

Leuven: European Capital of Innovation in 2020

Dave Deruytter looks at how the Belgian city is developing innovation



For the sixth time, the European Commission has chosen a European Capital of Innovation.

This time, the city of Leuven in Belgium has been awarded the honour. It is the smallest city on record to win the title. Before it, Nantes, Athens, Paris, Amsterdam and Barcelona wore the innovation crown.

For insiders, the choice for Leuven does not come as a surprise. They know about the Leuven 2030 project or about Leuven MindGate. And if not, they may

know that the university of Leuven was founded in 1425, almost 600 years ago, or they could know about Leuven as the home of the world's largest brewer, AB InBev.

“ FLAGSHIP TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH CENTRE ”

Furthermore, techies should be aware that IMEC, also based in Leuven, is the flagship technology research centre of Belgium.

The nice thing about the election of Leuven as the European Capital of Innovation this year is that it

not only involves the whole local population in its initiatives but also the province of Flemish Brabant. Moreover, Leuven also

cooperates actively with other cities in Belgium and abroad. For example, they share with Gent the Flemish Institute for Biotechnology (VIB) and the Vlerick Business School, the #1 Business School in the Benelux. Furthermore, whilst developing their capabilities and international reach, the university and the hospital of Leuven work together with many of their international peers. When preparing for the International House of Leuven, a one-stop shop for foreigners who want to settle in the greater

As such, it is very laudable that the European Commission stimulates cities, countries and companies to go the extra mile. Although the title is very nice to win, the €1m that comes with it is welcome to give Leuven even extra means to keep on making innovation happen.

Notwithstanding the great pain many people suffer with the current Covid-19 crisis, a positive side-effect is that cross-border cooperation is getting ever easier with the

Flemish Institute for Biotechnology, Ine Dehandschutter



Leuven area, the successful project of the International House of Copenhagen was studied, adapted and copied. All in all, the Leuven candidacy for the title had a lot to speak for it.

In Belgium, other university cities have similar approaches to innovation, and in other EU countries the race towards innovation ecosystems is also heating up. But, it goes without saying that many of them can learn a trick or two from Leuven to do it even better or faster.

Innovation is of paramount importance for the continuously thriving and changing economies and businesses around the world.



Leuven2030.be

extra impetus the digital world and economy has received from the lockdowns of all sorts that the crisis has forced on us. Indeed, many companies, particularly in the service sector, are still heavily relying on working from home. And the chances are high that this will remain, at least in part, a fundamental piece

“ HEAVILY RELYING ON WORKING FROM HOME ”

of the new normal that is being built in business. Though working remotely has its advantages, on the commuting side for example, it has its downsides too, like the lack of bonding opportunities with colleagues at work.

My 87-year-old father recently had a small health scare, and his landline and mobile phone were not working properly in order to

Money

get help to the place where he lives. To better cope with such situations in the future, my son installed a Voice and Video over Internet App on his tablet, which not only has fewer connection issues thanks to the good broadband internet my dad has, but also gives him the opportunity to see the other person whilst communicating - his doctor for example - and he can even show or see things by video now.

In business and research, the advantages of web meetings or seminars are even more obvious. When you organize a webinar, the whole world can participate if they have a good internet connection. Of course, technically that was already possible earlier. But now, far more people are using web meetings and their software. They are doing it far more often, or are using more features of the tools that provide these remote connection options. A noticeable example is the variety of backgrounds people are using in their web meetings, from cool stylish offices to their last holiday destination.

In conclusion, it is great to see there are world contests that give extra support to the much-needed drive for innovation in the global economy. Of course, innovation should not be an objective in itself. The aim is to have tangible results for businesses and people, further increasing business efficiency and our quality of life. Given the current



Fonske

Covid-19 uncertainty, a reliable vaccine is very high on our agenda. Fortunately, medicine, healthcare and biotechnology are fields in which the Leuven innovation scene is very active and successful.

Stay safe and take care. 🍀

**“ BUSINESS
EFFICIENCY
AND OUR
QUALITY
OF LIFE ”**

Property Hunter is a team of ‘property hunters’, but who is this service for?

For both private buyers and investors looking for real estate in Brussels or in Walloon Brabant.

What are the reasons that encourage a call on Property Hunter?

Very often, our clients have already defined most of their criteria. They have started to look for themselves, without success.

Usually, they don’t have time to:

- Consult offers and seize market opportunities.

In addition, they are afraid of buying badly. They therefore want to:

- Secure their investment.

- Avoid pitfalls.

- Receive advice from a real estate market expert who defends their interests.

We offer them that peace of mind.

Advice is essential to us.

What is the solution that Property Hunter brings them?

We enable our customers to find better while hunting less. Simple.

Concretely, how does a collaboration with Property Hunter work?

Every customer is different! We take the time to understand a customer’s project and specific needs, but also to compare their expectations with the realities of

the market. Our role is not limited to the search.

Once the specifications have been validated, the expert goes hunting. He remains in regular contact with the customer, who can also follow the progress of research at any time in the dedicated customer area.

What is the success rate of Property Hunter?

In 12 years of existence:

- We have satisfied the requests of 1,250 customers.
- We accomplish our missions within an average of 8 weeks.
- 9 out of 10 successful missions.

This expertise makes us the best address to find yours!



Cyber attacks: Be prepared, be insured

Hiscox's **Jeremy D'hondt** offers sound advice to fight off hacking

Every company will suffer a cyber attack sooner or later. Being prepared is everything. Approximately half of all Belgian companies (49%) fell victim to a cyber attack in the past year. This is what came out of the new *Cyber Readiness Report* from specialist insurer Hiscox. In addition, just over one in ten companies that were attacked (12%), were what are referred to as 'super targets'. That means that they were attacked more than 500 times last year. Moreover, in the context of the Corona crisis, more and more people are working from home, which creates a much easier climate for hackers.

D'hondt, Sales & Development Underwriter Professional Indemnity & Cyber, says:

"Companies that are insured with us can always get in touch with us in the case of a cyber attack, through our hotline. That is certainly not an unnecessary luxury. When a company that has been hacked calls us, you want to be able to respond as quickly as possible". However, he sees his primary task as helping companies prevent a cyber attack. "Given that the majority of hacks occur through human error, we teach our professional clients how they can detect a cyber attack and how to correctly respond thereto, for example through our CyberClear Academy."

Ransomware and phishing

According to D'hondt, the main forms of cyber attacks in Belgium are ransomware and Business Email Compromise (BEC) attacks. These types of attacks are very

varied, but both can cause serious damage. In a ransomware attack, hackers try to crash a company's computer systems or hold company data hostage, as a result of which the company can often operate only partly, or not at all. "We see this in SMEs as well as major multinationals," says D'hondt. They threaten to only release the systems again if the company pays a ransom.

A BEC attack works differently. In that case, they break into a company's email systems using employees' login details. Many email addresses and passwords are, in fact, all over the internet. Then they can act as someone from inside the company. "For example, they send through payment requests that look real but with different bank details. These are usually realistic amounts, so they don't look suspicious. Once this payment is made, you mostly never see that money again," says D'hondt.

Legal and communication assistance

"As an insurer, we have to react differently to BEC or ransomware attacks," says D'hondt. In both cases, a company suffers financial damage that absolutely must be covered by us. But it doesn't stop there. According to Hiscox experts, a company can experience other kinds of damage through hacking. The insurer, for example, covers the costs of IT experts to restore the system. In ransomware attacks, often confidential, personal data of clients and/or suppliers are compromised. "The defence costs ensuing from this are also covered," he says.

**" BEING
PREPARED IS
EVERYTHING "**



**" CHECK ALL
NEW ACCOUNT
NUMBERS "**



Jeremy D'hondt - Sales & Development Underwriter Professional Indemnity & Cyber

Hiscox also helps the company mitigate reputational damage by bringing in a PR agency to guide the crisis communication regarding the hacking, both to the media and to suppliers and clients. To finish off, D'hondt also gives some important tips to companies. "Be prepared, because the chance you will experience hacking is much greater than, for example, a fire. I always advise companies to check all new account numbers with the supplier and also to use multi-factor authentication for webmail accounts or for logging in remotely. You should always check identities twice when a log-in occurs from a new device. Finally: regularly back up your computer systems in a separate place. You can avoid a lot of issues just by doing this." www.hiscox.be ●



LIFESTYLE

Putting front and centre the natural light that floods into every setting

LIFESTYLE

Luxury

Luxury yachts: Custom Line Navetta 30

Our latest luxury yachts article looks at a brand-new romantic vessel



The eagerly awaited project designed by Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel and Filippo Salvetti unites the architectural language of the maritime tradition: living materials, fine craftsmanship and the power of light encompassing them in a perfect circle.

Launched this year, Custom Line Navetta 30 marks a new chapter in the brand's evolution. This romantic yacht is full of charm and makes an extremely elegant and contemporary style statement.

At 28.43 m (93ft) in length and with a beam of 7.3 m (24ft), Navetta 30 is a product of collaboration between the Product Strategy



Department, led by Piero Ferrari and the Ferretti Group Engineering Department. The yacht is the first project with exteriors designed by Filippo Salvetti and interiors by architecture and design firm Antonio Citterio Patricia Viel. The influence of these top professionals can be seen in every stylistic choice, across a construction process in which the details are enhanced by being set against a clean and linear design.



glass fibre. The sea metaphor is also clear to see in the colourways, and particularly in the choice of blue, as well as in the care over detail and in manufacturing processes that draw on the noble art of cabinetmaking.

The constant reference to seafaring tradition can also be seen in the rounded lines and curves of the interior spaces, furniture and window frames, combined with the use of natural materials like solid wood, leather and teak, which are free to continue their natural cycle and live a new life at every stage in their story.

www.ferrettigroup.com,
www.customline-yacht.com ⓘ

An in-depth approach to the design process, referencing stylistic features in the finest tradition, has generated the many unusual elements that make Navetta 30 a new icon of the sea. They range from the choice of natural, living materials, such as leather, wood and rope, to an unprecedented celebration of light. Not to mention reiterated references to the circle as the perfect sign, one that has also inspired a return to the rounded lines typical of boats from the past, as well as the custom design of the resin film wall coating consisting of quartz powder on

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Watches

With love from Mother Nature

Anja Van Der Borgh takes a tour of some of the world's finest timepieces



Rainbow

Rolex has just revamped its Oyster Perpetual family – from now on available in 41mm, 36mm, 34mm, 31mm and 28mm – and added some fashionable lacquered dials in candy pink, turquoise, yellow, coral and green. However, not all colours are available in every size. But hey, you might be lucky!
www.rolex.com

Big hearted

Jewel meets watch in L'Heure du Diamant from **Chopard**. Already released in round- and oval-shaped cases, the watches with quartz movement now appear with a case (29.9mm to 34mm) shaped like a heart – a motif dearly cherished by Chopard, whose philosophy and ethical commitments have caused it to become known as the 'Big-Hearted Maison'. Chopard uses 100% Ethical Gold in its jewellery and watch creations.
www.chopard.com



Evergreen

After interpretations in black, meteor grey and blue, the 43.6mm **Blancpain** Fifty Fathoms Bathyscaphe Chronographe Flyback is going green. The automatic diver's watch is one of Blancpain's must-haves, and this piece is equipped with a flyback function that enables the chronograph to be reset to zero and restarted instantaneously by simply pressing the push-piece located at 4 o'clock. It is paired with a NATO or sail canvas strap.
www.blancpain.com



Clean oceans

Although all kinds of plastic are found in the world's oceans, fishing nets are the biggest concern. They damage coral reefs and trap vast numbers of sea creatures. The Dutch watch brand **Gyre** introduced its Gyre SeaCleaner (42mm), a solar-powered sports watch made out of recycled ghost fishing nets, recovered from the Indian Ocean. Every watch sold supports local fishermen. 5% of the turnover will be donated to The Ocean Cleanup Foundation. The kind of watch that makes you feel good!
www.gyrewatch.com

Biodegradable

Since the brand's founding in 1983, **Swatch** has always had its finger on the pulse. Its latest innovation is the '1983: Bioreloaded', a collection in different sizes cased in materials sourced from nature, marking the first time a watchmaker has succeeded in using only bio-sourced materials in a series production environment. The new packaging sets a new standard as well. Made of paper foam, the material consists of an innovative mix based on potato and tapioca starch - fully biodegradable.
www.swatch.com



Solar power

Fashionable, minimalist and colourful, the ICE solar power watches from **Ice-Watch** are proof that it is possible to be a smart consumer without sacrificing your style or the planet. Wave goodbye to traditional batteries that have to be replaced on a regular basis. Expose your ICE solar power dial to a natural or artificial light source and it will recharge instantly, then last for several days. Even the packaging of the twelve unisex models is eco-responsible and entirely made from recycled plastic bottles.
www.ice-watch.com

**3 DAYS, 19 HOURS,
14 MINUTES**

That is how long it took for **Howard Hughes** to circumnavigate the world and become the fastest man in the air in 1938. He trusted his Longines astronavigation chronometer to determine the position of his airplane at night or over the ocean.



