

Together

magazine

APRIL 2022 #121

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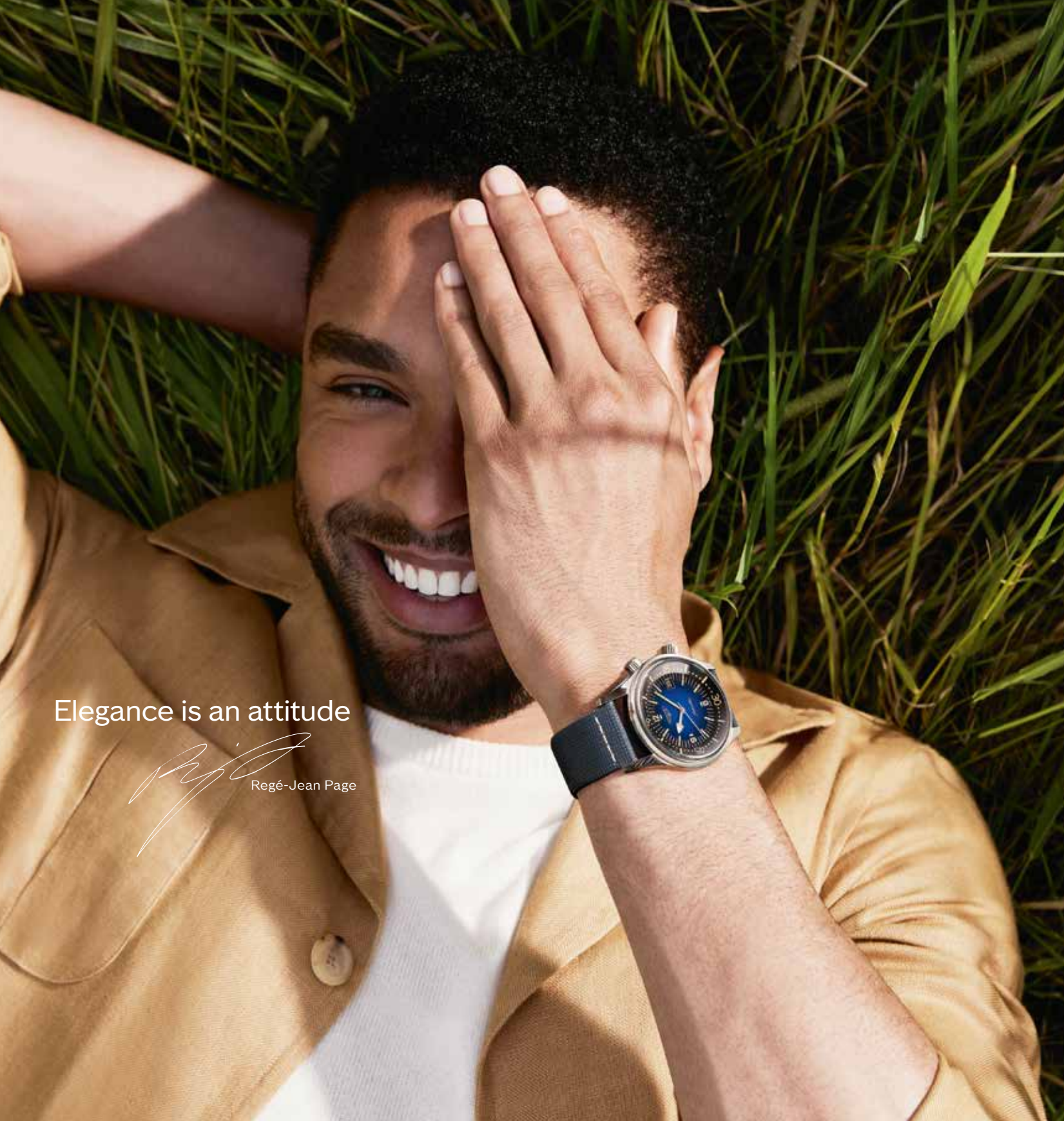
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Editor's LETTER

Summer on the way

On Saturday, supposedly for the last time although the European Union said this back in pre-Covid days, Belgium puts its clocks forward. Summer is officially here. What you lose in sleep you gain in light. Less shut-eye is a small price to pay for longer evenings, pas vrai?

With more sun comes thoughts of summer holidays – although the ski slopes are still ‘hot’ in April. Should you stay in Belgium or go to foreign climes? With Belgium effectively three countries in one – there is no real reason to leave. Especially when you can enjoy all the wonders of Wallonia that we feature here. Try out a new museum like BPS22 or climb a Black Country mountain.

Meanwhile, many Belgians are welcoming Ukrainian refugees who have left the country into their homes. Any optimism that war might end soon was, I see now, sadly misplaced. Is Putin the new Hitler?

What should or can you do when combating depressing scenes worldwide? As well as offering hospitality, you can concentrate on the simple things in life: meditate, practise mindfulness, play sport or watch your local football club. Try intuitive healing, read a book, take stock of your investments.

Or, if you can, indulge in a beauty treatment, perfume or luxury watch – maybe one Bond or even Batman wore – as an exciting new DC Comics blockbuster hits our screens. You only live once. You deserve it.

And of course, how could I forget? Easter is coming soon. Why not celebrate in a new gastro or cosy restaurant or at home with classic Sunday roast lamb. And chocolate. More chocolate. No, you can never get enough chocolate...

Liz Newmark
Editor

Liz Newmark

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ON THE COVER



Robert Pattinson: “I’m a little bit more ambitious in the roles I’m choosing now.”

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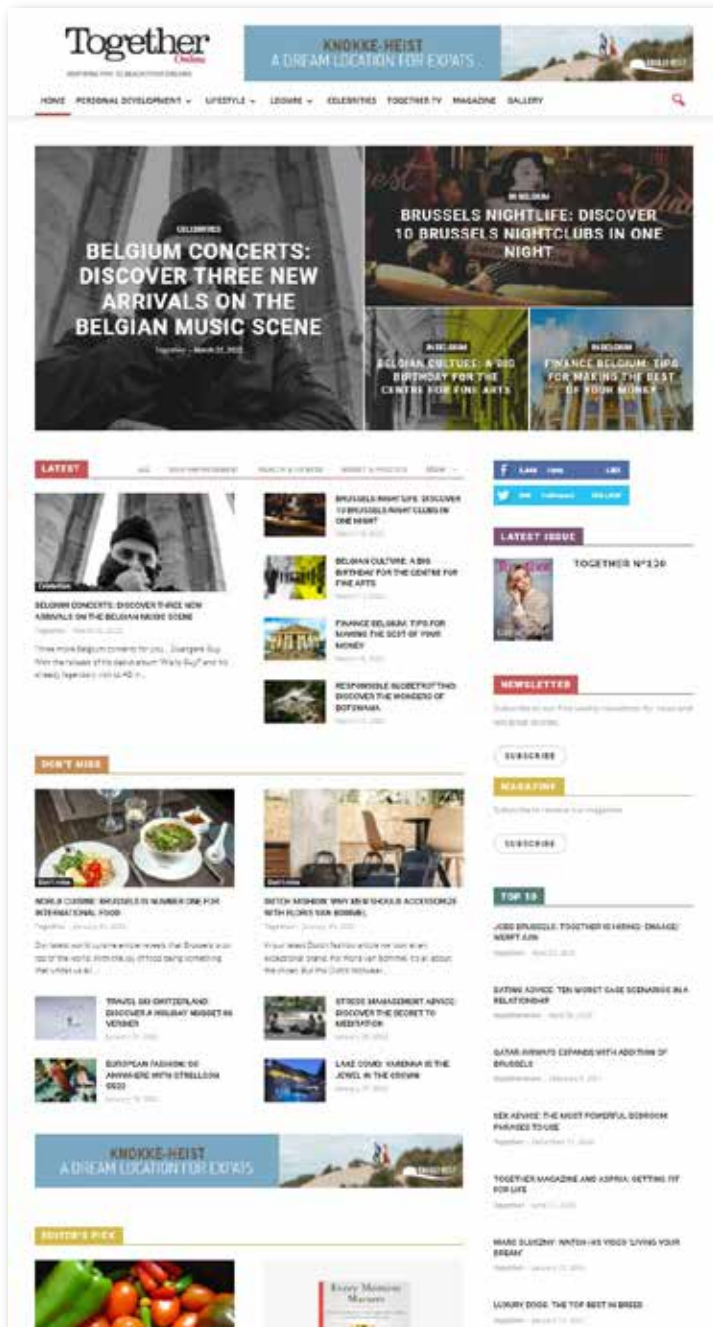


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Belgian culture: A big birthday for the Centre for Fine Arts

In 2022, BOZAR will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Centre for Fine Arts. Various festivities are planned, centred around the Project Palace exhibition. Together with Ghent University, Bozar has invited ten artists to reflect on what an arthouse like Bozar can offer both today and tomorrow.

Finance Belgium: Tips for making the best of your money

Recently, the stock market has become the domain of eager young investors looking for a return for their money. They are well aware that building their wealth must (partially) be filtered through investment.

'Four Thousand Weeks: Time and How to Use It'

The average lifespan is absurdly brief. If you live to be eighty, it is just over 4,000 weeks. So what do you do with this short space of time? Oliver Burkeman rejects the modern fixation on "getting everything done" in days filled with to-do lists, overfilled inboxes and the battle against distraction.



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Starring in Belgium

We look at three hot tickets at the Ancienne Belgique this month



Cate Le Bon + Mega Bog

Billed by the AB as an “otherworldly, reflective genius”, **Le Bon** (1983) spent her childhood on a farm in rural Wales. Her 2009 debut exuded the vibrant charm of someone trying to connect with the world in her own unique way. Since then, her music has become more eccentric by the album with her own special voice. ‘Crab Day’, her breakthrough record in 2016, is a collage of sounds and feelings. On ‘Reward’, her successful previous album, she performs with a both stunning and strange musical approach to the loneliness she feels. The singer’s sixth album *Pompeii* was released in February. Considered by Pitchfork magazine as “one of the best out there making music now” she is accompanied by the wonderfully-named Mega Bog (experimental singer Erin Birgy, 1989). **11 April, 8pm.** AB Box. €20. www.abconcerts.be



The Sisters of Mercy

Still going strong, the first AB concert on 17 April of this extremely popular 1980s English rock band, set up in 1980 in Leeds and an instant hit with students everywhere, is sold out. But there is hope for numerous fans of the archetypal Gothic group’s music – as an extra concert will take place and perhaps a third when this magazine is published. Mesmerising since the early 80s, ‘Body and Soul’, ‘Temple Of Love’, ‘Alice’, ‘Marianne’ and ‘No Time To Cry’ are all cult songs from their repertoire. **The Sisters** may have not released a new album for a while, but this does not make their gigs any less exciting. Their concerts focus on the band’s numerous classics, but also make room for older, unreleased or new material – attracting a new audience of young Goths all dressed in black. **18 April, 8pm.** AB Main Hall. €43. www.abconcerts.be



Joeseef + EMY

Described as “heart-warming, jazz-inspired, low-fi pop”, do not miss AB’s new date to see 25-year-old Scotsman, **Joeseef**, compared by the international press to Amy Winehouse. A self-declared “sad boy”, his music combines soul, jazz, pop and melancholy lyrics based on his own sad life as his latest single ‘It’s been a little heavy lately’ shows. Joeseef’s first concert was sold out before a single song had been released – a definite incentive to take a look. This Liveurope concert – the first pan-European initiative supporting concert venues promoting emerging European music – also features dreamy female musician EMY (Emy Gabore). **29 April, 8pm.** AB Club. €15. www.abconcerts.be

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Samusocial – Helping the homeless

Together finds out about a charity that aims to keep people off the streets

Samusocial of Brussels helps homeless people and asylum seekers. Its aims are to intervene close to people in distress in Brussels and to offer them primary assistance by offering medical care, psychological help, meals or showers. Ultimately, the goal is to stop people from sleeping on the streets.