Howard Hughes

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Watches with a plus...

Thinner

Since its debut in 2014, Octo Finissimo has redrawn the boundaries of style, mastering a rare combination of aesthetic vision and mechanical expertise with each of its six world-record-holding designs. Today, driven by excellence and artistry,

Bulgari continues to shift the paradigm of modern-day watchmaking with the latest Octo Finissimo Automatic Satin-Polished Steel 100m, featuring the thinnest automatic movement and a water resistance of 100 meters.

www.bulgari.com



Royal

The sport-chic watch par excellence, with its integrated bracelet, notched bezel and automatic movement, the new **Tudor** Royal range is both versatile and affordable for people who like quality. Available in stainless steel, or with alternating links in stainless steel and yellow gold, the models in this range cater to every taste owing to the intricacy of their finish. Available in sizes 41, 38, 34 and 28mm.

www.tudorwatch.com



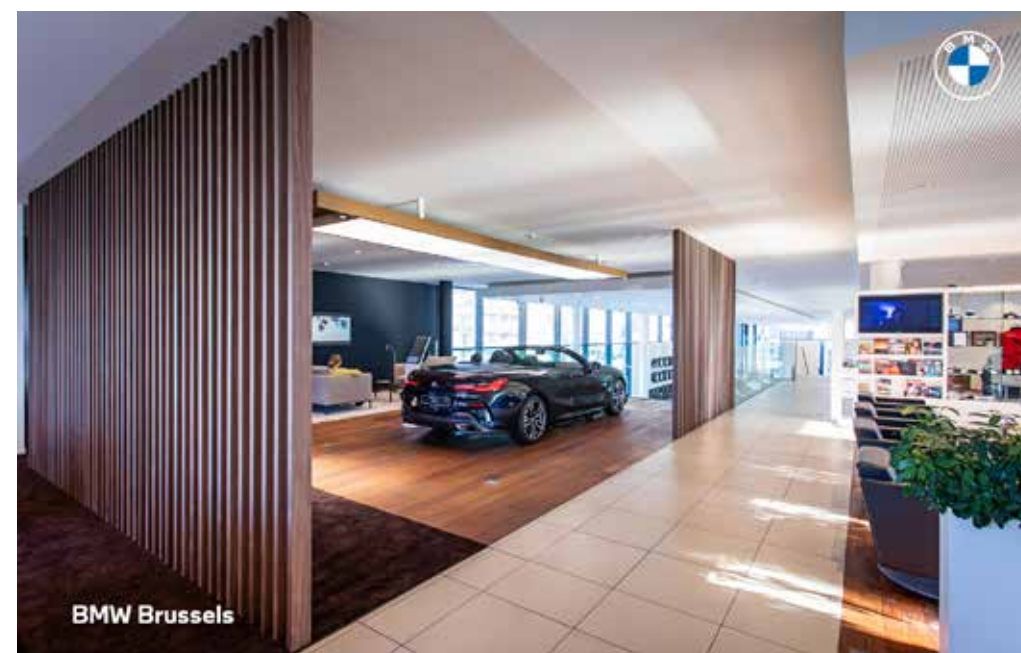
X-ray

Chanel celebrates the 20th anniversary of its J12 with some new models. With a new movement that has been designed and assembled by the Chanel Manufacture in Switzerland, the J12 X-RAY is all about transparency. The plate, timer bridge and cog bridge are made of sapphire. They fade away to let the light in, revealing a delicately embroidered latticework of cogs. As if that weren't enough, for the first time in history, a watch has been created with a strap composed of links cut from raw sapphires.

www.chanel.com

2020: Adapt and move forward

BMW plans to adapt to the changeable days ahead



Admittedly, 2020 will not go down in history as a year to be cherished. Yet all those moments when we collectively struggled also had a positive effect: we began to think about the little things we appreciate in life. Rediscovering driving pleasure after a lockdown, for example. Or human contact, even at a distance. At BMW Brussels we resolutely continue to believe in contact; digitally, by telephone and videoconferencing, or physically, albeit with the necessary distance and respect.

No motor show. Or?

Car lover or not, you have no doubt heard that the Brussels Motor Show is skipping a year. As a BMW Distributor with a certain

size, 30,000 m² and up to 3,000 deliveries per year, we can host our own version of the motor show thanks to our spacious showrooms and a large stock of cars and motorbikes. We can show you a maximum number of novelties, both physical and digital. After all, you don't just buy a new car on paper, but prefer to experience it in real life or via livestream. We are only too happy to take that with us from 2020.

BMW Brussels
Ch. De Louvain 864
1140 Brussels
marc.moncousin@bmw.be
www.bmwbrussels.be

Motoring

BMW X7: Luxuriously impressive! Top class luxury!

This month we look at an exceptional motor car



The new BMW X7 merges brilliance and elegance to create a very strong personality. The imposing appearance with sleek design and aesthetics exude a welcome feeling of slenderness. At the same time, the super-generous interior offers an unprecedented combination of exclusivity and rich functionality. Its unmatched comfort is present right up to its third row of Merino leather seats.

**“ A MODERN
AND TIMELESS
DESIGN ”**

Grace is its nature, elegance its character. Beautiful from all angles, the X7 does not forget its undercarriage: it relies on brand-new 22-inch light alloy rims. The exterior of the BMW X7 is of course extended into its interior fittings: a modern and timeless design, with rare aesthetics and a high level of comfort.

Appreciate and savour the meticulousness of the details and premium materials: the ‘Crafted Clarity’, with very fine and meticulously polished crystal, combines harmoniously with intelligent functionality.

This creates an incomparable atmosphere thanks to an abundance of direct and indirect light sources as well as the translucent panoramic roof, which gives rise to an impression of unlimited space in the passenger compartment of the BMW

X7, inviting seven occupants to travel in business class in a super-safe environment.

Obviously, cutting-edge new technologies go hand in hand in order to improve the driving of such a flagship vehicle. It begins with the effortless opening of the vehicle with a digital key on your smartphone before sitting



**“ BEAUTIFUL
FROM ALL
ANGLES ”**






“ THE BMW X7 IS ALSO VERY SPACIOUS ”



behind the wheel. The driving position is intuitive and gives pride of place to various tools, such as finding a parking space with reverse assist. For its part, the BMW Personal CoPilot adapts each journey to the driver's mood for optimum comfort.

Even at night, the range of the BMW Laserlight headlights reaches 600 metres, thus achieving a symbiosis between design and performance. The latter complement the 3-litre diesel of 211 and 340hp, the 3-litre gasoline of 333hp as well as that of the 4.4-litre 530hp under the hood of the M50i. There is also a delectable 8-speed auto gearbox and all-wheel drive.

The BMW X7 is also very spacious (5.15m by 2m) and imposing (2,400kg) SUV with a large grille! But don't think for a second that it is clumsy. With its superlative comfort and bourgeois style, it also seduces with its performance. Obviously, all of this comes at a price, think at least €100,000.

It's a beautiful drive in a luxurious universe. 



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mattress**
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The complete Auping product range

Our Auping Store contains the complete range of products: from beds and box springs to pillows, duvets and bed linen. This means we can ensure you can choose

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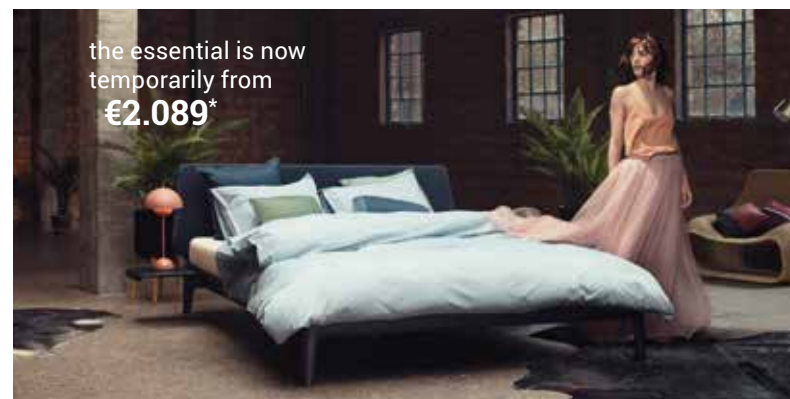
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*Photographer: **Xavier F. Martin** Assistant: **Samir Dari** Art director: **Nicholas Sirot**
Make up Artist DB for **Lancôme** and **Redken** Model **Lola** @ **dominiquemodels.com**
spécial thank to **Yelle** @ **livingroom.be** for retouching pictures*

*Total look and rings **Dior** @ **dior.com** - Cross jewel **Maria Fossati** @ **cachemirecotonsoie.com***



Handbag **Bobby**, Ultra fine fresh loose powder **Dior Forever** cushion,
J'adore eau de parfum infinissime the main **Dior**@ dior.com

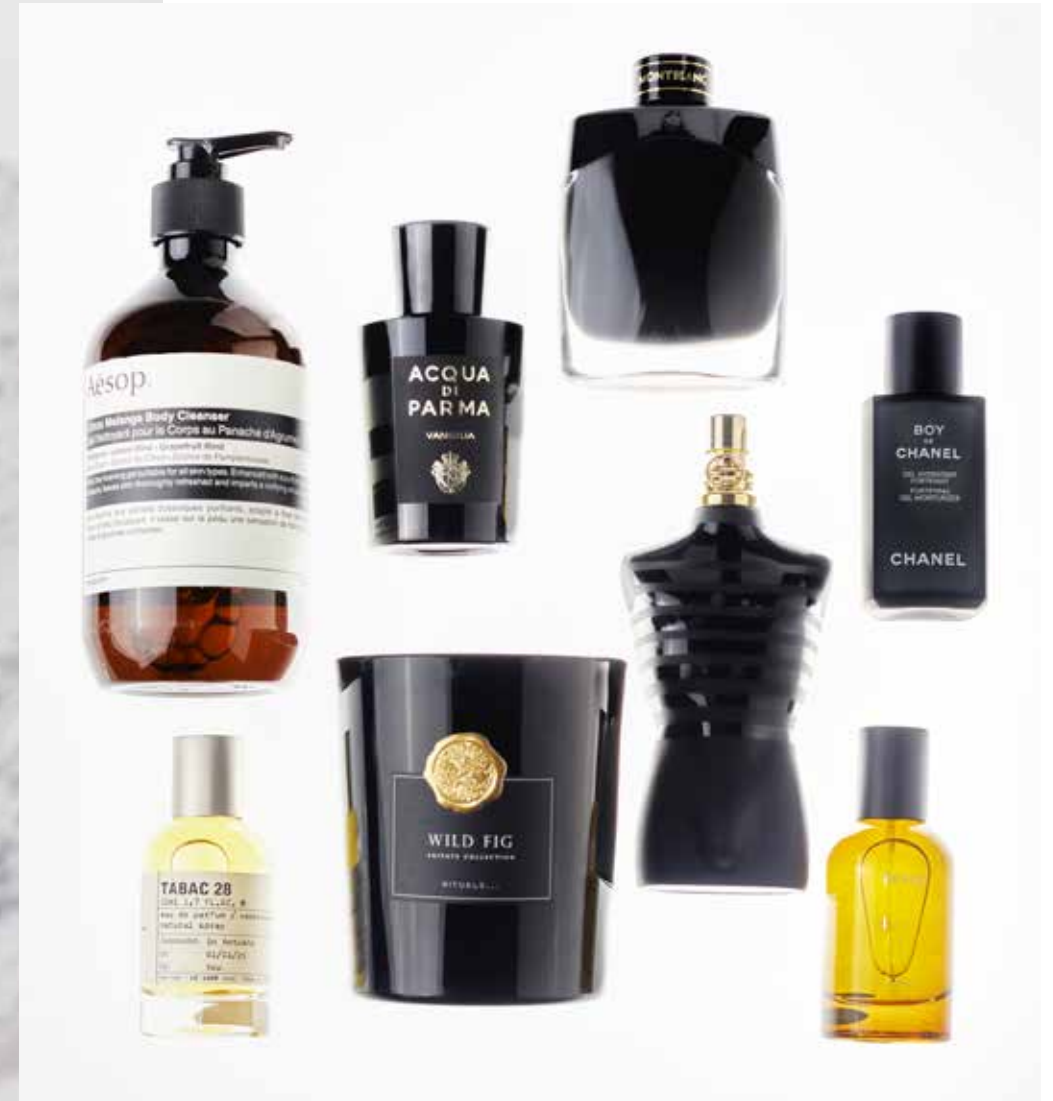


Shirt **Parosh** , Vest **Indress**, Brooch **Celeste Mogador**
the main **Cachemire Coton Soie** @cachemirecotonsoie.com



Handbag model **Flapbag** white/black , **Rouge Allure** lip colour 127 rouge d'or ,**Ombre première** Longwear powder eyeshadow 928 cuir brun ,**Ombre première** Longwear powder eyeshadow 925 or antique ,
Les chaînes de chanel illuminating blush powder , Longwear nail colour 773 chaine d'or ,
 L'eau N°5 de chanel the main **Chanel**@ chanel.com

Dress **Chloé** @ chloe.com



Dress **Twinset** @ twinset.com
Cap the vampire's wife for **H&M** @ hm.com

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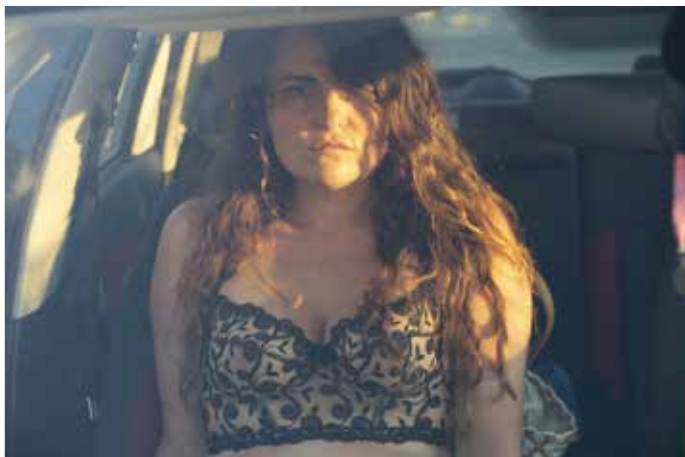
Fashion

MAISON LEJABY celebrates its 90th anniversary

Nine decades as seen by nine photos, illustrating changes in social mores



For nearly a century, MAISON LEJABY has been supporting women in their quest for emancipation, freedom and femininity, and their thirst for objects of desire. The House has been one of the greatest successes in the history of lingerie. At the end of 2020, the iconic French manufacturer of corsetry, underwear and swimwear will need a cake with room for 90 candles!



To celebrate this very special birthday, MAISON LEJABY has asked nine photographers to give us their take on a particular decade. They gave the photographers carte blanche. It's a gamble, but MAISON LEJABY wanted the project to have an entirely artistic dimension.

Lingerie is a garment unlike any other; it is demanding and delicate. It is an intimate reflection of the personality, uniting the body and the mind; the assurance of wellbeing and beauty. These nine photos will provide further evidence of this, bearing witness to times past, the heritage of yesterday and today, captured by contemporary



photographers working in this major field of the visual arts. Giving them carte blanche has allowed the brand to escape from its comfort zone and inhabit a different world, one that offers a sometimes poetic, sometimes sexualized, but always benevolent, vision of women and their bodies. A ray of sunlight filtering through, a particular pose, a delicate beauty spot, an adjustment to a bra strap or a flick of the hair... Nine decades as seen by nine photos, illustrating changes in social mores and demonstrating that art resides in a multitude of details.



There will be many different interpretations, no two reactions will be the same, but these images all have one thing in common - they are all testimony to moments in our lives that do not belong to us but will live forever as works of art.
www.maisonlejaby.com

**“ IT IS
DEMANDING
AND DELICATE ”**

Fashion

Festive shopping!

La Boutique de Wallonie, a bit of Wallonia under your tree

This end of the year will have a somewhat different flavour. But why not decorate it with delicious artisanal products? Simply open the doors of La Boutique de Wallonie in the heart of Brussels, and you find there is no lack of good gift deals. Food products, of course, to be enjoyed in moderation, or gifts to lay at the foot of the tree.

What will I find in the gift ideas department?

From sweet to savoury, from small to big budget, let yourself be inspired by the store's creations, which have been thought out and designed for you. Gourmet baskets with breakfast, Trappist flavours, delicacies from Wallonia, festive flavours, duo of Ruffus bubbles and/or Chant d'Eole wine. Or for the not so gourmand, there are candles and soaps with original scents, Namur and Henna perfumes, textiles and souvenirs of all kinds.



In a more creative mood? Compose your own gift from the boutique's entire selection: wines, beers and spirits, Walloon chocolates, Gin de Binche and Gin Luperia, mustards and flavoured oils, Ardennes ham, cuberdons, artisan crisps, Couques de Dinant and much more.

Collect your gifts in one click!

Take advantage of the new Click & Collect service and place your orders via the Facebook page. Discover our gift ideas as well as a selection of festive products.

La Boutique de Wallonie, Petite Rue au Beurre, 6, 1000

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Brussels

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Magritte Limited Edition 2020

Shopping



Wallonia foie gras

A moment of sharing par excellence, Christmas comes in many ways around the world. What will be common to all, however, is conviviality, love, colours but the choices of festive food, of which foie gras remains a safe bet. For the most demanding, there is certainly a producer near you who will be delighted to share his know-how, his passion for the profession and his search for quality.

Our local duck producers are subject to a strict working framework, unique in the

world. They follow an artisanal model of breeding and production that promotes local know-how and the short circuit. Also, they are proud to be able to offer superior quality products to their customers. Whether you like foie gras in terrine, semi-cooked, in a tea towel or even pan-fried, plain or accompanied, there are a multitude of preparations for this delicate dish that is very popular with Belgians. Our compatriots still rank second in world consumption with 100 grammes per inhabitant annually. www.apaqrw.be

Delacre

Delacre is back to the delight the taste buds with two new collections to celebrate the end of the year holidays. These glittering exclusive boxes in Christmas colours will help you enjoy festivities. This year, the boxes of the Festive collection are adorned with joyful scenes of winter life. For fans of delicious star-shaped cookies and all food lovers, the Constellation Etoile



assortment is back. This box contains tasty recipes specially concocted for the holidays. From delicate dark chocolate to gourmet milk chocolate, including the succulent Gianduja hazelnut, everyone will find what they are looking for. Festive Collection, 1kg box: **€12.99** for 16 varieties of cookies, Star Collection: **€3.99** for 4 varieties of cookies.

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LIFESTYLE

Shopping

BergHOFF Eco gift idea

Belgian brand BergHOFF's line of 'on-the-go' items are not only environmentally friendly, but also help to maintain a healthy lifestyle. The practical bottles, bowls and accessories are all made from high quality materials and are 100% recyclable. In addition to the children's lunch set, water bottle and insulated bottle, the range includes, for example, a practical water bottle in pink and grey and a stainless steel insulated bottle



with bottle caps in different colours. For those who want to enjoy tea on the go, there's the gourd with tea infuser, while for sportier types there is a handy shaker bottle with an ergonomic cap. The sustainable line also includes a versatile salad bowl and bowl set. BergHOFF is dedicated to creating products that respect the three pillars of ecological policy: reuse, reduce and recycle.
www.berghoffworldwide.com

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Shopping



Zaza

The Zaza collection is inspired by the virtuous flying insects that keep nature in constant bloom. The subtle beauty and fragility of these little creatures is captured in crystals. Adorned with a green pearl symbolizing the wings and the iridescence of their bodies, the jewel becomes a delicate illustration of life. In addition, white cubic zirconia subtly adorn the 925 silver and 18-carat gold plating. This alloy of precious stones reminds us of the centre of life in eternal movement. Gold breeze earrings:

€65

www.pdpaola.com

dinh van

Iconoclast in its inspiration, essential in shapes, Parisian jeweller dinh van has carved out its own niche in the codified world of jewellery. Created in 1976, the Menottes collection turned the world of French jewellery on its head. While traditional jewellers strive to make the clasp as discreet as possible, dinh van uses it as the centrepiece of every collection. Menottes dinh van yellow gold hoop earrings,, available also in white gold: **€2,390**

www.dinhvan.com



Waterloo Whiskey

The Anthony Martin group is launching their brand new whiskey for the holiday season. Tradition obliges, the latter has matured for three years in the historic cellars of the Knights of Malta at the Ferme de Mont-Saint-Jean in Waterloo. Three exclusive whiskeys will be offered to amateurs for Christmas at the respective prices of **€55** (The Brancardier), **€75** (The Nurse) and **€95** (The Surgeon). Pre-orders can be made

exclusively via the online shop of the Ferme de Mont-Saint-Jean or via the Waterloo Spirit Facebook page. Preferred buyers of Waterloo Whiskey will be invited to pick up their bottle (s) during an exclusive evening scheduled for Thursday, December 17. On this occasion, they will visit the distillery and its backstage and discover the brand new cellar room. *Finest shop* tinyurl.com/y23reb2t *Facebook Waterloo Distillery* tinyurl.com/y55cgtnu



Bruichladdich

A good single malt in an original bottle, intended for whiskey lovers and flavour crusaders. The Limited Edition Bruichladdich Classic Laddie Pack is the perfect end of year gift: 100% Scottish, yet completely different from the usual Scotch single malt whiskey. No age on the packaging, but a code that reveals the unique recipe of each bottle. Enter your code, reveal the recipe, all part of Bruichladdich's disruptive distillation philosophy. Made from Scottish barley, aged in premium oak barrels and distilled and bottled on the shores of Lochindaal, on the Isle of Islay. Bruichladdich produces a 100% Scotch whiskey, but according to its own philosophy of distillation. Recommended retail price: **€58**. Available from top wine merchants. www.bruichladdich.com

Beauty

Festive Beauty

Caroline Dierckx has some great beauty suggestions for the festive season

The festive essentials for coquettes and dandies. The following products deserve a place of honour in your bathroom cabinet and also under the tree, because now is the time to treat yourself and to give. Here are our recommended gifts.



Eucerin UreaRepair Plus, 5% Urea Body Cream: 450ml, **€23.90**



MAKESENZ Belgian hemp and coconut oil hand cream: 50ml, **€16**

ESCADA Candy Love limited edition eau de toilette: 100ml, **€79**



For men, a mysterious fragrance with powerful notes of Dsquared2 **Green Wood**: 100 ml, **€84**



Mica D'Oro I, Storie Veneziane La Maison Valmont: 50ml, **€290**



Bourjois Healthy Mix BB Cream Anti-Fatigue 02 Medium: **€14.99**

For a healthy scalp and healthy hair, Ageloc Nutriol, **NU SKIN**: Price between **€48** and **€64**



DIOR Holiday Collection 2020
Golden Night: **Price n.c**



2K Beauty Advent Calendar 24
Days - Nail Polish: **€12.99**
Available in Di stores

Advent Calendar,
RITUALS: €59.90



Intensive Hyaluronic Set
Esthederm: €132



EDELWEISS POWER FROM NATURE

"Small and white, clean and bright..." While The Sound of Music may have catapulted Edelweiss into the public imagination, this rare Alpine flower has been valued for its healing powers in traditional medicine for decades. Today, it has returned to the spotlight as a skincare superhero, renowned for its regenerative powers.