Every year, Samusocial plays a major role in Brussels' Winter Plan which welcomes more than 1,000 homeless people every night. Help is immediate thanks to Samusocial's mobile teams and emergency welcome centres – with one in ten of Brussels' 19 communes. Replenishing stock such as food, bedding or medical supplies is essential, says one of the centre managers: "We are an asbl [not-for-profit association] for emergencies, but even in emergencies you can plan."

Samusocial aid is also targeted at long-term support for the homeless. The main goal is to offer people realistic solutions so they can leave the streets.

Services offered include a family centre and the 'Housing First' programme aimed at 18-25 year olds. This scheme allows young people to move immediately from the street to personal housing. Once the young person has been re-housed, support is given to help them solve the problems that led them on to the street in the first place.



How to help

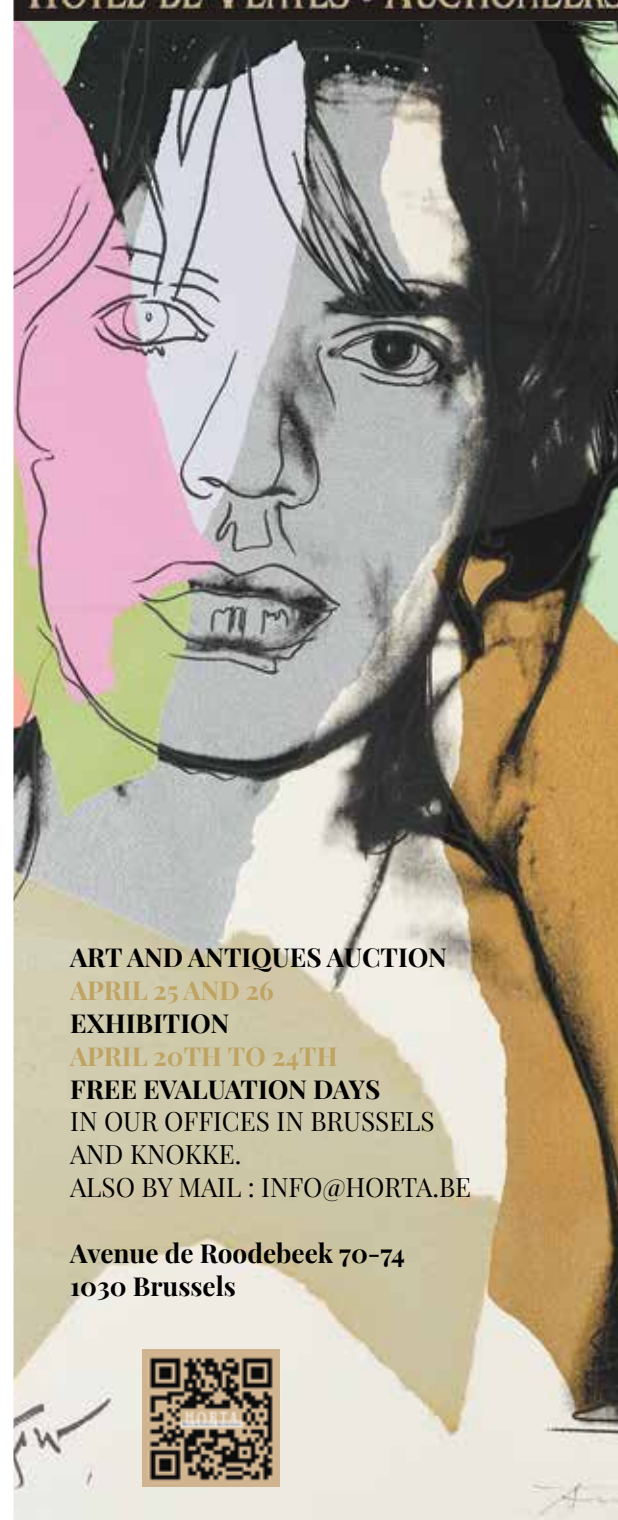
Support is essential to help the women, men and families with children who rely on Samusocial services. Monthly support will help Samusocial develop future projects. You can make a single or monthly donation online by transfer to BE04 0000 0000 3131, help the homeless in your will, or make a donation in kind.

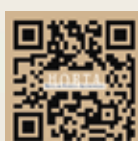
“ OFFERING REALISTIC SOLUTIONS ”

The organisation, linked to Solidarité Grands Froids, is looking for volunteers on an ad-hoc basis to help set up and fit out the accommodation centres. Tasks include putting up beds, painting rooms and communal areas and performing administrative duties. If you would like to volunteer on a more permanent basis, please contact Samusocial partners Solidarité Grands Froids (info@solidaritegrandfroid or 0477 33 85 47). This charity will for example collect and sort any clothing you want to donate to Samusocial. To offer support, please contact info@samusocial.be
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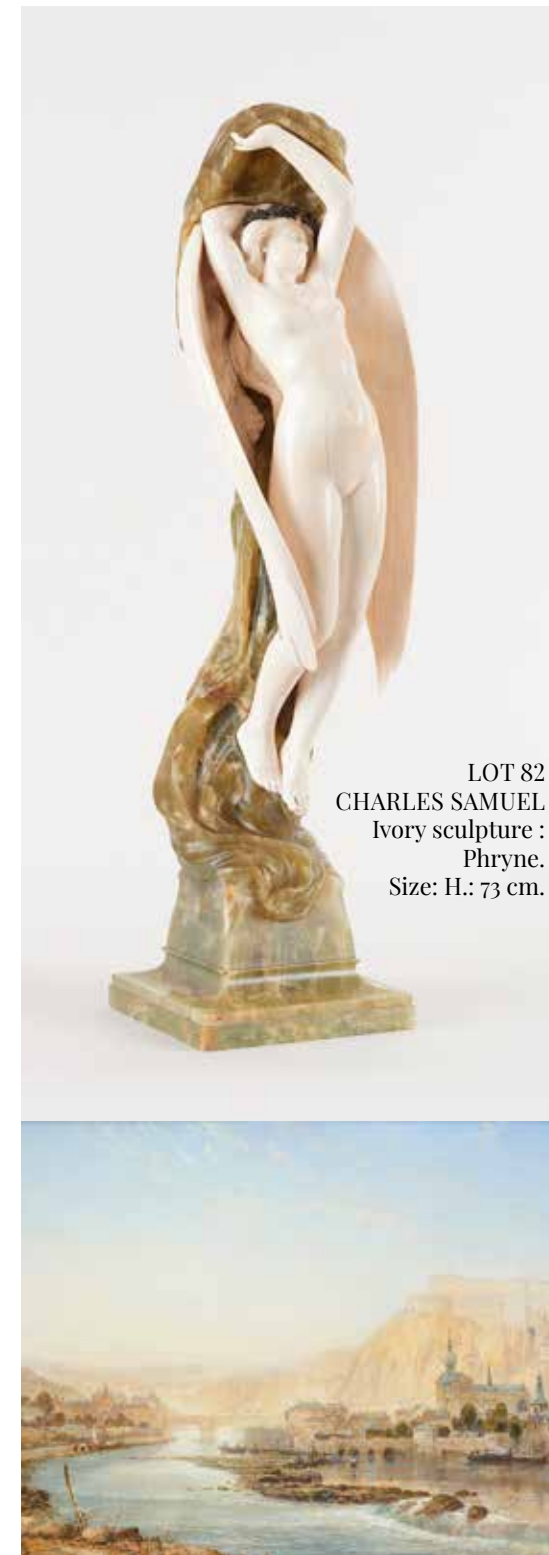
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PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Let our illusionary veils
about ourselves and one
another fall to the ground,
so that we may rejoice in
the humanity of spring*

PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT

Fitness

Personal Training: Your questions answered

Florent Rivault, Wellbeing Manager at Aspria Royal La Rasante, explains the benefits of personal trainers



Whether you are seeking a new training style, hesitating to take on a different fitness challenge, or if you simply need to re-evaluate your workout routine for better results, a personal trainer (PT) can help, Florent Rivault, Wellbeing Manager at Aspria Royal La Rasante, tells *Together*. In this article, she shares some of the reasons why and offers useful tips to help you on your way.

When you are starting out

It can be daunting to start working out on your own, and to step on to the gym floor, if

this is something new. To ensure you keep going and to gain self-confidence quickly, having one-to-one sessions with an expert is a good solution. Far from being the intimidating experience some may imagine, having a personal trainer to guide you is not about brutal exercising, but about finding a careful, tailored approach.

As a first step, PTs can direct you in setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound) fitness goals, and creating a gradual, bespoke training



programme that considers all your concerns. They also introduce you to the most effective workout options, explaining which gym equipment, weight-lifting or bodyweight exercises you should mix for optimal results, saving you time you would otherwise spend either researching or trying different training styles.

When you have injuries or special conditions

Personal training is particularly useful when you need that extra care in identifying safe workout options to take account of a specific physical sensitivity or an old injury. PTs can support with “re-athletisation” processes, merging personal training with physio elements for a successful post-injury rehabilitation. This focuses heavily on balance and stability exercises and the neuromuscular impact of your training.

If, on the other hand, you have had a long break from training and are concerned about potential injuries when resuming your sporting activity, a PT can help you alternate

between strength training, cardio and mobility exercises to ease your way back into your chosen sport, all the while ensuring that you apply the correct form and techniques and do not over-train certain muscle groups.

When you cannot see results

Whether you are looking to lose a little excess weight, or are aiming for a full body transformation, the truth is that reaching a fitness goal takes time and commitment. On many occasions, we can become impatient and demotivated when we do not see quick results. The answer however is not to quit, but to find extra support. A PT can help by managing expectations and by providing extra accountability – making it harder to skip your workouts when your motivation levels are low.

In addition, workout sessions are more fun and engaging with a personal trainer by your side. The whole point is to enjoy yourself as you become stronger and more confident, and to celebrate each little victory. And as you progress, and develop the necessary



strength and stamina, your PT can adapt your training programme, so that you never get bored.

A PT session is also an opportunity to push your boundaries, finding new ways to boost your performance by incorporating elements from pilates, boxing or yoga into your routine. Your trainer can further inspire you to try useful sporting activities or classes you never considered before for that extra variety.

When you have a specific sports goal

A challenge can range from the marathon you just signed up for to the upcoming ski season, or perhaps just an adventurous hike up a mountain. Whatever the case, a PT's phased and personalised training plan, based on your current fitness level and the time you have to prepare, is your best chance to successfully prepare physically as well as mentally.

When you want a healthy, holistic approach

Reaching and maintaining your desired fitness level should not only be a matter of training. To benefit from long-term results and feel better, stronger and healthier in the process, you also need to follow a holistic approach. And that is where personal training can be most helpful. Exercising is complemented by nutrition advice and the

all-important post-workout recovery recommendations (including sauna, cryotherapy or massages).

And as current lifestyles are increasingly affected by an unhealthy work-life balance, and in more and more cases by burn-out and anxiety, PT sessions can also support in terms of stress management, mental health and even sleep.

How to choose the right PT

In addition to checking the trainer's profile to see if their qualifications are relevant to your needs, Florent


recommends that you take time to notice how the PTs interact with existing clients on the gym floor. This helps you check if you would be comfortable with their communication style.

What to expect from the first session

This one-hour appointment is the chance for the PT to get to know you, explore your background and current lifestyle via a simple questionnaire, and to determine your fitness level by assessing your body composition, mobility and cardio levels. Following this consultation, the trainer will propose an initial bespoke training plan based on your profile.

Having the right connection with your PT is paramount. So this first session is also about checking your compatibility, and if you are comfortable with your choice of trainer.

All Aspria PTs are highly qualified specialists in fitness, sports and rehabilitation. They offer personal training packages from a one-off session to series of five, ten and even 20 classes. Sessions normally last one hour, but 30-minute classes are also possible – the perfect solution if you are struggling to find time in your daily schedule.

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Achieving your Olympic dream

Jellen Monsieur talks to former professional gymnast Laura Waem about the highs and lows of competitive gymnastics



Laura Waem (24) achieved a life-long dream of qualifying for the Olympic Games. However, in a gymnastics career riddled with injuries, she ultimately decided to retire at the age of 20 to focus on her pharmaceutical sciences degree.

Rio 2016 – the big dream

Laura Waem attended her first gymnastics training along with her sister when she was two and a half years old. Waem immediately liked the sport's competitive nature, and became inspired when she saw Belgian

gymnast Aagje Vanwalleghem perform at the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

"Watching professional gymnasts perform, I wanted to follow in their footsteps. Knowing that they were able to get to the Olympic Games inspired me to try and do the same. But I didn't know that qualifying for the Olympic Games would demand so much of me and my body."

Aged ten, Waem started training professionally in Dendermonde. After completing a two-year gymnastics preparation programme, she trained at the top sport academy in Ghent. She trained 30 hours per week for more than ten years. "Training for two hours before and three after school, I lived an extremely focused and dedicated life. Every year I had only two weeks off during summer and a few days during the Christmas period. Holidays didn't feel relaxing, because I often did gymnastics camps during my weeks off school," she told *Together*.

Fast forward nine years and Waem was trying to qualify for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games at the last Olympics gymnastics test event in Rio with her teammates Gaëlle Mys, Rune Hermans and Senna Deriks. The Aquece Rio test event [preliminary competition] was the last chance to qualify for the Olympic Games: "We were able to become one of the last four countries to earn our spot for Rio. Most of the pressure fell away, because for the first time we were among the 12 countries that qualified for the team competition in Rio. We were not able to proceed to get to the team finals, but I wasn't disappointed: I already achieved my dream of performing at the Olympic Games."

One injury too many

Waem often suffered from injuries during her career. Her injuries included a cartilage

lesion on both elbows until she was twelve and constant foot injuries. "After Rio, I had surgery on my right foot. I didn't want injuries to hold me back from performing at the highest level. I still had that drive to get one more good result before I ended my professional career."

But due to having become accustomed to a high pain threshold, later in 2016 Waem contracted an Achilles tendon rupture during a training session. "I was feeling stiffness in my calf when I was practising my floor routine. I asked my trainer if I could stop, because the pain was getting too much, but he told me to tough it out and perform my routine on a tumbling track. When I asked a second time, he told me to practise once again, and that ended up being fatal for my career."

The injury made Waem realise that she did not want to do the work to get back to her best level this time. She had already come back from a severe injury a few times in her career, but as she no longer possessed a clear goal, Waem decided to do a full rehabilitation for the last time, before ending her career and focusing on her studies.

"This wasn't the only reason I decided to leave gymnastics," she told *Together*. "Immediately after Rio I was expected to

do the same routines, the same hard training sessions as before the Olympics. The combination of this and the heavy workload from my pharmaceutical sciences master's degree

was too much: I realised I was no longer as motivated to train as hard as I did before."

Waem officially retired in December 2017. "During my first exam period, I told my coaches that I no longer wanted to return after my Achilles tendon injury. I felt relieved after I spoke with them."

" I ACHIEVED MY DREAM "

" I NO LONGER LIKED TO TRAIN AS HARD "

Sport

Waem's favourite gymnastics disciplines were the balance beam and the uneven bars, because she was able to improve and learn quickly when performing these disciplines. This resulted in her consistently performing at a high level of difficulty in tournaments and getting good results. Another highlight in her career was Waem's first world championship in 2013 – when she qualified for the all-round finals and performed in all four gymnastic divisions for women: vault, uneven bars, balance beam and floor exercise.

"I will always remember the feeling gymnastics gave me when I learned something new," she says. "To be able to do and share something with teammates for almost ten years has been one of the best times of my life."

Enjoying life

But Waem admits that she does not miss gymnastics at the moment. "Every day I had this urgency to do my best. I was not allowed to have bad days and I was drilled from a young age to never make mistakes and always do better. I still push myself to succeed in my studies, but no longer having other people pressurising me allows me to enjoy life more." For now, Waem is not interested in competitive sports and remains focused on her studies.



Currently, she is still deciding what to do after she graduates. She is planning to attend a pharma fair in March to explore her possibilities, but for now Waem still feels

a bit unbalanced. "In another six months, I will have finished my degree. I really want to go on a long holiday after my studies. I really

missed not being able to travel during my career. I hope to travel to many places in future and work in a job that I enjoy," Waem points out. "As for living abroad, right now I want to remain in Belgium. However, the pharmaceutical industry is large, so who knows where I will end up?" ❶

**“PRESSURE TO
DO MY BEST”**

Seeing how EIM's 3D printers can save the day

Advertorial

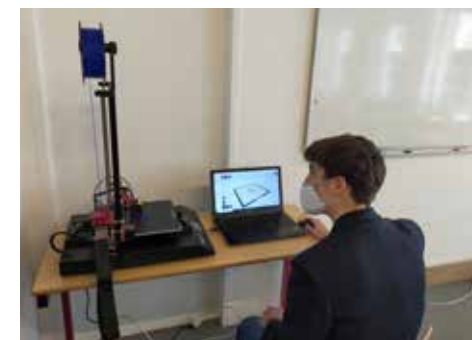
Together highlights how EIM's special Creality 3D printer can design and build anything from ice cube trays to Warhammer Titans

The explorers of the past and the families of today share a common problem. If you are venturing far from home, you must remember to take everything you need with you! History is full of gallant but doomed adventurers dragging boats across dry deserts and, in the current day, awash with beachside family picnics ruined because somebody forgot to pack the bottle opener. But what if you could make everything that you needed as soon as you needed it? As long as you can design the object and you have a 3D printer nearby, you can build it layer-by-layer.

At Montgomery International School (EIM), a private school near the Montgomery roundabout and the only one in Belgium to offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes in either French/English (Bilingual) or fully Anglophone, students learn how to print plastic objects using a Creality CR-10S Pro V2 3D printer.

In weekly information technology classes, students in the MYP (middle years programme – aged 11-16) have followed online tutorials to design objects such as vases, bottles, ice cube trays, paperclips and stamps using the computer-aided design (CAD) programme Fusion 360. With these skills they can use the printer to create objects for their club activities or MYP personal projects.

One of the school's senior students, Alec, has a keen interest in the video game, Warhammer 40,000. In this game players go to battle using miniature figurines of orks, space commanders, wizards, knights and master engineers. This year he has been



leading the EIM gaming club as a Diploma Programme Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) activity. He taught fellow students how to bring their plastic models to life with a few coats of paint. He has worked on a project over several months with the school's 3D printer to build and paint a Titan that towers over its opponents on the battlefield.

After persevering through several failed prints, the impressive model is now complete. Unfortunately, there is no bottle opener attachment...

You are welcome to see the Creality 3D printer in action at one of EIM's special open days on Friday 22 April, Friday 20 May or Monday 27 June.

Please email: info@ecole-montgomery.be to make an appointment. If you cannot attend any of these events, you can contact the school to make an appointment at another time to get the information required to enrol your children – and maybe take a look at the special 3D printer at the same time. www.ecole-montgomery.be ❶

All you ever wanted to know about mindfulness

Chandra Devi (the chosen pen name and Hindi baptismal name of **Karen Northshield** explains a four-step technique to combat negative thoughts and emotions



Mindfulness is a trendy word from our modern times and a practice that can improve well-being and the quality of one's life. Historically, mindfulness predates the 21st century and is found in the ancient wisdom of Buddhism. 'Mindfulness' originates from the Pali term *sati* and in its Sanskrit counterpart *smṛti*. Translated as 'correct' or 'right', mindfulness or *sati* is

the seventh element of the Noble Eightfold Path in Buddhism. Originally, *sati* or *smṛti* is practised on the path to reach Enlightenment (*nibbana* or *nirvana*).

Mindfulness is used in modern day science and medicine and has similar health related benefits to other mindful practices such as yoga and meditation. Today, mindfulness is

used to reduce stress and anxiety, improve sleep and the quality of life, among other things. It has been reported that mindfulness when practised regularly and with intention can help with pain and illness.

The term *mindfulness* is often interpreted differently than what was originally formulated by the Buddha. Originally, *sati* has its roots in spiritual teachings. In Buddhism, the Buddha taught *sati* as a way to remember to observe how the mind's attention moves from one thing to another. The first part of *sati* is to *remember* to watch the mind and remember to return to your object of meditation when you have wandered off. The second part of *sati* is to *observe* how the mind's attention moves from one thing to another.

Therefore *Sati* is an awareness of things as they are, in the present moment, stripping one's mind of interpretation, analysis or value judgment. In Buddhist teachings, ultimate wisdom refers to gaining deep insight into all phenomena or "seeing things as they are". In other words, it means to have a clear comprehension of whatever is taking place in or outside of oneself. Practising *sati* is the art of allowing your thoughts, body sensations, external stimuli to happen and pass by without getting involved in them.

The definition of *sati* to the beginner's ear may sound theoretical or impressive, yet with practice and patience, one learns to calm the mind and live through the five senses of the body. One becomes incrementally in tune with and aware of the present moment. In layman's terms, mindfulness is not about doing something. We are already doing. It is about becoming aware, adjusting one's attention time and time again to the present moment; of being mindful of what we are doing. When we become truly aware of our thoughts, actions, and sensations, and leave out any value judgment we can live the

present moment intensely and fully. After all, the present moment is the only moment we ever have.

For example, I am breathing. I am breathing in. I am breathing out. Nothing more, and nothing less. I am walking. By walking, we simply become aware of bodily sensations.

“SEEING THINGS AS THEY ARE”

With my footsteps I am massaging the palms of my feet. I am caressing the earth with my feet. The sun is shining. The sun is sending rays of light and warmth. The sun is existing in its full nature. It is raining. Raindrops are pouring. Rain is replenishing the earth. The rain is carrying out its job in all its existence. Nothing more. Nothing less. There is no value judgment attached to observation. There is no interpretation attached to mindfulness. Being mindful is simply seeing and feeling things as they are and letting them be.

Today, mindfulness has been greatly popularised in the West. Western therapies have introduced mindfulness practice

“WE ARE ALREADY DOING”

into mental health treatment programmes. Today, as with yoga, there are many schools and techniques. Many people across the globe can benefit from the practice of mindfulness thanks to serious and passionate practitioners. These notably include the Vietnamese monk Thich Naht Hahn who founded his own school in Plum Village in the South of France and the American microbiologist Jon Kabat-Zinn. For Kabat-Zinn, who used mindfulness in medicine and founded his own school at the US's Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) called MBSR (mindfulness-based stress reduction), the benefits of mindfulness are clear: "To bring one's attention to the present moment, time and time again, intentionally and without judgment."

Self help

Mindfulness or meditation?

The goal is the same, yet the paths differ slightly between mindfulness and meditation.

Whereas mindfulness (*sati*) is mainly based on mindful awareness of or bringing attention to one's thoughts, actions and sensations, or being present in the task at hand, mindfulness can be practised in everyday activities, ordinary gestures and rituals: standing, walking, brushing one's teeth, showering, washing one's hands, taking the dog for a walk, etc. Meditation (*dhyana*) is usually practised in a lotus position (or *savasana* for deep relaxation) by using the cognitive ability to focus and concentrate on one's breath, thoughts and perceptions with detachment and by mostly coming back to breathing.

The immediate goal of both meditative paths is to withdraw the mind from the automatic responses to sense-impressions, leading to a state of detachment or equanimity. The ultimate goal is to reach a state of meditative consciousness called *samadhi* (becoming one with ultimate consciousness) and *nibbana* (liberation from suffering and desire). Translated in lay terms, through mindfulness or meditation, the purpose of both *sati* and *dhyana* is to be and let things be. By simply observing – nothing more, nothing less – our thoughts, behaviour and stimuli, we open our consciousness where there is no room for judgment allowing for more light and love to all living beings.

A simple practice of mindfulness is concentrating one's attention on the breath called *Anapanasati*, or mindfulness of



breathing. 'Sati' we know by now means being mindful and 'ānāpāna' refers to inhalation and exhalation and is a practice of concentration and awareness of simply breathing in and breathing out. I am breathing in. I am breathing out. Nothing more. Nothing less.