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Edelweiss is a small white flower that mainly grows on the Swiss Alps' highest peaks, more than 3.000m altitude. It is blessed with a unique ability to thrive in the most extreme conditions withstanding high winds, powerful UV radiations and freezing temperatures - down to -30°C/-22°F -. Known as the flower that never fades, its infinite strength of resilience allows it to produce specific anti-ageing molecules with unparalleled virtues. Among all Edelweiss species, HELENA RUBINSTEIN Laboratories selected the strongest one: the Alpha-Edelweiss.

NATIVE CELLS, ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL CELLS IN THE VEGETAL WORLD

The secret of PRODIGY CELLGLOW lies in the use of Edelweiss undifferentiated native cells, one of the most powerful cells in the entire vegetal world, which have an infinite regeneration capacity. With just one single cell from this flower, an entire new plant can reborn. As if that was not enough, they have a high-bio affinity with skin, which makes them tolerated by all skin types, even sensitive.

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Infused with a triple Edelweiss extract including native cells - the Cellular Supreme of Edelweiss™ - concentrated at an outstanding 10%, PRODIGY CELLGLOW Deep Renewing Concentrate is a moist-infusing fresh rosy-glow serum that leaves skin all-day replumped, redensified, and lastingly glowing. For a brighter skin's future.



www.helenarubinstein.com

YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE TO GLOWING SKIN

It is no wonder that these days, skin that glows has become the holy grail of beauty. Whatever your age, nothing brings out your natural beauty better than a luminous, fresh complexion that looks like it is lit up from within. Factors like age, stress, pollution, sun damage, lifestyle can dull our complexion. The good news is that by following a few simple guidelines, we can get our glow back !

THE HERO OF ANTI-AGEING AND BRIGHTENING

1. GENTLY EXFOLIATE



Give your skin breathing room to regenerate properly. For a supercharged radiance boost, choose a mild - not too harsh for your skin - resurfacing essence like PRODIGY CELLGLOW The Intense Clarity Essence, which combines glycolic acid with powerful brightening agents like Vitamin CG.

2. GET SCIENCE ON YOUR SIDE



Advanced anti-aging and brightening skincare like PRODIGY CELLGLOW uses native cell technology to reverse cellular aging and get you at your glowing best. Discover The Deep Renewing Concentrate, a rosy-glow rich serum of Edelweiss native cells that will leave skin replumped and lastingly glowing.

3. REDENSIFY YOUR SKIN



Add The Radiant Regenerating Cream to your routine to redensify your skin, while leaving a lasting sensation of comfort.

Design

Jam Hotel: Saké and a soak

Catherine Feore samples a unique Brussels experience



Tucked away in the Jam Hotel near Avenue Louise, you can escape the daily grind and truly relax with an escape not just from the daily stresses, but from Belgium itself.

In *Atsukan*, which is the term for a way of drinking *saké*, you can experience a Japanese *sentô* which is a Japanese public bathhouse. Once you have offloaded your belongings and had a good scrub in the shower, you will be asked to select from a range of essential oils to scent your bath. My friend chose *Shoga* to 'energise and

revitalise', while I went for *Sugi* to 'relax and calm'.

The large cedar wood baths are prepared, and you can order a drink. There was warm or cold *saké*, Hitachino red rice beer, amber or white, as well as juices and, of course, tea. I went with the beer just to see what Japanese beer was like.

The relaxed bar lit with lanterns and the tranquil atmosphere really force you to let go of the day behind you. The baths are separated by thick recycled denim curtains





that are much nicer than they sound and are heated to around 42 degrees.

Initially, you immerse half your body (up to midway) to get used to the temperature of the water. Then, you slip into the bath completely, whilst making sure you keep your head above water. This stage is known as the *zeshin-yoku*. All in all, it takes 30 minutes, and if it is too hot you can add some cold water, but it's worth keeping the temperature high so that your muscles are given no choice but to relinquish the tensions they have accumulated during the day.

There is also a sauna, should you want to take some more time.

There are up to 10 tubs and it's straightforward to book online: www.jamhotel.be/atsukan

Designed by the very talented, quasi-mythical Brussels' Lionel Jadot, the Atsukan baths won the Commerce Design Brussels Awards 2020.

www.lioneljadot.com



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Be success

Marie's Corner: A sophisticated and welcoming touch

David Mc Gowan sat down for a chat with Marie's Corner's Serge Silber

All photos © We Art Family (Raquel Boidana)



Marie's Corner has added a new collaboration to its list of prestigious partnerships. After luxury hotels and gourmet restaurants, the tailor-made sofa specialist is entering the world of co-working with Patchwork. Mikael Benfredj, founder of these Parisian co-working spaces, called on the Belgian enterprise to furnish his new space in Saint-Lazare, located in the 8th arrondissement, in Paris. Marie's Corner has teamed up with interior designer Pascale

Bensoussan to create a cohesive, warm and work-friendly atmosphere. A new opportunity for the sofa specialist to promote Belgian craftsmanship and design in the French capital.

“ WE HAD TO MULTITASK ”

Mikael Benfredj and his partner Jordan Chiche design their spaces by focusing on a universe combining comfort and design in order to bring modernity to their interiors. The Parisian company defines itself as "a high-end environment where everyone feels at home". To ensure

unparalleled comfort in an elegant setting, working with Marie's Corner became obvious. Supported by the wise advice of interior designer Pascale Bensoussan, Marie's Corner brought a sophisticated and welcoming touch to these spaces dedicated to work.

David Mc Gowan sat down for a chat with Marie's Corner's Serge Silber.

David: So who is Serge Silber?

Serge: I would say that Serge Silber is one of the co-owners of Marie's Corner. It's a great professional adventure since for me it's a second wind in my professional life.

Decoration has always been part of my life, without my being directly or professionally associated with it. Today, if people asked me I will say that it was a passion that gave me a second professional boost.

How did you start out in business?

My first experience was in IT, in the 1980s. I worked for a family business that actually worked in the area of textiles, and I arrived in this company first as a computer specialist. I went to Asia for them, and I immediately entered the industrial side of textiles. I must have been in the textile industry for 25 years!

How did you come into contact with Marie's Corner?

Well, the founder of Marie's Corner is a childhood friend. It is true that I knew the company through their eyes. And then my wife was herself a Marie's Corner customer. So this is how the link was made. It turns out that Alain and Laetitia, the founders of Marie's Corner, were looking for a general manager and asked me if I knew anyone. It was a question of entrepreneurship, but where we had to multitask.

It was different because, frankly, at the beginning we had to immerse ourselves in each of the activities that revolve around the company. That's what I liked. There was a lot of added value in that.

Isn't being an entrepreneur about taking the financial risk for the sustainability of the enterprise?

Yes, you're right, we are committing our funds, I agree. I was thinking more about 'the creator' side of things. I come from a family of entrepreneurs, people who have always been independent themselves. From a young age I was bathed in it.

What do you think are the keys to success for entrepreneurship?

I think the qualities you need to have today is being multi-faceted, multifunctional. You have to be curious to be interested in everything. It is above all desire and curiosity that bring richness to the

profession of an entrepreneur.

Isn't it difficult for two people to run a business together?

Philippe Vanhemelen and I had already worked a lot together. We are very complementary. He comes from the world of finance, management and entrepreneurship. And, today, it remains a very complementary management. We often find business compromises.

What is your favourite piece at Marie's Corner?

My favourite piece is the Tennessee sofa, the one you and I are sitting on, right now - it is so comfortable. I like it for several reasons. This is a piece that we released three years ago, and it is a true Marie's Corner creation, the DNA of the firm.



Be success



What is your 5-year plan?

Consolidate our positions in the existing market. Open up new markets for us, such as England. Have real growth. Which allows us to have quickly have growth in the market responds to the offer that is offered to it.

Strengthen the brand. Enhance recognition in some countries. Because in some countries we are present, but people are not very familiar with the company. We work with a designer who has known us for 20 years. He has a good idea of the range we want to offer. Today, we are trying to develop models because there is a need for them in the market, but we take care that it is consistent with the collection.

It is sometimes difficult, but you have to remove models to make the collection clearer. We release ten new models per year. It's a pace that we have been setting for four



years. When we took over Marie's Corner, we had a very classic intention.

How do you know your market?

Through feedback from resellers who are on the front line, agents and distributors. An agent sees around 100 active clients and gives us feedback from the field. Through these testimonies we can sense certain trends.

“ BE A GENERALIST WITH A GLOBAL VISION ”

Our brand is supported by the furniture rental service to meet the demands of customers who cannot invest in furniture. They rent it long term with a maintenance clause. After 48 months, it will become their property. The advantage is that it pays as it goes. We also offer an on-site maintenance service to professionals.

The second important thing is to know your target, your community, and to stay in touch with them. We created MC Care Benelux, a complete anti-stain guarantee for the



customer. For a period of five years after the purchase of a sofa, clients may call upon our cleaning service to come and remove stains on that piece of furniture.

Where is the production done?

All production is done in Spain. We have a bit of an icon of an upholster business from father to son in the Spanish factory. There is enormous pride. Workers sign their work. This is quite special in this job.

What's the most important thing for you in business

To move forward and progress, you have to surround yourself with specialists in their field and know how to be a generalist with a global vision. And, at the same, time knowing how to ask the right person for the ideal solution.

The Patchwork decorator

I work with Marie's Corner for the confidence, for the standards and because I know the team. Marie's Corner adapts to a wide variety of styles. Before Serge's takeover of Marie's Corner, I had the



impression that this makes for a more classic brand. Our market is public spaces, residential areas, hotels - before, it was about furniture dealers, now it's about the decorators.

Decorators are also assemblers. Marie's Corner wants to unload the maximum from decorators by providing a delivery service, loading and logistics. The subcontractors with whom we work arrive, unpack the furniture and leave. The work does not stop with the creation of the sofa but rather ends when the clients receives their sofas in their living room.

www.mariescorner.com
www.patchwork.co 📍

Shopping deco

Festive shopping decor!



Rennatazza Viadurini

6 Christmas Mugs of Design with a Reindeer Shape with Lid and Handle. Breakfast cup with red handle and reindeer-shaped design, 6 pieces. Technical features: dolomite with lid and red handle. Hand wash recommended. www.viadurini.it



Rennathe Viadurini Christmas Teapots

2 Reindeer Design Christmas Teapots in Porcelain Pink and White. With this porcelain line, the Christmas teapots accompany the pleasure of breakfast or snack with their witty and fun design in the shape of a reindeer head. The pastel colours and the trendy and functional design will envelop the house to create the perfect and cheerful Christmas atmosphere. www.viadurini.it



Red Candy I'm a Christmas Pudding Side Plate

With the I'm a Christmas Pudding Side Plate, it's a classic case of falling into a food coma on Christmas day. You're absolutely stuffed and swear you're never going to eat again... yet you can't help reaching out for the festive food! **€25** www.redcandy.co.uk



Natural History Museum Dinosaur chess set

Since Netflix's Queen's Gambit is turning chess into something that's sexy, here are two sets that are perfect additions to your decor. Let the battle of the beasts commence with this stunning collector's item. This chess board is constructed from American black walnut and maple and

completed with 32 dinosaur head pieces. Standing no taller than 10cm each, the hand-painted playing pieces are crafted from poly-resin, and the complete set incorporates 12 different species. A great investment for chess fanatics and dinosaur enthusiasts alike: **€225** www.nhmshop.co.uk

Westminster Abbey Burgundy and Cream Chess Set and Board

This burgundy and ivory chess set has been created from statues, figures and artefacts in and around Westminster Abbey. The king of the chess set is based on St Edward the Confessor, who is the patron saint of the Abbey and one of the earliest monarchs to be buried here. The queen is based on St Helen, who was reported as finding the true cross in Jerusalem. The board is made using Walnut veneer and high-quality synthetic mother of pearl that has been hand polished: **€400** www.shop.westminster-abbey.org



FATBOY Transloetje lamp

A subtle function as for the Trans-parents goes as well for Transloetje, the smaller version of this range of see-through beauties. A tiny design lamp that gets you searching for an on-and-off button that's nowhere to be found. The trick? Gently tap its foot and voilà, the light is yours.