Everything we do in life is an experience. Every time we sit down for a meal, every time we wash our hands or pick a child up from school. We never experience the same thing twice. As Heraclites once said beautifully:

"No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and it's not the same man."

"WATCH THE MIND"

Being mindful reminds us to do everything in life like a ritual, as

though it were the only thing that matters. The practice of mindfulness increases our awareness of the present moment to appreciate life in all its forms. Right now, wherever you are, whether you are caught up ruminating or feel stressed, simply come back to the breath and the present moment and remember to be mindful of the present moment with kindness towards oneself and all beings. Simply be and let be and therein you will find happiness. 🍀

Finding love that lasts

Liz Newmark looks at a dating agency aiming to make your first rendez-vous the best in your life

Looking for love these days is more likely to be online than at your local sports club. But in the wake of the Covid-19 crisis, people turn more and more to serious dating agencies which regard their clients as more than just a number or photo to swipe left or right.

Marie de Duve started working for one of these agencies – a2 rencontres, created by Valerie Dax in 1970, in 2006 and took over the business in 2017. "We are a serious dating agency adapted to today's way of life," she tells *Together*. "Our clients are single, active, entrepreneurs, professionals, civil servants and above all ready to make a commitment."

With its headquarters in Brussels and agencies also in Namur and Braine l'Alleud, a2 rencontres has 771 clients, 480 women and 291 men on its books and people wanting to join all the time, de Duve said, adding she has received three times more enquiries post than pre-pandemic. The clientele is Belgian and also European thanks to the innumerable European institutions, not just the European Commission, European Parliament and European Council, in the capital.

For de Duve, people are returning to agencies like a2 as they want to gain time, meet people more successfully with discretion and keep their profiles confidential. Clients at a2 benefit from her 20 years' experience in matching single people: "We make the contacts and get to know each

client personally. It's humans that take care of singles here, not a machine."

This means that a2's address book is full of motivated, serious people. "We are a super filter. Desperate cases will find it easier to join dating sites," explains the self-confessed 'head-hunter for the heart'.

De Duve sees her job as "the most beautiful in the world, making people happy." But finding true love takes time, she tells *Together*. "We are living in a world where everything goes very quickly, we can get many things rapidly in one click. But it takes nine months to make a baby for example.

Finding your soulmate will not happen with a snap of your fingers. We are not in a supermarket."

This year, a2 clients also benefit from the services of Diane, a counsellor and 'love coach', de Duve says. Diane gives everyone a 'love test' to find out how clients behave in matters of the

heart; advice on how to be "attractive and sparkle while still remaining true to yourself" and tips for your first meeting or start of a relationship with that hopefully special someone.

"It's just a meeting," de Duve adds, but "perhaps the best of your life."

Please contact a2 rencontres for an information meeting free of charge and with no obligation, at 0495 24 44 44 or info@a2rencontres.be or www.a2rencontres.be 🍀



In search of healing

Happiness coaches **Gaëlle Jadoul** and **Christophe Finot** lead you up the path to goodness

Deciding what is beneficial in life is an essential question because it is the key to your balance, your well-being and your happiness.

Who has never said to herself/himself:

- If I had known, I would never have done this.
- I find it hard to exist, I am afraid of the future, I am sick of living.
- Another disease to deal with.
- Why is this happening to me?

We spend our lives building our ego and strengthening our mind. There is always a quest to satisfy our appetite for having. But what about our being, our inner self, our soul?

What if our balance, our well-being and our happiness are blocked?

We know the physical blockages but there are so many others:

- Emotional (fear, persecution, humiliation, rejection, devaluation...)
- Affective
- Family
- Professional
- Psychosomatic (syndromes, phobias...)

Did you know that more than 80% of our life is driven by our emotions? Not only the ones we release, but also those we have inherited from unresolved past conflicts.



In fact, behind people's uneasiness and anguish lie blockages, fears, and traumas from the earliest age to adulthood that we have great difficulty in apprehending, understanding or integrating and to which they all remain linked. In any case, all these blockages keep hindering our adult development in the present, in the "here and now."

The answer is that everything is energy. Our thoughts are energy. Our feelings are energy. Our world is energy. But what is energy?

A call from a loved one, good news that we were no longer expecting – and we overflow with energy. It then appears to be linked to our emotions, but not only... it is also linked to our food, our environment, our hormones and much more...

In other words, energy is an emotional source that determines our behaviour, our attitudes, our well-being or ill-being.

Energy exists everywhere, whether it is scientific (Albert Einstein's formula $e = mc^2$), psychic (Sigmund Freud's libido), or spiritual (the vital energy in the Hindu spiritual tradition).

The one we are interested in today is vital energy. So let us take a closer look at what vital energy is.

Vital energy or bio-energy is a flow that circulates throughout the body and the organism. It actually flows through the meridians that connect all our organs. With the help of vital energy, we can feed the energy centres of the body called chakras (seven in total).

In concrete terms, vital energy is indispensable. Breath and breathing are basic examples of vital energy that is essential for life and for our inner balance.

When this vital energy circulates in a harmonious and balanced way, everything is fine. On the other hand, if this energy is depleted or if the flow is disrupted by poor nutrition, stress or an emotional blockage, then everything goes wrong, leaving the door open to pathologies such as fatigue, general malaise or stress.

The fact is that there is never any chance involved in what happens to us. Everything has a conscious or unconscious, temporal or timeless, endogenous or karmic, telluric origin... a whole in which we are connected to others and of which we are the key, here and now. When we live in a situation where discomfort is omnipresent, no matter what we try to do or change, if the original source of the discomfort is not healed and the vital energy restored, we will only suffer all the blockages in our life.

The release of all these blockages is therefore essential to eliminate the stagnant pathological energy and live life to its full potential. Without healing, personal and

spiritual growth does not go further. When we heal, we rebalance our energy and connection to our body and everything around us.

The good news is that bioenergy is the extraordinary therapeutic key to regaining this harmony within us and to achieving our happiness.

But how? What can it do?

To answer this question is to become aware that our life is not going well or as we would like it to be, to become aware of this discomfort and then to want to change things, to take care of ourselves. This is not always easy because some people choose to avoid discomfort rather than choose healing because yes, healing requires courage with the ultimate reward being rebirth... a true rebirth of our whole being for life.

And what can bioenergy do for us in answer to the question: What do I need to work on?

- To release all the causes that block my healing
- To release the wounds, doubts, fears, blockages that are obstructing my life path
- To release all thoughts of insecurity that prevent my happiness
- To let go of all the problems that are blocking me
- To have the will and the strength to make all these beneficial changes

Are you ready for these changes? If yes, are you ready to live your life?

"80% OF LIFE IS DRIVEN BY EMOTIONS"

Do you want to know more?

Please contact Gaëlle Jadoul, Hypnosis & Happiness Coach: +32 479 352 606 or at g@gaellesecrets.com

or Christophe Finot, Energy & Happiness Coach: +33 621 318 329 or at c@gaellesecrets.com



The humanity of spring

Intuitive healer **Katarina Winslow** reflects on the awakening of humankind when winter ends



The beauty of spring...

Does not it feel wonderful when the buds of nature start to appear in the cherry trees, and we know in our hearts that a new dawn is about to be born? It is like a butterfly's chrysalis straining to eventually burst. It is the time before nature's birth breathes through the air. When we go through self-healing, our inner core guides us through a similar budding consciousness and our true self. We know something new is about to break out, but we often do not know who we will find to be in our authentic selves.

“LET GO OF THE OLD COCOON”

We go through the process while waiting patiently to one day discover the birthed self, just as nature rejuvenates in infinite cycles. To awaken our true self, we must break the cocoon of our illusionary or imposed self.

The journey of self-discovery is a courageous path we embark upon to experience rebirth, a sort of catharsis we go through to awaken one day to love ourselves more fully.

This spring is a once-in-a-century event, a pivoting point of rejoicing in the true nature of the human heart and mind. The coming of this spring will go beyond the flowers in our backyard to spread wide and

free if we let it take us beyond our illusionary selves and our false beliefs about ourselves and the world. We are in suspense of the elevation of a more beautiful, truer, and more virtuous humanity. We are at the same time in need of this if we want to remain human.

This birthing season encourages us to change how we see ourselves and invite more beauty into our self-perception, just as the rose discovers the beauty of its actual nature once it bursts. The aim of any spring and rebirth is the process of letting go of the old cocoon, allowing the bud to burst and discard old illusions. Still, the approach to embracing birth often involves pain and discomfort. We need to be patient and know the outcome, just as nature is quietly rejoicing each spring. There is no birth without pain. It is uncomfortable when our old shell starts to stretch and tighten around what we no longer want to be. Just as in the bearing of nature, there are many complex stages leading us through birthing to the truth of you.

To accept this time and the gigantic turning point in human consciousness, we are encouraged to bloom in synchronicity with the beauty of spring. To rejoice in all that is streaming from our authentic nature. To finally make a promise to embrace a new way of life and living.

The global awakening is no longer a myth in the future, but a reality at our doorstep. It is time to open the door and go in (or up) to a higher level of consciousness. To be dedicated to the divine and only let what is human remain within. It is an ecclesiastical moment in the history of humanity to let the sanctity of humankind breathe out loud. The spring of anything is the leap to become free, birth, stretch, break, and let go of what no longer has purpose or meaning. Like the seed that has burst into a flower, the caterpillar has burst its cocoon to become a butterfly.

“NO BIRTH WITHOUT PAIN”

We may also burst our cocoon of false, limiting, and outdated beliefs to change the way we see ourselves. To leave behind us all that is illusionary. To liberate ourselves from all that is not part of the awakened human, in you and me, and the concern of the human psychology at large, such as comparison, competition, measuring, and division. To collaborate and be patient just like nature. Knowing that the source of any elevation and flourishing is to let life have its way in its own time, and that time is now if we only allow our hearts to lead the birth process.

In remembering where we came from and what we came here for this spring, we will triumph by reconnecting with the divine in you, me, and in life itself.

We came here as guests to experience love and beauty in ourselves. That is when the time is right, and we are ready. That time is now. In the same way, as the flower discovers its splendour when spring is here, and the butterfly starts to fly once the cocoon breaks, we flourish when we pierce through the illusions we have about ourselves.

Once we have lived through the experience of who we are not and start to aim for who we want to become in our next breath, we may birth anew. We are in the now and no longer in the spirit of next time or even next life. To plunge into or achieve a more heightened state of awareness, it is possible to reconsider what it means to be human and reevaluate our essence. Just as the bud knows that it is a flower before it blooms, it is helpful for us to see the source of our true self before we experience it. After all, the invitation to be born is a unique option to experience who we truly are.

We knew ourselves as love before entering this dual reality, as love is all there is between lifetimes. Inside life, after our first breath, we often feel lost, longing to return to the love



we originated from. It is not easy for our souls to be limited by our physical bodies, and even more difficult for our hearts to remain open and pure when life wounds you when you are no longer allowed to be you. You could say that your true nature and your sacred being get lost in illusions. Illusions that, after all, are only illusions. It is like the caterpillar that insists and resists letting the cocoon open, or the bud that struggles against nature not to burst.

We often need guidance not to get stuck here in our unborn self. It is helpful to open up and listen to those who have already made the journey – the ones who have overcome their resistance to life. The ones who know the awakened human at the core of its heart. The sacred intention for our existence is understood by some brave and luminous souls who know what humanity will look like once the birth

“ EMBRACE A NEW WAY OF LIFE ”

of the new consciousness is in full bloom. In that reality, no human being is better than another, just like no flower is worth more than another. Nature is without measure and status.

Within the awakened human consciousness, we are all unique in what we look like, and we are all perfect in our imperfection, no more or less than another.

Let us embrace this truth this spring, while letting our illusionary veils about ourselves and one another fall to the ground, so that we may rejoice in the humanity of spring.