Price n.c.

www.fatboy.com/be



SilvioMondinoStudio Fulmine Three Lights

Somewhere between a suspension light and a floor Lamp, Fulmine (thunderbolt) engages with gravity in an innovative and playful way. The lightning-bolt zig-zag creates an essential motif with a punchy graphic appeal. Fulmine creates a dialogue with architectural spaces: **€3,300**
www.silviomondinostudio.com



Beaumonde Mercer Table Lamp

Super stylish Mercer Black Arm Table Lamp from Libra Interiors, great as a task desk lamp and equally as practical as a bedside lamp. Bulb type required: E27 40W: **€168**

www.beaumonde.co.uk



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www.vdv-design.be

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LIFE OF
LEISURE

Interview

Teresa Palmer: Motherhood in the movie world

A highly successful actress, model, producer, entrepreneur, has three kids... at 34 years old



Teresa Palmer is yet another exceptionally talented and beautiful actress who left her native Australia to ply her trade in Hollywood.

Best known for romantic comedy *Take Me Home Tonight* (2011), for zombie love story *Warm Bodies* (2013), for supernatural horror *Lights Out* (2015) and for biographical war spectacular *Hacksaw Ridge* a year later. Yet, it is her time on the small screen as Diana Bishop in *A Discovery of Witches* that has opened up new creative angles, and this

at a time when she is keen to focus as much energy as possible on growing her beautiful family.

**“ WE ARE
LIVING IN
SOMETHING OF
A REVOLUTION ”**

Palmer, 34, is married to director Mark Webber. The couple divide their time between homes in Los Angeles and Adelaide where they recently decided to relocate. Webber has a son,

Isaac, 12, from his past relationship with Frankie Shaw – who is good friends with Palmer – and in 2014 the couple welcomed

Interview

Bodhi into the world. Completing the trio is Forest, now three, and Poet, the couple's first daughter, aged one.

Open, charming, fresh-faced and effervescent, the Australian is a breath of fresh air in conversation, and with new projects in the offing – albeit in an industry that remains on its knees in these Covid times – the year that follows should provide opportunities for the actress to further her creative development.

A Discovery of Witches is on a second season in 2021...

Together: It's been amazing. As a drama it has captured the imagination, and I think the producers have been smart to keep the story turning over without it becoming stale or predictable.

Teresa Palmer: If you'd told me a decade ago my focus would be on TV work I'd have imagined something had gone very wrong along the way, but we are living in something of a revolution, and the power of premium channels is really being seen at the moment, particularly as the cinemas are out of bounds for so many people.

Obviously, I'm looking forward to the time when the cinemas come back, because they are unique in what they do; but at least in the meantime we have a good alternative where people can still enjoy original drama.

Teresa, now that you're a mum, is it more complicated to go from one project to another in quick succession?

Not really. I take our children everywhere. I've always dreamed of being a mum and we're travelling together and when I'm working we try to create a very family-friendly environment. I only use a nanny when I'm working, but otherwise I really embrace the joy that comes from being around my boys and having them in our lives.

With a little bit of planning you can always incorporate your children's life into your own.

Was it at all difficult to start working again so soon after giving birth?

I think as long as your child is with you and is part of a loving family it doesn't matter whether you're working or travelling. We try to live very happily and harmoniously wherever we are.

The fact is I am a mum and am expected to play with my children and talk about *Peppa Pig* and *Paw Patrol*. It can be difficult to come out of that mindset and get into film mode, but I'm a professional and it's what I do.

Ultimately, you need to work harder to manage all your different responsibilities. You need to make sure you are spending enough time working on your relationship, just as you are on your career.?

“ I KNOW! THE ALIEN COMING OUT OF THE LIGHT ”

I've always looked forward to having children though and I'm enjoying everything that comes with that. But I'm also lucky to have a husband who is a very dedicated and hands-on father,

which is exactly how I am as a mother. It all comes down to being good at juggling all those different roles in your life.

Has motherhood developed your career perhaps?

I don't know whether it has developed because I'm a mum now or that it happened naturally regardless. Or whether it's all just coincidental timing, but something has definitely changed for the better.

I think a lot of that has to do with the wave of change in Hollywood for women where roles are much more enriched because women are increasingly dominating the box office, so the roles are strong and layered and complex. Definitely a lot different to some of the girl candy parts I played where it was all about





the guy's journey.

Your career has seen you play many different kinds of characters. What kinds of factors influence your choices?

Now that I'm older, I'm a lot more selective in terms of projects. I'm drawn to real. I just want real characters who are steeped in a reality, strong women with a specific point of view.

You've been outspoken in the past about environmental radicalism and activism?

I think there are limits you need to respect. You can't go so far in the pursuit of your beliefs that it harms other people. You can't assume that your vision is so righteous that it gives you the right to do anything that you feel is necessary to your cause. That's a line I could never cross, even though I have great respect and admiration for political and environmental activists.

You run your own website, Your Zen Life, which you founded with actress Phoebe Tonkin. Is that your way of making a contribution to the world?

**“ I'VE ALWAYS
DREAMED OF
BEING A MUM ”**

The site is a forum and platform for people to contribute their ideas and stories and advice to the wellness world. We are trying to support and inspire positive change in the world and we want people be able to share their thoughts and ideas with others and help each other to live more healthily and happily.

What is the most important advice or knowledge that you can share about wellness?

I believe that we all need to take care of ourselves from the inside and then head outwards from that. Wellness is something

that is both physical and spiritual. My personal belief is that we need to find our happiness from a place within and not from external sources. That includes mental health, which is something that is very personal to me. I've lived with it all my life through my mother and I would be extremely sensitive to the subject.

I also know that, for me, I am much healthier when I am happy. It starts from inside you and it radiates to everything else in your life: the way you work, the way you interact with



others, even in the way you approach your nutritional and exercise habits. I love feeling very Zen and balanced, and that approach has been very liberating in every aspect of my life.

Where are you at in life these days?

I have a beautiful home and family life that I've always been pointing towards. My work is also a source of much greater satisfaction these days and I feel very blessed in life.

What scares you most?

Not much these days, but when I was a kid, I was petrified of the dark. Yeah, until I was about 13, which is quite old.

I know folks into their thirties, forties who are still scared.

Okay, I feel brave now.

Let me guess, The X-Files were what did it?

No, I wasn't really an *X-Files* fan. It was actually, and I'm going to show up how bad a parent my mum was, it was that movie *Communion* when I was seven years old.

Yikes, terrifying.

**“ THE ROLES
ARE STRONG
AND LAYERED
AND COMPLEX ”**



I know! The alien coming out of the light, that's what did it for me. So basically, I thought I would be abducted too, which is chilling for any adult, let alone a child.

You seem like a pretty upbeat person. Is it hard suppressing your natural enthusiasm?

I'm naturally an extrovert; I'm very confident and I don't hide my thoughts or emotions.

Finally, what was it like working with Mel Gibson on Hacksaw Ridge because, let's be honest, there's a little bit of a reputation...?!

He was a joy to work with, from start to finish, and it was a huge honour.



At first I may have been a bit, 'It's Mel Gibson, oh my god!' And I'll admit, I was expecting something different, but he's a really warm, immediately likeable person who knew every single person on set... not just their names, he knew them, and you know he's the director of a crew

and cast of at least a hundred people. As ridiculous as it sounds, you just don't get that

very often with people of his status. And I really rate and respect that about him.

**“ THE ROLES
ARE STRONG
AND LAYERED
AND COMPLEX ”**

①



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LIFE OF
LEISURE

Travel

Hoshinoya Tokyo

Melanie de Lacy Staunton finds
tradition and history in Japan



TRAVEL TOKYO HOSHINOYA Hoshinoya exterior

Tokyo is truly one of the most dynamic, vibrant and culturally exciting cities I've ever visited. There is so much tradition and history around every corner, yet this is juxtaposed with neon lights, eccentric fashion and cutting-edge cuisine. If you want to have a truly authentic, luxury Japanese experience, then you absolutely must stay at the mesmerising Hoshinoya Tokyo.

Perfectly located nearby the Imperial Palace, the Hoshinoya Tokyo is a soaring sight to behold. The entire building is a piece of art with its beautiful patterned façade. With a hint of secrecy, the entrance feels like something out of a spy movie. The handcrafted, mammoth cypress front door slickly glides open as you stand in awe of the

most picturesque hotel entrance you've ever seen. The lighting, the stunning autumnal flower arrangement and the synchronicity that faces you is entrancing.

The Hoshinoya Tokyo is a traditional *ryokan*, which I loved. It follows all the customs. One of my favourite aspects is that when you enter the hotel you are asked to remove your shoes, and they give you slippers to wear. This is the only hotel I've ever stayed in throughout all my travels where in no part of the hotel did I ever wear any shoes. No shoes in the lobby, no shoes in the lift, no shoes in the restaurant. It was so relaxing and made me feel right at home. It's surprising how soothing walking along a tatami mat in your socks can feel. I wish this was something all hotels did.

Travel

Everything at the Hoshinoya feels like an experience, and exploring our room and our floor was no exception. First of all, each floor features an *ochanoma* lounge; this is an area in the middle of the floor where they have sofas, blankets, workstations, coffee, tea, snacks and even ice cream. It is an extension of your room, for you to relax in, much like you would in your own living room. Many of the snacks on offer are handmade, and I was so completely addicted to the Hoshinoya rice crackers that when I left they gave me two big bags to take with me.

Then there was our room, called 'Kiku', which translates as chrysanthemum, as all the rooms are named after flowers. Located at the end of the hallway, I was immediately excited by the fact that our room had its own private Japanese gateway before you got to the door. A pre-entrance entrance, if you will. This made the room feel even more private and exclusive. As we walked in the door, the first thing that struck me was the sheer size of the stunning corner room, it felt like an apartment and even had a huge dining table.

It was fascinating to soak up all the Japanese traditional elements of the room. The blinds, the low-lying bed, the deep, square soaking tub and, of course, the always fun Japanese toilet. The bed was honestly one of the most comfortable I've ever slept in - it felt like a cloud. The room even had its own walk-in closet with traditional *kimono* and Japanese pyjamas for us to wear. Fabulous.

I was giddy exploring all these wonderful new things, got dressed up straight away in my *kimono* and socks, and off we went to dinner. You think at first that it will feel strange roaming around the hotel in your socks and a *kimono*, but you feel remarkably comfortable, and soon it's hard to go back to normal clothes. Especially as all the staff are wearing incredible Samurai inspired uniforms.

“ ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR ONSEN IN TOKYO ”

Another first for me was the fact that the Hoshinoya Tokyo only has one restaurant. The only other dining option was if you wanted to order to your room. Furthermore, in line with traditional *ryokan*, you can only dine at the restaurant if you are staying at the hotel. Again, this made the whole experience ultra-exclusive. If you feel like a change of scene, there are a multitude of restaurants right outside the hotel, including a Michelin-starred *ramen* restaurant with the tastiest *ramen* I've ever had.

The restaurant is designed to feel like you are looking at the layers of earth under the hotel. It feels like an underground lair with private rooms carved into the walls for you to dine in. We were kindly invited to taste a most sensational 10-course seafood menu. Every dish was so clever and artistically put together. Every bite tickling the senses and intriguing the mind. Certainly, a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

You all know my love of spas, however, this was my first time in a spa in Japan, and I was especially excited because I had never been in an *onsen* before. Well, the Hoshinoya Tokyo has possibly one of the most spectacular *onsens* in Tokyo. They have somehow managed to tap into a natural hot spring from 1,500 meters underneath the building and transport it to the top floor of the hotel. The *onsen* is mysterious with its black tiles and golden water teeming with minerals.

What makes this *onsen* particularly special is the fact that it has an inner bath and an outer bath. The outer bath has an open roof so you can breathe in the fresh air, stare up at the stars or let the sun warm your face as you soak.