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Life lessons: The Yin-Yang of failure and success

Matthew Cossolotto explains how failing to launch comedy TV was ultimately a blessing in disguise

Back in the mid-1980s – while I was working as a young Congressional staffer for then-Majority Leader and later Speaker of the House Jim Wright – a friend and I started kicking around some business ideas. We settled on one idea that we both thought was pretty exciting: A cable television channel dedicated exclusively to comedy.

We called it Comedy TV. Keep in mind that this was long before the now quite popular and successful Comedy Central cable channel was created. Nothing like Comedy TV existed at the time. And since cable television was something of a new frontier back in those days, we figured the medium would be hungry for exciting new programming ideas like ours.

For about six months, we got together once a week to brainstorm the idea. After we had fleshed it out a bit, we met with a high-powered attorney at a big law firm in Washington to help us prepare the necessary incorporation papers and explore fundraising possibilities. Despite our keen sense of excitement about this project, I am embarrassed to admit that, ultimately, nothing came of Comedy TV. Somewhere along the way, we simply dropped the ball.

A few years later, I happened across a startling article in the newspaper about a new cable comedy channel. They called it the Comedy Channel – which later evolved into Comedy Central. I was stunned.



Michael Jordan: "I've failed over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed."

I knew it was a great idea and a terrific business opportunity (as Comedy Central's considerable success has proven), and I had let it slip through my fingers. Clearly, I had blown a golden opportunity. In this case, I *blew* it because I did not *pursue* it.

I later became aware that I was struggling during this Comedy TV episode against a force – a very real and very negative force: the force of my old, ingrained mindsets, behaviour patterns, belief systems, and ways

of thinking. In effect, I undermined my own success with negative self-talk. I remember saying things to myself along these lines:

"Who do you think you are? You don't know how to launch and run a cable television channel. This idea is way beyond your ability. Don't waste your time on this pipedream. You have a busy job and family obligations. You're going to look foolish if you try to do this and fall flat on your face. Where are you going to get the money for this venture? Don't be an idiot."

These were just some of the disempowering thoughts that were running through my mind – over and over again in a kind of undermining, self-defeating, never-ending, negative-thinking loop – during this Comedy TV episode.

The Yin-Yang of Failure-Success

A few years removed from that discouraging experience, I went through a period of self-reflection and self-discovery. I read lots of self-help and personal empowerment books, listened to tapes and attended seminars. And I kept coming back to a nagging question: Why do some people succeed and others fail?

Eventually, I came across this Taijitu symbol and something clicked. It is often referred to simply as the Yin-Yang symbol, which has been embedded for centuries as part of the ancient Chinese philosophy of Taoism. At its most basic, Yin-Yang embodies the idea of dualism. But it is not the static dualism of two opposites. It is a more dynamic dualism in which the two halves interact with each other.

Yin is often defined as the 'shady side' – or the dark side – while Yang represents the 'sunny side'. Think about Yin as 'night' to Yang's 'day'. These are often thought of as

opposites, but day has a way of blending into night and vice versa. Together they form a balanced whole.

The key point here is that these so-called opposites are interdependent. Nothing is completely Yin or completely Yang. Taken together, Yin-Yang form a complete whole, but there is a dynamic interaction between the two. A symbiosis.

I thought to myself: Could the supposed opposites of *failure* and *success* be thought of in terms of yin-yang?

The Chinese philosopher Confucius, born 551 BC, spoke to this interplay when he observed: "Our greatest glory is not in never failing but in rising every time we fall."

Many other famous people have continued to comment on failure throughout history. The poet John Keats wrote: "I was never afraid of failure; for I would sooner fail than not be among the greatest." In other words, you have to be willing to risk failure in order to succeed.

The great inventor Thomas Edison famously remarked: "I have not failed 10,000 times. I have not failed once. I have succeeded in

proving that those 10,000 ways will not work. When I have eliminated the ways that will not work, I will find the way that will work."

Winston Churchill also helps to put failure and success into perspective with this wise observation: "Success is not final; failure is not fatal: it's the courage to continue that counts."

Microsoft founder Bill Gates believes it is essential to learn from failure. "It's fine to celebrate success," he suggests, "but it is more important to heed the lessons of failure."

The American businessman Sumner Redstone (1923-2020) agrees, saying: "Great

**"WE SIMPLY
DROPPED
THE BALL"**

**"NOTHING IS
COMPLETELY
YIN OR YANG"**



success is built on failure, frustration, and even catastrophe.”

Basketball legend Michael Jordan offers this encouraging perspective on the delicate interplay between failure and success: “I’ve missed more than 9,000 shots in my career. I’ve lost almost 300 games. 26 times, I’ve been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I’ve failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed.”

Along the same lines, baseball supremo Babe Ruth held the home run record for many decades. He hit 714 home runs in his career, but he struck out 1,330 times. Ruth adopted a positive attitude to all of his strikeouts. “Every strike,” he said, “brings me closer to the next home run.”

“ HEED THE LESSONS OF FAILURE ”

Oprah Winfrey believes: “There’s no such thing as failure... you get as much from your losses as you do from your victories because the losses are there to wake you up.” She goes on to say, “You’re not defined by what someone says is a failure for you, because failure is just there to point you in a different direction.”

Best-selling author and leadership expert John C. Maxwell puts it this way in *Falling Forward*: “Failure is simply a price we pay to achieve success.”

The more I think about *failure*, the more I think the word is overrated. It carries far too much emotional baggage. It all comes down to how you define failure. I believe *failure* is nothing more than falling short of your

potential. It is no more complicated than that. And it is a mistake to make failure more complicated – or more intimidating – than it is.

That definition takes some of the sting and stigma out of the word. Defined that way, it is clear that failure touches just about everybody in some way. One of the explicit goals of this article (and my book about what I call *mindful HabitForce*) is to de-stigmatise failure. The fear of failure — or, more accurately, the fear of being stigmatised as a failure — keeps more people from reaching their potential than just about anything else.

So my message is this: Failure can be one of life’s most powerful and effective teachers. In fact, failure can give birth to success. Of course, I did not feel that way right after my Comedy TV fiasco. But I do now. No other

experience holds as much potential for personal growth and transformation. Nothing else so clearly identifies our strengths and weaknesses. No other gift that life offers us is quite so full of promise. Yes, failure can be a gift – but only if you learn the right lessons.

About the Author

A former NATO speechwriter, Matthew Cossolotto is the author of *The Joy of Public Speaking* (now available on Amazon.com) and two forthcoming books on the habits of success and the power of promises. Matthew provides coaching and conducts public speaking workshops and other Personal Empowerment Programs (PEPTalks) in Brussels and beyond.

www.ThePodiumPro.com ⓘ

Taking charge

International speaker, Peak Performance trainer and business mentor **Arnon Barnes** gives his take on how to lead and succeed in a post-Covid world



Recently I met one of my clients at their offices in Europe – one of the business owners that I’ve been coaching, mentoring and training for three to four years. When we started working together, turnover was around two million euros annually. Today, his main business is doing around six million euros per year. Also we have just started a new business, a spin-off from the main business, now in its first year of trading and we’re about to break a million euros. It’s been very exciting for everyone involved and it inspired me to think about what it means to take charge.

Taking charge of your business, your life, taking charge of your bad habits and what you excel at. For the last two years, we have been in a pandemic. The world has turned upside down. Things are 180 degrees and one of the things that I’ve noticed is that, in my opinion, one of the most important things you need to take charge of, is yourself.

Identifying who you are today, but more importantly, who do you want to become? Now is the time to take charge of yourself because nothing just happens. Taking charge of yourself is to assume responsibility

over your emotions, feelings, your mindset, behaviour and over your self-sabotage. We all self-sabotage ourselves, some more than others, and in every different shape or form. Now is the time to make responsible choices that serve us and the people around us.

Right now the world is split into two groups and 50 percent are in the space of ‘making shit happen’, moving forward. They are telling themselves and others around them: “Let’s get aggressive and take market share. Let’s play a bigger game!” They use what the world has thrown at them and make sure they find a way to grow and succeed. That’s the first 50 percent.

The other 50 percent are very much in a space of hiding. Retreating and telling people (either in words or by actions) to “let’s wait until this situation gets better.” They are sitting in a corner covered up with a blanket, so to speak, waiting for things to improve. And here’s the facts: We’ve all been dealt pretty much the same deck of cards.

Now it’s all about how you play that deck of cards. The second thing that is really important to me regarding taking charge is taking charge of your tribe. Taking charge of your family. And this has nothing to do with restricting or controlling people. I’m talking about leading your tribe.

Leadership is so important because with a lack of leadership comes a lack of direction, motivation, inspiration and drive. It will create a standstill of growth and when we’re not growing, we’re automatically dying. We have got to realise that we are in control. We are the only ones capable of writing the story of our life. So write a good one. You’ve got to take charge of that and lift up your tribe whilst doing it.

When you take positive action and realise that you are in complete power, that is when you can make the shift and control the direction of your life. So that in ten, 20,

even 30 years from now, you can look back and be proud of yourself. You have got to be willing and open to take calculated intelligent risks. So many people today are living from a place of fear. Fear levels are at an all-time high. I am shocked about how fearful people are right now. As a result, it is affecting the way they are performing.

And that brings me to the third important thing concerning taking charge; You have got to be careful about the information you feed to yourself. You are going to want to surround yourself with fearless people. People that are aware that things happen and instead of being paralysed they roll with the punches and look for the hidden, but existing opportunities. People that understand the rules and restrictions yet refuse to let them stop you living.

“NOTHING JUST HAPPENS”

Finally, and this is probably the biggest thing I am going to share with you: Surround yourself with can-do people. People that are taking responsibility for their lives and moving forward, despite challenges or obstacles. Despite lockdowns and restrictions. Again, we must decide whether we are a victim or a leader in our lives.

Remember, you cannot choose your family, but you can certainly choose your friends and the people you spend time with. I’m telling you, from my own experience, that every single one of you reading this has at least one friend that you need to start loving more from a distance, because that person is not serving you. As Jim Rohn said: “Tell me who your friends are, and I’ll tell you who you are.”

If you hang around nine drug addicts, nine alcoholics, nine depressed people, the chances are you will become number ten. Just a fact. However, when you surround yourself with nine ambitious people with a can-do attitude, nine successful people, nine people who want to make a difference in this world, make an impact and add value to the



marketplace? Chances are you will become number ten. So, surround yourself with people that are going to push you forward, encourage you to move forward and to take calculated, intelligent risks.

Do not live in fear. Fortune favours the brave, and so you've got to be brave. You've got to be courageous. This crisis can be one of the greatest blessings that will happen to us. Take action and you will shine. Why? Because, like I said earlier, the marketplace is split into two groups right now. Fifty percent of the people are fear-based. And so, when there is less competition because 50 percent of people are living in fear, that gives you an opportunity. Now, you can really make an impact and stand out.

“WE ALL SELF-SABOTAGE OURSELVES”

So make sure you have someone supporting you. If you do not have someone kicking your ass right now, holding you accountable, giving you a little bit of guidance, you are doing yourself a disservice and you are playing small. Get yourself a coach, surround

yourself with the right people, TAKE CHARGE and get things done!

Would you like to meet and work with Arnon Barnes live? Or join one of his

next upcoming offline or online events? For more information on the events or coaching, contact his office via info@arnonbarnes.com or check out his website www.arnonbarnes.com. To watch his interviews and podcast appearances please subscribe to his Instagram and YouTube Channel. 📺

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Investment options face a crossroads

Dave Deruytter gives tips on how and where to invest in today's uncertain world

It is not easy to read the financial markets these days. There seem to be too many uncertainties on numerous fronts to see a clear path ahead.

The complex international supply chains for goods are still not fully back to their pre-Covid efficiency.

The microchip market is only slowly recovering to a more normal supply-demand situation. Microchips are used in smartphones, cars, home appliances – many of the bestselling goods of the moment.

Raw materials, particularly for car batteries, are highly priced. Energy of the fossil sort, gas and oil, are very expensive.