What is so thoughtful about the Hoshinoya is that they always have little ways of explaining or sharing their history and traditions with you, which I really appreciated. For example, there was a lot of information about the

TRAVEL TOKYO HOSHINOYA Hoshinoya Tea Ceremony



onsen traditions and how usually people drink milk afterwards, and, of course, there was a display of cold milk on ice waiting for you once you left the hot spring.

The Hoshinoya offers many activities for their guests. I would suggest trying them all if you have time. We did the *saké* tasting and the tea ceremony. The tea ceremony was so interesting, and by the end I could make my own *matcha* tea from scratch. All the instruments they use are from what feels like a forgotten time, and I genuinely felt transported to 100 years ago in Japan. It was phenomenal.

Finally, the amazing staff at the Hoshinoya Tokyo absolutely need to be mentioned. They

were so thoughtful, and everyone seemed to know who we were from the minute we arrived. Whilst being warm and considerate, they were also exceptionally efficient and executed everything with precision and dedication.

“ ALL THE ROOMS ARE NAMED AFTER FLOWERS ”

I will never forget my stay at the Hoshinoya Tokyo. It was the authentic Japanese experience I've always dreamed of, with a splash of luxury thrown in. If you want exposure to true Japanese architecture, history and culture all while feeling completely pampered, then the Hoshinoya Tokyo is without a doubt the place for you.
www.hoshinoya.com ●

A Renaissance trip to Florence

Mark Browne took a trip to see some of the highlights of a special era



Renowned worldwide for its beauty and artistic heritage, the city of Florence is often known as 'the cradle of the Renaissance'.

Living history

Facilitated by its strong economy, Florence was at the centre of the surge in artistic, literary and scientific development that occurred in the 14th-16th centuries, known as the Renaissance. Many of the key buildings constructed in that period remain as monuments to be admired today, making even a casual stroll of the city a journey into a bygone history. Moreover, most are filled with

contemporary artistic treasures, making each one even more worthy of a visit. In addition to guided tours or audio guides to the landmark buildings, fortunately there are also many guided walking tours around this very accessible city for those who wish to admire the architectural heritage while taking in the local atmosphere alfresco through the streets and squares. These include a selection focusing on the city's Renaissance era and some of the key spots to visit as part of any tour focused on this era of Florence's heritage.

Florence Cathedral, the Duomo Santa Maria del Fiore, is frequently hailed as one of the symbols of the Renaissance. It was, however, originally designed and built along the traditional Gothic lines of the late medieval period before later being crowned with its characteristic dome designed by Brunelleschi. It remained the largest dome in the world until 1881. The fascinating exterior and façade, comprised of marble panels bordered with hues of pink and green, featuring elaborate sculptures and frescos, is pure renaissance.

Religious sites are, of course, some of the key remaining historic buildings of the era. The Basilica Santa Maria Novella was the first great basilica in Florence and is a perfect example of early Renaissance architecture in Italy. It features an elegant marble facade by Alberti, and its interior is adorned with frescoes by masters of the early Renaissance, including Masaccio's 'The Holy Trinity'. A later example is the nearby Basilica di San Lorenzo. Designed by Brunelleschi, it is often praised as one of the best examples of Renaissance architecture and also features works by Michelangelo and Donatello. It is also the burial place of all the principal members of the Medici family.

However, examples of related architecture are not confined to religious buildings. The Palazzo Vecchio, an impressive castle-style structure towering in the city centre near the Duomo, was the main symbol of civil power for the city of Florence for centuries. It features works from Renaissance masters such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Giorgio Vasari and Donatello.

Founded by Francesco I de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany in the 16th century, the Uffizi Gallery is nearby, also located adjacent to the impressive Piazza della Signoria. It is the most visited museum in Italy and has one of the largest and best-known art collections in the world, particularly from the period of the Renaissance. A must-see on any visit to

Florence! It overlooks the iconic Ponte Vecchio, often viewed as the symbol of Florence. This bridge actually predates the Renaissance, hailing from the medieval era. However, it owes much of its current appearance from the latter period as, in 1565, Cosimo I de' Medici had the Vasari Corridor built above it. Subsequently, to enhance its prestige, the Medici Grand Dukes passed a decree for gold and silver merchants to operate there and prohibiting butchers, who had previously monopolized it from selling there. A decree that remains in effect today.

Across the river Arno from the historic centre, and continuing the alfresco theme, lie the Boboli Gardens. This park, now open to the public, was originally designed for the Medici family commencing in the 16th century.

Today, it forms an open-air green museum as it features statues and large fountains of various styles and periods distributed throughout the garden. More information on the Medicis and their treasures are available in the Riccardi Medici Palace and the Medici Family Museum, while the Academia Gallery, Italy's second most visited museum and home to Michael Angelo's 'David', also houses many of the artistic works of which they were patrons.

But these are just a selection of the sites to visit and, of course, the Renaissance is just one of the historical eras represented in Florence. Truly an artistic treasure trove.

Where to stay?

Naturally, a global destination city such as Florence is well served by top quality hotels. However to complete a Renaissance tour of the city where could be a better place to stay than in a genuine palazzo originally built for a nobleman of that era? The Four Seasons Firenze is an urban resort principally comprising the Palazzo Della Gherardesca and La Villa. The former was originally commissioned in the 15th century by the Chancellor of Florence under the reign of

“ TRULY AN ARTISTIC TREASURE TROVE ”



Lorenzo the Magnificent, a famous artistic patron. It has enjoyed some illustrious proprietors throughout the centuries since, including cardinals and even the Viceroy of Egypt. Today, it forms a key part of this magnificent hotel, which is adorned throughout with outstanding artwork and sculptures forming a living and contemporary museum.

Rest assured that the antique setting does not detract from the level of comfort that one would expect of a Four Seasons Hotel. The painstaking restoration carried out has combined the historical structures with some modern twists, such as the glass-topped Atrium Bar. The hotel exudes the luxury of the Renaissance era throughout in its furnishings and decor, perhaps most notably in its suites, such as a Renaissance Suite whose lofty ceilings are adorned with chandeliers and frescoes and occupies a princely area of over 900ft. The perfect accommodation choice to cap any renaissance tour. However, even these are surpassed by the unique Royal Suite Della Gheradesca, which is perhaps for those wishing to experience the city as a Renaissance king and queen.

Other aspects of luxury available to be enjoyed on site include the hotel's Michelin Starred restaurant Il Palagio, where dishes

reflecting the city's culinary and cultural heritage are prepared by Executive Chef Vito Mollica and can be enjoyed in the restaurant itself or on request at one of the more secluded romantic locations available to guests, including alfresco spots overlooking the city.

However, after a long day sightseeing one of the luxuries, guests may most be looking forward to enjoying a visit to the Four Seasons Spa, an oasis of peace in an adjacent building with fabulous views over the hotels grounds. These are the Gherardesca gardens, the largest private park in the city and occupying an area of 11 acres. Having been in existence since the 15th century and extensively renovated to reflect a 19th century romantic garden, these represent a botanical experience to enjoy away from the hustle and bustle of the nearby city outside the garden walls. And they can be enjoyed by the whole family as they feature children's play areas. In fact, the entire hotel is very family friendly and children are welcomed with a variety of features. The hotel also seeks to cater to families during holiday seasons, with elaborate decorations adorning it, making it the ideal location to celebrate the festive season with loved ones.

Mark Browne was a guest of the Four Seasons Firenze. 📍



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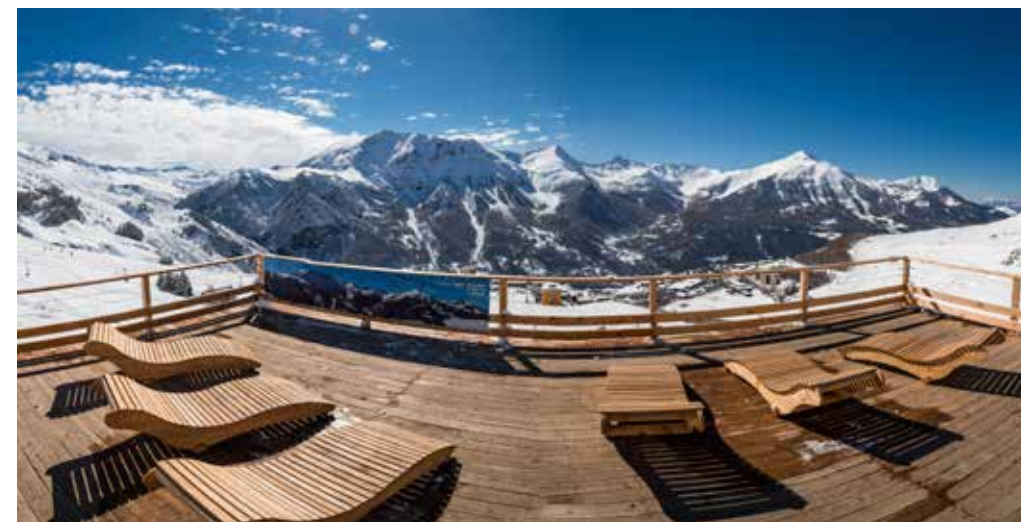
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LIFE OF
LEISURE

Skiing

Orcières Merlette

Isabelle Ferier visits a mountain that offers so much pleasure



The Orcières resort is located at the gates of the Ecrins National Park at an altitude of 1,850 metres, and its ski area is suitable for all levels of skiing and rises to 2,725 metres.

Particularly friendly, it can also boast of being one of the sunniest resorts in the Alps. Particularly sensitive to caring for the environment, this 'eco-responsible' resort does everything to reduce energy costs, offers sustainable mobility and has set up a series of initiatives to reconcile tourist activity and ecology.

This charming resort has many shops, restaurants, bars and offers accommodation for an extremely varied clientele. If skiing and snowboarding are the main attraction, a number of unusual and new activities also bring fun, rejuvenation, laughter and adrenaline to winter vacations.

I tried it with great enthusiasm – an unforgettable flight on one of the longest zip lines in Europe. Like a bird, I flew on my snowboard, lying down on my craft between the top of Drouvet (2,650m) and Lac Long (2,500m). With a speed of up to 140km, this unique and breathtaking experience in the heart of the mountains provided an extraordinary thrill. During my night snowmobile ride to the Rocherousse plateau, at an altitude of 2,300m, I discovered new sensations... seed, powder and mysterious landscapes.

The Rocherousse plateau stands out as a true high-altitude amusement park – head to the Winterparc for new gliding pleasures. A special buoy lift provides access to the slopes to prevent fatigue. We hurtled down specially designed tracks. This activity, which may be practised alone or in a team, offers

**“ AN
EXCEPTIONAL
PANORAMIC
VIEW ”**



a unique experience. Personally, I tried it out with other journalists, with much laughter at the rendezvous.

Note for families: Baby slopes have been designed for the little ones, from four and above.

After a short briefing, we went for a ride at the head of a team; during this magnificent escapade, I slipped into the skin of a musher, with a minimum of technique and balance. What happiness it was to bond with my companions, three adorable sled dogs full of energy and vitality.

One of the most intense memories of this discovery trip to Orcières was our ski-touring outing and, for me, on the splitboard, which is a snowboard that is split in two and becomes a real pair of touring skis, equipped with specially designed bindings and skins.

Fitted with a DVA (avalanche detector), a probe and a shovel, we were supervised by ESF professionals. A ski-touring trip from the top of the resort (at an altitude of 1,725

metres), we climbed the Col De Freissinières (via national des Ecrins) to the top of Rochebrune.

This ascent offers an exceptional panoramic view. Reserved for sports enthusiasts and experienced skiers, the climb 'stings the thighs' and some fairly steep sections get the adrenaline pumping. After this progress, which was certainly sporty, the long off-piste descent is breathtaking. What a joy to ride on immaculate snow bathed in a feeling of freedom in the heart of a splendid and imposing mountain.

Orcières Merlette is also good for other day and night activities, such as the Pop Song Live music festival, which takes place in a festive atmosphere on the snow front.