The US is facing a “Great Resignation” wave of employees and workers, who are looking for a better work-life balance and more work-time flexibility.

All of this is leading to inflation levels not seen in recent decades.

The Russian invasion in Ukraine does not help, and nor does the complex US - China relationship.

Industry voices predict that energy costs should stay high anyway in the coming decades. Salary inflation could be a different story in the medium term because, when economic growth stabilises again at around 2% in the Western world, and further digitalisation results in less need for



employees and workers, a more balanced employment market should return. Still, for the coming year or so it will very much be an employee/worker market, not an employer one. The war for talent rages fiercely. Some companies are even paying hefty welcome bonuses to attract top talent.

All in all, inflation could stay high much longer than anticipated half a year ago. If economic growth remains

reasonably good, interest rates should further increase, putting a burden on highly leveraged businesses. At the same time, bond yields should become attractive again. Given the high level of uncertainty, index-

“ INVEST IN WHAT YOU UNDERSTAND ”



linked bonds may very well return to favour, at least in the coming years. Indeed, this is an almost forgotten asset class amongst private investors. The likes of insurance companies have always had some of those bonds in their portfolio.

The advantage of index-linked bonds is that capital loss is very rare; but the same goes for capital gain. Thus, your investment return is essentially the interest income of the bond. That interest is linked to inflation. The higher the inflation, the more interest you will receive.

Real estate prices also have a link with interest rate levels. Mortgages could become much more expensive in the coming years, leaving private buyers with less money to spend. The same goes to some extent for corporate investors in real estate. All of that should have a downward pressure on real estate prices.

A true safe haven does not exist in the financial markets, but raw materials, including gold and other precious metals, should stay in demand for the foreseeable future.

Crypto assets are a special category of investments that not everyone really believes in. Still, there is a market here and when that market is historically low, there could be upward potential. Bear in mind however that the real value of what you buy is at least questionable. The same can be said

for investments in art for example. An artist can be “en vogue” one day and “out of favour” the next, leading to substantial movements in the price for their works. The adage “invest in what

you understand” stays valid in any market circumstance.

With the drive for ESG (environmental, sustainable and corporate governance),

“ AN EMPLOYEE/ WORKER MARKET ”



there should be an extra innovation wave coming to drastically reduce the carbon footprint of businesses and people alike, all around the globe. This stays a very interesting focus of attention for investors, whatever other outside pressures may be around. Look for the winners through the ESG score companies get from reputable scoring agencies, then evaluate their R&D or innovation pipeline.

The “Digital Revolution” obviously has not fully run its course, particularly not on the Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), Big data and robotics side. Agreed, many companies, directly active in those fields, are already highly priced on the stock markets. Still, more mainstream businesses may take advantage of that digital offer to substantially reduce their need for employees through robotics or digitalisation, which could sharply improve their margins.

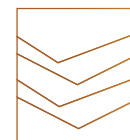
It is believed that focusing on a combination

of sustainability and innovation could very well be the right bet for the next decade. Companies that read that combination well, plus implement it swiftly in their processes or products, should outperform the market substantially.

In conclusion, we cannot escape the classical advice of diversifying our investments and to invest according to our investor profile and time horizon. If the offer sounds to be too good to be true, it typically is too good to be true. Particular attention should be given to returns above the market, in distant or difficult to control or understand markets or assets.

In addition, intermediaries you never heard of, or who just popped up on the internet or social media, should be scrutinised with extra care. If something appears on your screen that you neither looked nor asked for, you should be particularly on your guard. ❶

“SUSTAINABILITY AND INNOVATION”



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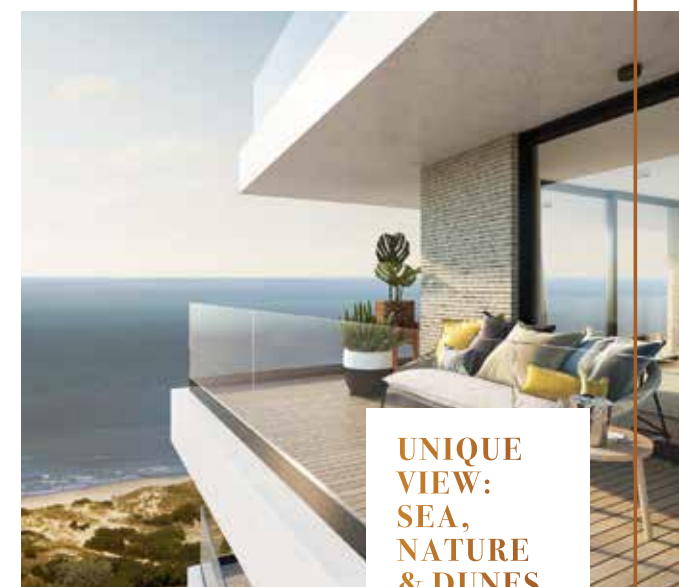
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Be successful

We detail two books to help you reach success at any age



‘From Strength to Strength’ by Arthur C. Brooks

Many of us assume that the more successful we are, the less susceptible we become to the sense of professional and social irrelevance that often accompanies aging. But it is far more likely that the greater our achievements and our attachment to them, the more we will notice our decline, and the more painful this will be.

So is it inevitable that the years past 50 are going to be less successful? Not at all, says Arthur C Brooks, who, at the height of his career at age 50, embarked on a seven-

year journey to discover how to transform his future from one of disappointment over waning abilities into an opportunity for progress. *From Strength to Strength: Finding success, happiness and deep purpose in the second half of life* is the result – a practical roadmap for the rest of your life.

“A PRACTICAL ROADMAP”

Drawing on social science, philosophy, biography, theology, and eastern wisdom, as well as dozens of interviews with everyday men and women, Brooks shows us that true life success is well within our reach. By refocusing on certain priorities and habits that anyone can learn, such as wisdom,

detachment from empty rewards, connection and service to others, and spiritual progress, we can put ourselves in a better position to achieve increased happiness.

“In this book, Arthur C. Brooks helps people find greater happiness as they age and change.” — The Dalai Lama

The roadmap for finding purpose, meaning, and success as we age, from bestselling author, Harvard professor, and the Atlantic’s happiness columnist Arthur Brooks.

Many of us assume that the more successful we are, the less susceptible we become to the sense of professional and social irrelevance that often accompanies aging. But the truth is, the greater our achievements and our attachment to them, the more we notice our decline, and the more painful it is when it occurs.

What can we do, starting now, to make our older years a time of happiness, purpose, and yes, success?

At the height of his career at the age of 50, Arthur Brooks embarked on a seven-year journey to discover how to transform his future from one of disappointment over waning abilities into an opportunity for progress. *From Strength to Strength* is the result, a practical roadmap for the rest of your life.

Drawing on social science, philosophy, biography, theology, and eastern wisdom, as well as dozens of interviews with everyday men and women, Brooks shows us that true life success is well within our reach. By refocusing on certain priorities and habits that anyone can learn, such as deep wisdom, detachment from empty rewards, connection and service to others, and spiritual progress, we can set ourselves up for increased happiness.

Read this book and you, too, can go from strength to strength.

Hot off the press – the book was only published on 15 February this year – *From Strength to Strength* has received rave reviews, even from the Dalai Lama, who says: “This book helps people find greater happiness as they age and change.”

Other critics focus on how important it is to realise your limits, particularly as time goes on: “If you’re a striver tired of striving, this remarkable book is for you,” says Daniel H. Pink, author of *Drive*, *When* and *A Whole New Mind*.

“LIFE’S STRUGGLES GIVE IT MEANING”

“Arthur is trying to save us pain and maximise our contributions to the species,” says Dan Harris, author and former ABC News anchor. “Every ambitious person should read this.”

And Eric Schmidt, former chair and CEO of Google, said “*From Strength to Strength* offers

real answers to timeless questions about happiness and progress: How can I be happier? How can I have more meaning in life? What is the most important thing to me right now and why?”

Arthur C. Brooks (born 1964) is an American social scientist, the William Henry Bloomberg Professor of the Practice of Public Leadership at the Harvard Kennedy School and Professor of Management Practice at the Harvard Business School. Also a musician, he was president of the American Enterprise Institute for ten years and leads the podcasts *How to Build a Happy Life* and *The Art of Happiness*.

‘The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck’ by Mark Manson

Definitely not for the faint hearted or easily offended, blogger and American author of self-help books Mark Manson’s *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck: A Counterintuitive Approach to Living a Good Life* is a short,

Be success

quick read that effectively tells you how to get over yourself and any sense of entitlement you may be labouring under.

Indeed, for Manson (born 1984), all advice about positive thinking and having an upbeat attitude is an approach to nowhere that has produced a generation of losers.

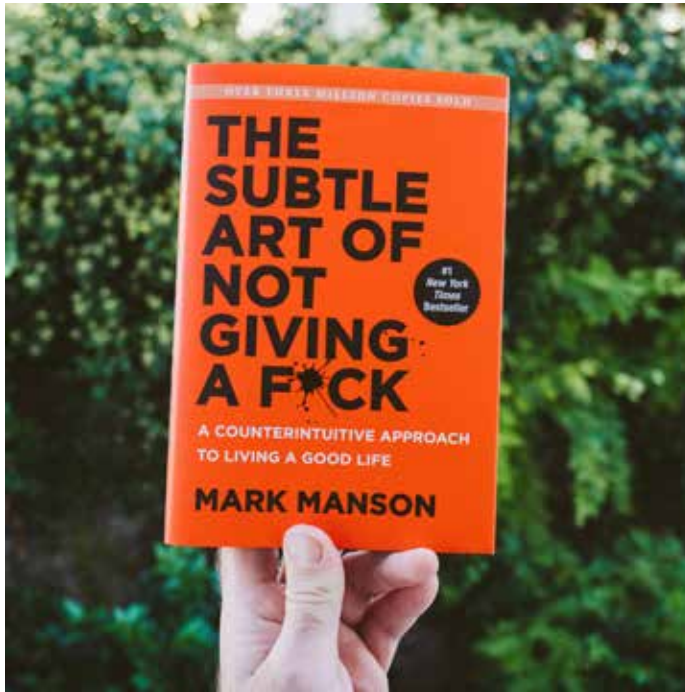
Manson argues in his book – laden with expletives and off-colour humour – that life's struggles give it meaning. In a reaction to the self-help industry, he makes clear that the mindless positivity of typical self-help books is neither practical nor helpful for most people.

Manson uses many of his own personal experiences to illustrate how life's struggles often give it more meaning. He argues that this is a better approach than constantly trying to be happy, as "life is hard, you're not special, happiness is a hollow goal and therefore you should make sure you're focused on the truly worthwhile."

The book focuses on showing the reader how to find meaning in the important things in life. For Manson, any value – such as popularity – that is not under a person's control is a bad value to have.

He advises you to replace such values with those more controllable like punctuality, honesty or kindness. Manson further advises avoiding claiming certainty about knowledge that is out of one's grasp.

In addition, do not fret about leaving a legacy for posterity, he argues. "Instead of worrying about building a body of work as a legacy, one should seek to create joy in the moment for oneself and those around."



Manson's raison d'être is to "write life advice that is science-based, pragmatic, and non-bullshitty, also known as life advice that doesn't suck."

You only need to look at the nine chapter headings to understand where Manson is coming from, namely: 'Don't Try'; 'Happiness is a problem'; 'You are not special'; 'The value of suffering'; 'You are always choosing'; 'You are wrong about everything (But so am I)'; 'Failure is the way forward'; 'The importance of saying no'; and, last but not that upbeat least; 'And then you die'.

Before you may condemn this book as another soapbox for a blogger's ideas, Manson has carried out a great deal of research for the book. Kirkus Reviews calls *The Subtle Art* an "in-your-face guide to living with integrity and finding happiness." It may not be pretty, but it is real – and this New York Times bestseller has sold more than a million copies since its September 2016 release. ❶

J'isole ma maison,

Ik vervang mijn boiler,

Je rénove,

Ik koop een huis,

Je change de salle de bain,

Ik renoveer,

Ik bouw,

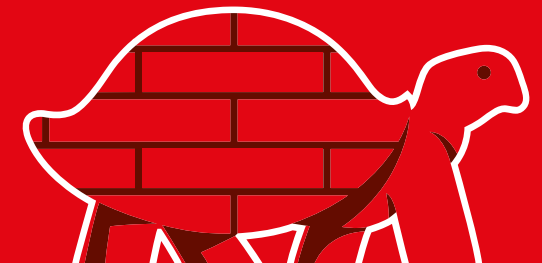
Je change ma chaudière,

Ik vervang mijn keuken,

Je refais mon sol,

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The 2mm rule

Real estate expert **Yannick Callens** explains how important change is for growth



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Who has already heard of the '2mm rule'? American author and business strategist Tony Robbins explains it like this: when business is not going according to plan and your brain keeps telling you "nothing is working", it can feel like you are a million miles away from where you want to be. "But the truth is, you're really only 2mm away. This is true even if you are performing above your standards, because there is always another level.

**“ YOU'RE
REALLY ONLY
2MM AWAY ”**

In real estate, this rule also applies and is even, in my opinion, the most important rule for long-term results. Imagine if you improve

your efforts, performances and results 2mm every day ... where will you go? What would the result be? And are you going to reach the same destination? For me, the answer is clear: No, the end-point will be different! And I often ask my students to choose one habit to change in order to achieve a different long-term result.

Ultimately, the key is to apply the 2mm rule in a more practical way in everyday life. Are you capable of doing that as well? Of course! Are you ready to pay the price to get there? By that I mean make the effort to achieve this? I am not so sure.

Real Estate

Many of us want to do things, have things and then feel different, better. But most of us make a mistake in the order of all this. Most people tell themselves that if I have that, I will do that, and I will feel like that! Mistake! The right order in this recipe is that I am like that, so I am going to do that, and then I will have that.

To summarise, instead of having, doing and being, the right formula is being, doing and then having.

And you can apply this rule in real estate, just as in all other areas of life. I often repeat to my students that everything is a whole. If your health is fine, your relationships are fine, and work is fine – each will affect the other in all aspects of your life. We are the same and different at the same time! Ultimately that's the beauty of things in our world. Even more so now, in the present world.

I would like to return to the 2mm rule I put in the introduction. Imagine if a boat leaves its port and misses the right direction by 2mm. What will its destination be? What in your life or in your real estate assets or real estate strategy do you need to pay attention to in order to stay on the right path and improve?

The beauty of '2mm' is that it does not take up "too much" effort, but you have to remain reliable and accurate!

I challenge you to change a habit by improving it by only 2mm and then continuing this for three months.

Challenge accepted?

If you would like information on our coaching programmes, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@immo-champion



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AND THEN
HAVING ”**

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LIFESTYLE

Luxury

Time for luxury

Liz Newmark looks into luxury watches – and it's not just Rolex

My kids don't wear watches. I am not sure many adolescents do. Why bother, I have a phone, they say. But the industry is booming, with the US-based consulting firm McKinsey predicting the luxury watch market to grow to US\$30 billion by 2025.

Watches – first created in the 17th century – have a rich history that the digital world can never live up to. And if they might not be so cool for the so-called 'younger generation', luxury brands have graced the wrists from the rich and famous from Napoleon Bonaparte to Brad Pitt.

So in the hope that come 50, 100 or 200 years beautiful timepieces instead of Apple Watches will still be adorning the arms of the elite and Jo Public alike, *Together* highlights five top luxury brands – Rolex, the Swiss 'holy trinity' of Patek Philippe, Vacherin Constantin, Audemars Piguet, and Omega.

Just three others are Hamilton and Huawei – which you can read about next – and Denmark's up-and-coming, socially conscious Nordgreen – that plants trees to compensate for any carbon generated by the manufacturing or shipping process.

Rolex

Synonymous with luxury and the high life, this is arguably the most famous watch in the world. A Rolex is not only a watch, but also

a statement of power and prestige. From its classic collection to its dive and Yacht-Master models, Rolex makes some of the most popular men's watches. First to patent a waterproof watch, the Oyster, Rolexes have been seen on top of the highest mountain and in the deepest ocean. Talking technical, with a Superlative Chronometer, they have an accuracy of ± 2 seconds a day. Finally, the brand that is guaranteed to last a lifetime, has true star appeal. It is the preferred timepiece of the world's most famous spy James Bond. www.rolex.com



Patek Philippe

Switzerland is the first port of call for luxury watches – with Patek Philippe arguably the most well-known of the 'holy trinity' that also includes Vacherin Constantin and Audemars Piguet.

Founded in 1839, Patek

Philippe is the last family-owned independent watch manufacturer left in Geneva.

Each detail is finished by hand by a dedicated master craftsman.

No surprise then, that fewer than one million Patek Philippe watches have been created since 1839 – this scarcity making them highly sought after.

They are also the most expensive – with the Patek Philippe Grandmaster Chrome fetching US\$31.19 million in December 2019 at auction. Famous wearers include Brad Pitt, Eric Clapton and Charlie Sheen. The first celebrity was none other than Queen Victoria.

www.patek.com

Luxury

Vacherin Constantin

Founded in 1755, Vacheron Constantin is the world's oldest continuously operating watchmaker. Like Patek Philippe, the Vacheron Constantin workshop only produces a limited number of pieces. This guarantees the wearer a level of exclusivity. The brand is also renowned for technical wizardry. The recently released #57260 is known as the world's most complicated watch with a dizzying 57 complications [any function on a watch other than the display of the time]. This special model carries a price tag to match – estimated at US\$8 million by Forbes. Every Vacherin Constantin watch bears the Hallmark of Geneva – the top-level seal of quality in fine watchmaking. And Napoleon Bonaparte himself used to wear one.

www.vacherin-constantin.com

Audemars Piguet

Audemars Piguet has manufactured spectacular watches since 1875. Famous for its Royal Oak series, AP was the first to use a non-precious metal – stainless steel – in sports watches and charge luxury prices. This opened the door for other watchmakers to use expertise and not only precious metal as a pricing factor. The AP Royal Oak Offshore underwater version became one of the most popular diving watches in history. The company is also out there on the design front – creating many avant-garde Haute Joaillerie pieces, such as the Diamond Punk and Diamond Fury watches for women. The brand hailing from Switzerland's Jura mountains has also travelled the world on the wrists of Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jaz-Z and James LeBron.

www.audemarspiguet.com



Audemars Piguet Royal Oak

Omega

Swatch-owned Omega, a brand almost as famous as Rolex with 70% brand recognition, but not one of the most expensive, has delivered exceptional luxury watches to horophiles and watch collectors for more than 170 years. Omega watches have broken several precision records. In 1931, the company topped all six categories at the so-called Olympics of watchmaking – the Geneva observatory trials. Buzz Aldrin took the Omega Speedmaster Professional 'Moonwatch' to the moon. Many American astronauts will only wear this brand today – that has also travelled to the North Pole and the bottom of the ocean. If any more persuasion is needed as to Omega's appeal, these timepieces have also been worn by Elvis Presley, John F. Kennedy and graced nearly every Bond movie.

www.omegawatches.com

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Watches

Hamilton strikes again with the Ardmore Quartz

Together takes a look at the latest American Classic from a world-class company whose watches are worn by James Bond

Perfect for spring, Hamilton has launched its American Classic range Ardmore Quartz watch in vibrant new colours. The calf leather strap – chose from coral pink or bright blue hues – take the classic from its subtle Art Deco revival appearance to a “decadent-of-the-moment statement maker,” Hamilton says.

Originally introduced in 1937, the Ardmore’s stepped rectangular case keeps its Art Deco appeal with a ‘running seconds’ sub-dial, delicate proportions and high quality materials.

The exciting shades of cool turquoise or sunny coral transform the understated Ardmore Quartz into an eye-catching accessory for every occasion. The look is completed by matching in-colour Roman numerals and an angular silver dial, for a style combining old and new.

A blend of American heritage and



contemporary colourways, this is a watch for women looking to add a splash of fun to their sophisticated lifestyle. Start turning heads with these wonderful timepieces.

Founded in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, US, in 1892, Hamilton creates watches with a unique blend of authenticity and innovation. Its timepieces have helped people keep track for decades – synchronising the first railways and keeping time for aviation pioneers and US soldiers.

A favourite of filmmakers for years, Hamilton watches have appeared in more than 500 movies. Custom pieces have played a pivotal role in several Hollywood blockbusters, notably James Bond. The iconic Hamilton Pulsar watch was worn by Roger Moore in *Live and Let Die* (1973); Giancarlo Giannini as René Mathis wears a Hamilton Khaki Field watch in *Quantum of Solace* (2008); and, Primo (Dali Benssalah) wears a Hamilton Khaki Navy Frogman Auto H77605335 watch in *No Time To Die* (2021).

In 2020, Hamilton released a limited edition of 888 pieces of the Hamilton Khaki Navy BeLOWZERO inspired by the prop Hamilton watches made for Christopher Nolan's film *Tenet*. In the film, John David Washington also wears a steel Hamilton Jazzmaster Seaview Chronograph.

Finally, the Hamilton PSR watch worn by Keanu Reeves is now available in a special Matrix Limited Edition inspired by *The Matrix Resurrections* (2021).



With its continued commitment to craftsmanship and accuracy, Hamilton launched the world's first electric watch in 1957 and the first LED digital watch in 1970. Now a member of the Swatch Group, the global leader in watch manufacturing and distribution, Hamilton's current collections, as these stunning Ardmore Quartz newcomers make

clear, combine its American spirit with special Swiss precision.

Technical specifications

The Hamilton Ardmore Quartz has an 18.7 x 27mm polished stainless steel case, 6.9mm thick, a silver dial with roman numerals and nickelled hour and minute hands. The glass is mineral crystal. Water resistance of Hamilton's new addition is 3 bar (30 m) – the Ardmore Quartz can withstand minor moisture from splashing, but should not be worn for swimming, diving, bathing, or showering.

For more information, see hamiltonwatch.com or look at @hamiltonwatch on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. www.hamiltonwatch.com



Watches

World-leading telecom company launches another breakthrough in fitness watches

Together takes a look at the latest high-tech classic from Huawei



Kim Clijsters
Huawei Watch GT3 Ambassador

Billed as a “personal trainer on the wrist”, the HUAWEI WATCH GT 3 is Huawei Consumer Business Group’s next generation smartwatch.

Powered by HarmonyOS 2.1 technology, it delivers an upgraded, more powerful and convenient user experience. As well as its fashionable appearance and comprehensive upgrades, it comes with accurate health and fitness monitoring with TruSeen 5.0+, 14-day battery life with a new design and an

Intelligent Dynamic Adjustment Plan.

Indeed, the HUAWEI WATCH GT 3 records and analyses the user’s workout data and intelligently identifies the user’s current athletic ability level and goals. It then adjusts the training intensity, gradually increasing the training volume to steadily improve athletic ability.

The HUAWEI WATCH GT 3 also comes with an upgraded workout monitoring feature

providing over 100 workout modes including 18 professional workout modes: 12 outdoor workouts (running, walking, mountain climbing, hiking, cross-country running, cycling, open water swimming, triathlon, skiing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing and golf) and six indoor workouts (walking, running, cycling, swimming, stationary exercise machine and rowing machine).

As far as health management is concerned, with the whole new PPG 5.0 module of TruSeen technology, heart rate monitoring accuracy is drastically improved compared to that of the previous generation of watches. The GT3 can keep track perfectly, even in fast-changing heart rate scenarios such as sprinting, pool swimming and skipping. HUAWEI WATCH GT 3 also gives continuous, real-time and accurate sleep, stress and even menstrual cycle monitoring features.

In addition, HUAWEI WATCH GT 3 supports personalised health and fitness features, including the AI (Artificial Intelligence) Running Coach and a Healthy Living Shamrock, which is like a health and fitness assistant for users to stay healthy and active.