There is also an aquatic area, skating rink, bowling, local products and many other pleasures to discover.

www.orcieres.com ⓘ

Travelling in Wallonia without a car

We have put together some slow getaways by train, by bike, or on foot

Gare Liège-Guillemans, J.P. Remy



Discovering Wallonia in slow tourism mode is the new project set up by Wallonie Belgique Tourisme in collaboration with HikeUp and Railtrip. travel.



walloniebelgique tourisme.be

spending a magnificent lasting holiday (a fortnight in total) in Wallonia. Combine the routes as you wish, according to your rhythm, your interests, choose your accommodation and where you visit.

The concept

Explore Wallonia by combining train, walking and cycling. Getaways of a few days? 100% Zen, 0% car...

Five routes are offered: Waterloo - La Louvière, Mons - Tournai, Charleroi - Erquennes, Namur - Dinant and Marche (Marloie) - Liège.

Each of the proposed routes starts and ends at a railway station. Between the two, there are stopover stations. Connect by train, on foot or by bike.

The itineraries are inter-connectable. By combining them, you have the possibility of

For each getaway, a travel diary offers:

- Detailed maps
- Places to visit on your route
- Nature activities
- Restaurant ideas and cool picnic spots
- A great choice of accommodation
- Local specialities to try

Our escapades can be linked together, obviously by train, enough to make the most of this new slow tourism experience and the opportunity to use your free Rail Pass offered by the SNCB. Have a good trip!

Download your travel diaries on: visitwallonia.be/sansvoiture



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Ruinart: The second skin case

We look at a high-end champagne producer's commitment to sustainability

A case to preserve the Ruinart's taste integrity until serving. Innovative, authentic and environmentally conscious, the second skin packaging crystallizes the commitment to sustainability of Maison Ruinart.

An eco-designed packaging

Two years of research and development were needed to get back to the essential: a 100% paper and entirely recyclable case, moulded to the shape of the bottle.



This case is nine times lighter than its predecessor and produced without incurring any airfreight, resulting in a 60% reduction in its carbon impact according to the BEE (Bilan Environnemental des Emballages) and ADEME (Agence de la transition écologique, anciennement Agence de l'environnement et de la maîtrise de l'énergie) methodology).

The second skin packaging was developed with manufacturing partners Pusterla 1880 and James Cropper. The manufacturer James Cropper was established in 1845, on the shores of the Lake District National Park between Scotland and England, where it developed a unique savoir-faire. The family business is specialized in paper, respectfully leading innovations amidst a landscape classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site. The water indispensable to the creation of the second skin case is drawn from the site,

91% of which is clean enough to be released back into the river after manufacture. The result is obtained without the use of plastic or glue.

A sustainable innovation

Maison Ruinart puts its leadership role in service of sustainable development. This approach results from multiple technological challenges, focusing the efforts on a unique material—namely cellulose fibres, or pulped paper.

Where a big gift box made sense in the past, an entirely recyclable cloak composed of 100% natural wood fibres is a more suitable fit today. The sustainable innovation of the second skin case extols a return to nature and to the natural: it aims to reduce waste and recycle materials without denaturing experience or taste. ❶



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Festive Dining



Irish lamb by Bord Bia

Lambs are an integral part of the Irish landscape and for good reason. There are nearly four million sheep for 4.70 million Irish people! Lambs are naturally at home in their environment of the beautiful landscapes and green grasslands for which Ireland is famous. Often, lambs and oxen are raised together to get the most benefit from grass growth - lambs like short grass, while oxen have a preference for longer grass, creating a fully-grazed meadow that grows back in a denser and richer manner.

Focus on shoulder of lamb

Taste-wise, the shoulder of lamb has nothing to envy the leg of lamb, but it contains more bone which can complicate the preparation. This is why Bord Bia would like you to discover its boneless version, which is much easier to cook. You will notice that the shoulder of lamb retains the shank bone, which will not interfere with the cutting and provides the

“ AN IDEAL CANDIDATE FOR A FESTIVE TABLE ”

flavours so typical of 'meat on the bone'. This cut is prepared by the lamb specialist A. Lonhienne. It can be roasted, stewed or stuffed. Generous, visual and fragrant, it is an ideal candidate for a festive table.

Available throughout Belgium, in particular in the Carrefour and Match stores.

Chef Maxime Colin's advice

Prepare a marinade based on sweet spices, garlic and thyme for 24 hours before cooking the lamb. Brown the meat at high temperature in a roasting pan before continuing to cook it covered at low temperature, with its juice at +/- 95° for 12 hours. Drizzle the meat with its juices as often as

possible throughout cooking, giving you a tasty meat which really melts in the mouth.

The image shows Shoulder of Lamb Stuffed with Pancetta and Shallot Confit.

Bord Bia is the official Irish Food Board.

CULLY & SULLY: Ireland's number one soup

Cully & Sully started in 2004 when two childhood friends Cullen Allen (Cully) and Colum O'Sullivan (Sully) decided they needed to bring tasty, healthy and fun food to supermarkets. And so Cully & Sully was born. Both love food and cooking and decided to start with potato pies which they sold to restaurateurs. Then in 2006 they launched a range of soups. Today, Cully & Sully soups are number 1 in Ireland and number 3 in the UK. The range of soups is based on recipes from quality restaurateurs but also on recipes that cradled the childhood of Cully & Sully. Cully & Sully is



also the first food company of Irish origin to achieve Bcorp certification. The range of soups are available in Belgium at Delhaize at a price of **€2.65** per soup.
www.cullyandsully.com

Brasserie du Lac

What could be better than a good seafood platter to end this year? And more than anything else, we have to have fun and take advantage of the 'now'. The Brasserie du Lac offers magnificent seafood platters. Daily arrivals ensure the most beautiful freshness of delicate products. Lobsters, mussels, oysters from Zealand or Brittany, whelks, cakes and more. It must be said that the Brasserie du Lac is a benchmark address in terms of oysters and other shellfish since it operates all year round. Simply order and take away your tailor-made tray. The Brasserie du Lac has also concocted a special festive menu with delicious dishes, with or without seafood.
www.brasserieedulac.be



Dining

Umamido

Umamido is "an exploration of taste" developed by Guy Quirynen since its launch in 2013. Guy Quirynen is above all a food lover. Before launching Umamido after an internship in Kyoto, it is important to remember that he studied at Hotelschool Ter Duinen, then at the Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne. At the same time, he also worked for more than a year in the two-star restaurant Slagmolen. We tried the vegetarian ramen (broth) and the triple



mushroom rice bowl (donburi), washed down with their own No Fox Given beer. The portions are generous and the food is alive with colours and aromas. They call it: "Honest Ramen crafted with ethically sourced ingredients and produce from carefully sourced partners, served in our meticulously home-cooked broths." It certainly lives up to its billing. Open in Bailli, St. Catherine, Leuven and Vooruit for take-away & delivery. www.umamido.be

Foodiz

The Foodiz concept is based on the principle of 'Dark Kitchen', essentially virtual restaurants whose dishes are prepared in a single workshop, from a common line of ingredients transformed differently. Concretely, they are professional kitchens only intended for the delivery of meals at home or in the office. Currently, the platform offers six different brands, something to satisfy all tastes. It is currently possible to order salads, bentos, sandwiches, wraps, bowls or even soups. We tried two soups (asparagus and broccoli) and plumped for Bento main course, sharing Beef Tataki with soya wasabi sauce, soba



noodles, Japanese omelet, rice and wakame and Salmon Sashimi with soya wasabi sauce, soba noodles, Japanese omelet, rice and wakame. Absolutely delicious, and check out their custom office menus. www.foodiz.be

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Books

Walter Chandoha Dogs Photographs 1941–1991

Our book this month begs the question: who let the dogs out?



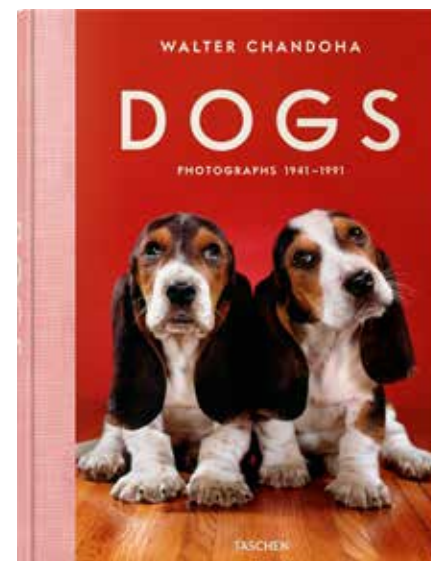
The world appears to be divided into cat and dog lovers, but fortunately Walter Chandoha, the 20th century's greatest pet photographer, found himself happily in the middle. He loved these intriguing creatures equally for their unique beauty and individualism, and as subjects to photograph in a career spanning over 70 years. While working on his critically acclaimed TASCHEN book *Cats*, Chandoha hand-picked his favourite dog photos for a potential follow-up title, putting into carefully marked boxes hundreds of contact sheets, prints, and colour transparencies, many unseen for at least 50 years, and some totally unseen.

Chandoha sadly passed away in 2019 at the age of 98, but his legacy lives on in this dashing sequel dedicated to man's best friend. "Walter Chandoha's photographs of dogs are compelling not just because dogs have an inherent charm, but because the person behind the camera was a master of his craft," writes the photography critic Jean Dykstra in the book's introduction.



We see terriers, collies, beagles, bloodhounds, poodles, small dogs, big dogs, show dogs, working dogs, and many more, featuring over 60 breeds photographed in both black-and-white and glorious Kodachrome.

Spanning a 50-year period, the book is divided into six sections, and each chapter reveals Chandoha's exceptional combination of technique, versatility, and soul. *Dogs* is an unleashed photographic tribute to these lovable and loyal creatures. The photographer





Walter Chandoha (1920–2019) was a combat photographer in the Second World War, before a chance encounter with a cat led him on a path that would shape his professional career. He is regarded as the world's greatest domestic animal photographer with a career spanning over seven decades and an archive of more than 200,000 photographs. His photographs have appeared on over 300 magazine covers, thousands of advertisements, and were regularly featured in magazines such as *Life*, *Look*, and their equivalents around the world.

Reuel Golden is the former editor of the *British Journal of Photography* and the photography editor at TASCHEN. His TASCHEN titles include: *Mick Rock: The Rise of David Bowie*, both London and New York *Portrait of a City* books, *Andy Warhol - Polaroids* and *The Rolling Stones*. Hard cover, 296 pages

€40

"A heartfelt ode to man's best friend."
townandcountrymag.com

"Walking the supermarket pet-food aisle in the 1960s was like attending a Chandoha gallery opening; almost every brand used his work on its packaging at one point."

Financial Times 1

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What's on

What's on Belgium

BOZAR is back

The reopening of exhibitions in BOZAR started from 1 December. The three current exhibitions - *Danser brut*, *HOTEL BEETHOVEN*, *Philippe Vandenberg: Molenbeek* - have reopened, and they have added a new exhibition *Facing van Eyck The Miracle of Detail*.

Facing van Eyck: The Miracle of Detail

This new exhibition looks at Jan van Eyck's extraordinary works through a contemporary lens. Thanks to pioneering digital techniques and new scientific research at the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage (KIK-IRPA), you can get closer to van Eyck and his secrets than ever before. Take an immersive dive into van Eyck's pictorial micro cosmos by zooming in on landscapes, architecture, textiles, human figures and everyday objects, and unveil fascinating details hardly visible to the naked eye. Benjamin Glorieux composed a van Eyck-inspired piece especially for the exhibition - a sensory experience that fascinates both the eye and the ear.

A richly illustrated film focuses on Jan van Eyck's devotional images and links him to the Byzantine icon. By delving deeper into the reception and appropriation of Byzantine models in van Eyck's work the film explores the religious and artistic exchanges between East and West in the 15th century.

A new way of looking at Jan van Eyck's oeuvre through 20 digitized works that show you the radicality and freshness of his fascinating visual language.

With a ticket for Facing Van Eyck you have free access to *HOTEL BEETHOVEN*.

Jan van Eyck

Jan van Eyck was a painter active in Bruges who was one of the early innovators of what became known as



FACING VAN EYCK Virgin of Chancellor Rolin
Jan van Eyck, Detail from The Virgin of Chancellor Rolin, c. 1430-34, Musée du Louvre. Foto: KIK-IRPA, Brussels. From closetovaneyck.kikirpa.be

Early Netherlandish painting, and one of the most significant representatives of Early Northern Renaissance art. About 20 surviving paintings are confidently attributed to him, as well as the Ghent Altarpiece and the illuminated miniatures of the Turin-Milan Hours, all dated between 1432 and 1439. He was highly influential, and his techniques and style were adopted and refined by the Early Netherlandish painters.

The BOZAR Bookshop by Walther König will also open at the usual times (Tu-Su, 10 am-6pm). The existing health protocols (wearing a compulsory mask, online booking, regulation of the flow of visitors, social distancing, hand disinfection, etc.) remain in force.

www.bozar.be

What's on

Hangar Photo Centre: The World Within

Hangar launches the 5th edition of PhotoBrussels Festival, an event dedicated to photography that aims to radiate in the city.

PhotoBrussels Festival 05 will commemorate the year 2020: 419 artists in Europe responded to the 'Call for European Photographers' launched during the lockdown (March-June 2020).

Through twenty-seven different photographic and/or video sensibilities, Hangar reveals the seeds of human creative resilience. Each artist presents their vision of the 'inner world', thus shattering the confinement's peculiar atmosphere. Creativity, humour, empathy, reflection, love, inspiration from nature are all principles that promise a quick recovery and a better 'after'.



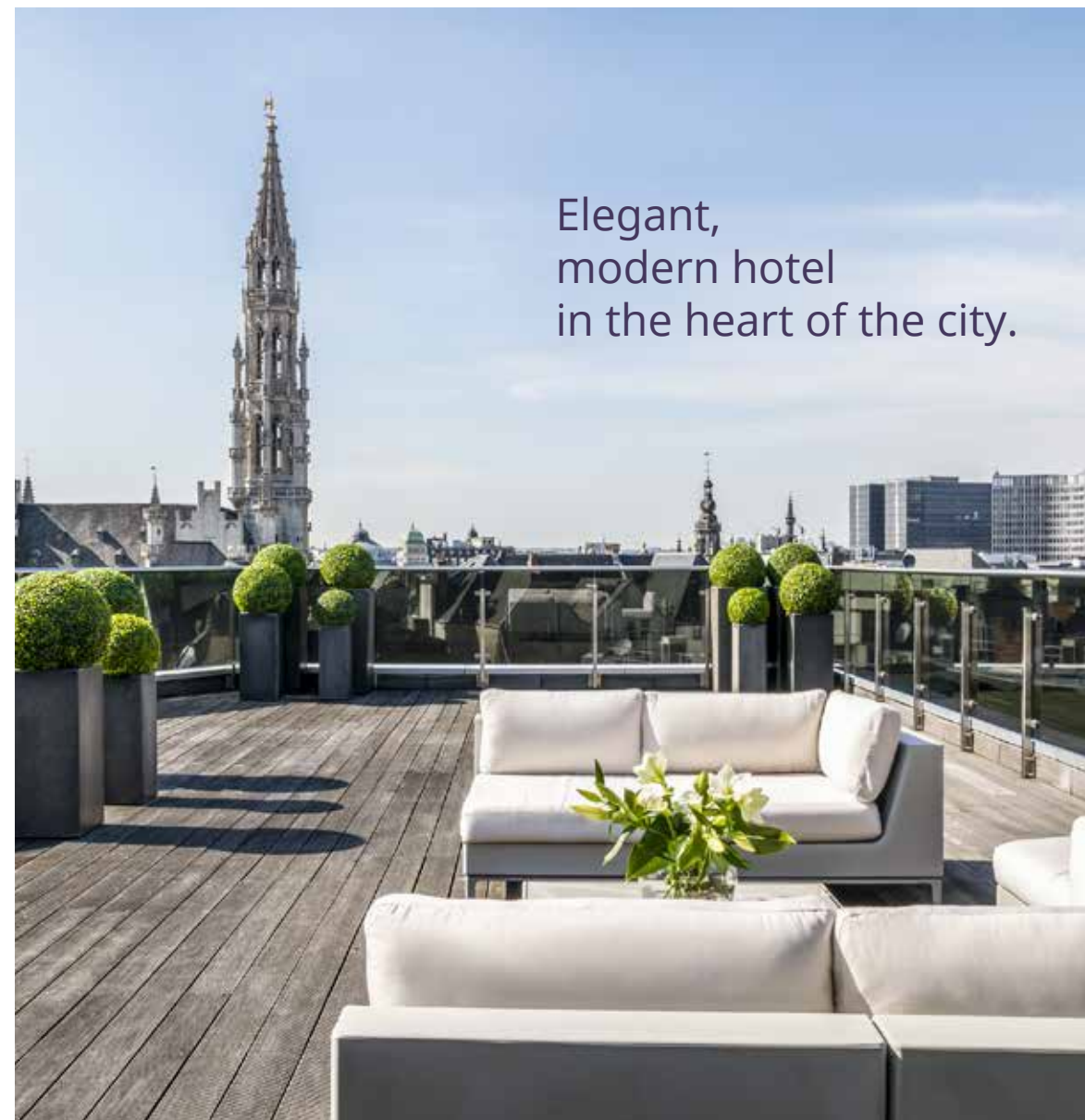
The 'Leica Coup de coeur' will be announced at the opening of PhotoBrussels Festival. The winner will be granted a Leica Q2. **21 January - 27 March 2021.** Hangar.
www.hangar.art

MARLIS PETERSEN ©Simon Van Rompay La Monnaie De Munt

La Monnaie: Die tote Stadt

Watch this in streaming on La Monnaie's website. A restrained psychological thriller, a muted portrait of a city, and one of the masterpieces of Belgian Symbolism: in Bruges-la-Morte, a gloomy Venice of the North reflects the grieving process of a man who, following the death of his wife, sinks into a mood of obsession and delusion. The operatic adaptation of the novel was a huge hit for 23-year-old Erich Wolfgang Korngold, whose ecstatic, at times exuberant music prefigured his later career as a film composer. The work has inspired the director Mariusz Trelinski to create a production in which the lines between reality and the imaginary are constantly blurred, while the La Monnaie Symphony Orchestra reaps the benefits of conductor Lothar Koenigs' unerring feeling for the late-Romantic repertoire.

Until 3 January. La Monnaie streaming.
www.lamonnaie.be



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Photo © Nicolas Lobet



Origami journey in the centre of Brussels

The centre of Brussels will sparkle with origami for the festive season, and this until the end of February. A series of installations, created by Charles Kaisin, will form a festive ballad, all with music, through the Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert, the surrounding streets, the Grand'Place and finally in the lobby of the Hotel Amigo. Not to be missed with family or friends!

In collaboration with the City of Brussels, the Société des Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert asked Charles Kaisin and his team to create origami installations that fit into a journey through the Îlot Sacré. For everyone's enjoyment, the ballad begins at the Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert, continues in the adjacent streets and ends in the lobby of the Hotel Amigo.

The Galeries Royales Saint-Hubert are the oldest monumental covered galleries in Europe, dating back to 1847. In each of



the three galleries, visitors will be able to see an installation that dialogues between all three of them.

A huge 'Golden Tree' installation, 40m long, will be on display. A new crea-

tion made for the holidays, gathering 20.000 origami in the shape of a dove, constitutes this huge golden paper tree. All along the Galerie de la Reine, this monumental project will allow visitors to play with the light by day and by night.

Within the Îlot Sacré garlands of light in golden origami, hung from facade to facade will accompany visitors to the Galleries or the Grand-Place of Brussels, like stars in the firmament. While keeping the spirit of the festive season with the Great Christmas Tree on the Grand Place, another luminous tree will be installed in the courtyard of the City Hall of Brussels. A 3.50m high tree, made from golden origami, will be erected in the lobby of Hotel Amigo for the pleasure of all.
www.grsh.be

What's on

What's on Paris... at home

Exhibitions, concerts, opera and culture in Paris can also be enjoyed virtually.

Despite the announcement of a second lockdown and the curtain falling on events, culture is very much alive for everyone to discover in new ways. Major cultural venues have an attractive online programme, including exhibitions, shows and festivals for you. Here are some of the events to enjoy from home during the month of the festive period, all from the comfort of your sofa, on your screen, and for free!

Paris is the capital of fashion. For several centuries, the City of Light has been renowned for its unique dress style. Every year, this cradle of haute couture welcomes the collections of the greatest couturiers.

The Musée des Arts Décoratifs takes a look at the history of fashion through its virtual exhibition on clothing from 1715 to 1914. Skirts, dresses, shoes, parasols... see the changes in fashion over the centuries, admire the details, cuts and fabrics in a few clicks. A nice peek preview before being able to rediscover these wonderful fashion garments and items at this museum on Rue de Rivoli.


The Musée Yves Saint Laurent unveils some of its most beautiful works in a virtual exhibition in the form of triptychs. The couturier's iconic pieces are also presented in the form of sketches and in photographs

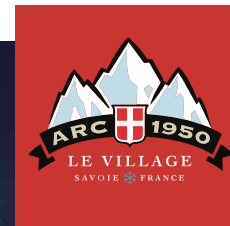
Photo © Centre Pompidou, Paris, photo Zairon



of films, events, plays and concerts where they have been worn. See the costumes of Zizi Jeanmaire, Catherine Deneuve, Anny Duperey and Arletty online before getting the opportunity to admire them in real life at the former fashion house of Yves Saint Laurent, on Avenue Marceau.

For its first virtual exhibition, Centre Pompidou walks the visitor through the world of Spanish painter Joan Miró and in particular his Blue I, II, III triptych. Cutting-edge technology normally reserved for video games, enables the public to travel through the virtual exhibition spaces and access new resources that help provide a better understanding of the artist's place in modern art, along with unique scenography.

And exhibition goes nostalgic for previous exhibitions held at the Centre Pompidou can now revisit Christo & Jeanne-Claude, Bacon, Boltanski, Prehistory, and Dora Maar via a virtual guided tour. The current exhibitions on Matisse, Martin Barré and Global Resistance are also available on video.
en.parisinfo.com 



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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



Falling

Justifiably acclaimed actor Viggo Mortensen goes behind the camera for the first time. The film stars Mortensen as John Peterson, a gay man whose conservative and homophobic father Willis (Lance Henriksen) starts to exhibit symptoms of dementia, forcing him to sell the family farm and move to Los Angeles to live with John and his husband Eric (Terry Chen). The film's cast also includes Sverrir Gudnason, Laura Linney, Hannah Gross and, intriguingly, David Cronenberg.
TBC.

Made in Italy

And an interesting turn-up for Liam Neeson, too. Actor-turned director James D'Arcy (this is his first feature) directs Neeson with his son, Micheál Richardson, as well as Valeria Bilello and Lindsay Duncan, and follows an artist who must restore a villa with his estranged son after his father's wife dies in a terrible car crash.
93 mins.

The Comeback Trail

A big cast gets together for this one – a comedy crime drama directed by screenwriter, film director, producer, painter and musician George Gallo, Jr. (*Midnight Run* (1988), and a remake of the 1982 film of the same name by Harry Hurwitz. Robert De Niro, Tommy Lee Jones, Morgan Freeman, Zach Braff, Emile Hirsch, Eddie Griffin, Kate Katzman and Blerim Destani are all in attendance. It's all about two movie producers who owe money to the mob - they encourage their ageing movie star to set up an insurance scam to try and get themselves out of hock. But they wind up getting more than they ever imagined.
TBC.

Love Sarah

A young woman wishes to fulfil her mother's dream of opening her own bakery in Notting Hill, London. To do this, she enlists the help of an old friend and her grandma, in a charmingly romanticised note of affection for London and, specifically, for the delicate joy of exquisite cakes. You can't say lovelier than that. Celia Imrie stars, and it's a first film from director Eliza Schroeder.
TBC. ①

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* Beer C. et al. (2014). A Clinical Trial to Investigate the Effect of Cynatine HNS on Hair and Nail Parameters. The Scientific World Journal, Volume 2014.
Zinc contributes to normal protein synthesis and to the maintenance of normal hair.



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