The AI Running Coach is based on a weekly training plan and the body’s feedback to training, automatically adjusting the schedule for the user the next week to ensure that the plan is suitable. This means the wearer will get more out of the training – both in terms of sporting improvement and general enjoyment. The running aid Running Ability Index (RAI) uses historical running heart rate, pace and other data to analyse running performance after each training to help users see their progress.

The Shamrock has new features to suit daily health needs. Users can receive regular reminders of health challenges, water intake, mindfulness, early sleep reminders and exercise volumes.



Much more than a sporting aid, the HUAWEI WATCH GT 3 innovative design is inspired by nature and focused on cutting edge technology. Large lenses and lightweight design achieve a futuristic look and a distinguished smartwatch. Without a strap, the 46mm watch weighs just 42.6g with an overall thickness of 11mm. The 42mm version weighs 35g and has a thickness of 10.2 mm. Both timepieces allow consumers “a brighter and thinner wearing experience”.

Battery life is more than impressive too. The HUAWEI WATCH GT 3 boasts a 14-day battery life in normal use, meaning users can even sleep with it – while the 42mm watch battery will last for seven days.

Third-party apps on the HUAWEI WATCH GT 3 have increased too, covering daily life, travel, gaming, entertainment, work, fitness and health.

And anyone who cannot read maps and loses their way will also be helped by HUAWEI WATCH GT 3 as its Dual-Band Five-System GNSS positioning provides users with more accurate geographic location positioning.

About Huawei Consumer BG

Huawei’s products and services are available in more than 170 countries and used by a third of the world’s population. Some 14 R&D centres have been set up in countries worldwide, including Germany, Sweden, India and China.

Huawei Consumer BG, one of Huawei’s three business units, covers smartphones, PCs and tablets, wearables and cloud services. Built on over 30 years of experience in the telecom industry, Huawei’s global network is dedicated to delivering the latest technological advances to consumers around the world.

www.consumer.huawei.com ⓘ

Sport

Union Saint Gilles : A Belgian fairy tale

Deep in Forest's Duden Park lies a little football club with big ambitions. Journalist and football fanatic **Martin Banks** explains why RUSG's success has outgrown its beautiful Art Deco surroundings and reveals where the club will likely play next.

All photos © Royale Union Saint-Gilloise football club



It is a Belgian fairy tale story but one that is also, typically, tinged with sadness.

The dream is a sporting one in the shape of "little" Royal Union Saint Gilles (RUSG), the football club that has taken the Belgian top-flight by storm this season.

The club is currently riding the crest of a hugely successful wave, topping the Jupiler League and with the particularly mouth-watering – if barely believable – prospect of Champions League football looming large on the near horizon.

The only cloud on the horizon is that, if the club does qualify for European football, as seems certain, the home games will have to be played not at their historic, if quaint, home but at one of two other grounds (Leuven and/or the national stadium on the outskirts of Brussels).

The reason for that is because the current ground – picturesque and dripping in history as it is – is simply woefully inadequate to host European football.

Its capacity struggles to top 9,000 and a mixture of concerns about safety and comfort means the club's home stadium will not see the likes of Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo next season.

Its fans will have to trek to either Leuven's ground or the larger stadium at the old Heysel to see such superstars.

Indeed, the club's amazing success this season, its first back in the big time in a generation, is proving something of a double-edged sword.

Not only can it not host European games, but it also means the club is now resigned to – indeed encouraging – a switch to a completely new venue.

The question on the lips of all its devoted fans is: which one?

Well, one option under consideration – and by far the favourite – is relocating to a newly built stadium just off Exit 17 on the Brussels Ring, close to the Audi car plant in Forest/Vorst.

This 22,470 square metre site would meet UEFA [Union of European Football Association] demands, with a capacity of about 13,000, growing to possibly 21,000 over time, 17,000 seated.

The club is said to be keen on building a hotel, with up to 150 rooms next to the site.

“ DRIPPING IN HISTORY ”

A second, less likely option on the table is the Bertelson site, near the Forest National concert venue, which already has some sporting facilities. The downside here, it is said, is the fact that it is in the middle of a densely populated area, a bit like the current ground.

Another possibility, just staying where the club is at the atmospheric if rather rundown Joseph Marien stadium, has already been effectively ruled out.

RUSG club spokesman Maarten Verdoodt, in an interview with *Together*, said no final decision has yet been taken, nor will one be made until the end of May.

Negotiations will continue for the time being between the club and local commune.

The most popular choice, especially for the club, is near the Ring, which would allow USG to meet its ambitions of providing the sort of facilities one might normally associate with a top-flight club in 2022.

These, he says, include offering packages for sponsors, staging other events, improved safety and comfort for fans – all part of the mix of competing at the highest level, not just in Belgium but, possibly, in Europe.

He says, “We want extra and better facilities, but we also want to keep the soul of this historic club.”

In the meantime, the club plans a series of fans' evenings to explain to supporters what is happening and, of course, find out what they think. The first of these, due to take place soon, is part of a fans' consultation exercise.

Maarten acknowledges that, while the current stadium is historic and part of the club's DNA, it also belongs in another era.

Assuming the go ahead is given in a few weeks, construction on the new ground, he

“ A TOP- FLIGHT CLUB ”



says, should begin immediately with building work lasting two to three years. That means – and this may come as music to the ears of the club’s romantics – that the team will continue to play at its current stadium for the next two seasons until the work is complete on its new home.

Maarten also reassured fans that the current stadium will not – indeed, as it is classed as a listed building, it cannot – be demolished.

“There will be no flats or suchlike being built on it,” he states.

Instead, the ground will be used for the club’s U-21 team, the ladies team, reserve games and friendlies, he says.

That will come as at least some consolation for those – especially the older fans – who still (albeit vaguely) will recall the club’s golden era – it won 11 Belgian championships between 1904 and 1935 – when it was regularly achieving the sort of domestic success it has had this season.

This season was its first back in the highest level for a generation during which not only

the turnstiles had badly decayed, but also the club’s ambition and status.

That changed when a British owner – Tony Bloom – took over in 2018. Installing a go-ahead management team, Bloom et al set about restoring the club’s fortunes, at least on the pitch. The result? Well, the club is now back at the top for the first time since before World War II. This achievement even surprises club president Alex Muzio, a long-time associate of Tony Bloom, who said, “Yes, even just a couple of years or so ago, we could not have imagined where we are today!”

So, what is the secret of the club’s staggering success?

“It is a question I keep getting asked,” said Maarten.

The answer, as is often the case, is somewhat less “fairy tale-like” than the club’s actual success.

“It’s all about hard work, a good playing scouting system and damn good ownership.”



These are things most football clubs aspire to but which far too few actually manage to realise.

That philosophy extends to the club’s newfound ambition – and that brings us back to its present and future.

In the case of USG, there is actually one other element to explain its rise to the top, says Maarten.

“ IT’S ALL ABOUT HARD WORK ”

“The club’s history and place in the game in Belgium is fully explained to every player who comes here. He therefore understands what we are about and where we are coming from.”

Just how will it cope with European competition, quite likely Champions League football, next season?

Well, on the pitch it has a nice mix, currently, of relatively unknown players, loanees and low budget transfers, who may well have punched above their weight.



How the club will re-invest in new playing talent in the summer remains to be seen. That, as ever, will be vitally important, of course.

Off the pitch, the club is forging ahead with those redevelopment plans.

But, while it will be playing in a new home by the middle of this decade, fans can still be assured that the wonderful current stadium will live on.

That's good news, not just for the fans but also for those who appreciate the lovely Art Deco design, architecture and sheer history of the place.

It's worth a visit just to marvel at this – but, if you can, also try to grab a ticket and see a game. The ambience at a USG home game is something else – as Mr Messi could soon be discovering! 📍

“ DAMN GOOD OWNERSHIP ”

Chill out,
ski in spring!

thurla - 15455 - photo - A. Parant

Lola

Model: **Lola**
Agency: **Dominique Models**
Photographer: **Thomas Prudhomme**
Art Director: **Nicholas Sirot**
Hair and make up: **Elke Binnemans** with **Sisley**
cosmetics and **Kevin.Murphy**, **Balmain Hair Couture**

Special thanks to: **Stanhope Hotel** rue du Commerce
9, 1000 Brussels. Tel: +32 2 506 91 11.

www.thonhotels.com

Olivia Hainaut: Tel : +32 475 47 44 89





Top: **Elisabetta Franchi** - Trousers: **Stand Studio**
Shoes: **Steven Madden** - Jewellery: **Olivia Hainaut**



Total look: **Love Stories** - Tights: **FALKE**



Dress: **Elisabetta Franchi** Handbag: **Christian Dior**
Rings: **Olivia Hainaut** - Using **Kevin.Murphy** for hair:
Fresh Hair Everlasting Colour Leave-in





Top: **Elisabetta Franchi** - Trousers: **Stand Studio**
Shoes: **Steven Madden** - Jewellery: **Olivia Hainaut**

Jewellery: **Olivia Hainaut**
Using: **Sisley cosmetics** for make up:
Phyto-teint nude 00N pearl. Phyto-rouge shine 10 sheer.
The phyto-ombres 42 glow silver and 22 mat grape. Phyto-
Khol Star sparkling grey. Phyto-Blush twist 5 contour.



Dress: **Elisabetta Franchi** - Using: **Sisley cosmetics**: Eau de parfum Izia La Nuit. Suprem'ja anti-age lotion. Phyto rouge shine lipsticks N°31, N°30. Using: **Kevin.Murphy** for hair: Everlasting Colour Wash. - Handbag: **Christian Dior**

Fashion

“We are all xandres”

Belgium's iconic xandres brand, which started out more than 50 years ago with just five designs for trousers, is now a fully-fledged fashion collection writes fashion expert **Veerle Windels**, and its new shop concept marries digital and physical shopping experiences

Xandres may be a well-known, even iconic brand in the Belgian fashion industry, but 50-somethings in Belgium grew up with Andres. Andres was launched by Jan and Lieve Andries in December 1968, but even before that time the entrepreneurial couple was known for making menswear trousers – a focus on one product being normal in those days. When Andres hit the market, it immediately became an essential part of the early Seventies fashion scene in Flanders. Lieve Andries was a modern woman inspired by the designs of Giorgio Armani, Yves Saint Laurent and even Biba, the quintessential boutique in London of that time. She was a true feminist and loved empowering women through their wardrobe. It cannot surprise us then that she offered trousers in fashionable colours.

By 1975, Andres was a complete fashion line, offering tops and bottoms, knitwear and even accessories. The one outfit that got them tons of fans (and made the turnover go through the roof) was a cotton suit: produced in the original plain colour and only later painted in a plethora of pastels. In the mid-1980s, some of Belgium's finest fashion designers worked for Andres incognito: Dries Van Noten designed the summer collection of



1983, Annemie Verbeke was responsible for knitwear from 1985-1988, Dirk Bikkembergs put together most of their catalogues of that epoch and even Dirk Van Saene would later work for the house, designing an eveningwear collection in 2007 and 2008.

The name change from Andres to xandres (with a small x) came about in 1997. It was all about reviving the brand and giving it the necessary power to broaden the scope and go European. The label Andres proved to be difficult in Spain (because of other brands carrying that name), whereas xandres was supposed to open doors. By this time, xandres was run by the well-known Santens family: Marc Santens' daughter Isabelle started her career in the knitwear division of the brand and took over the creative helm when Lieve Andries left the company.

Soon, Isabelle would lead the way. She did not only collaborate with multibrand stores in

Belgium, but she also opened self-standing pilot stores for xandres: the first one in Knokke, and others in Ghent, Brussels, Antwerp and Kortrijk, to name a few. She also ventured into the international market, collaborating with fashion stores all over the Netherlands and opening a pilot store in Den Bosch. Some of these stores were designed by iconic Belgian architects such as Glenn Sestig and Vincent Van Duysen. This move was a reflection of the brand's success. By 2003, the collection was divided into xandres,

xandres x-line (for plus-size clients) and xandres golf. Launching X-line proved to be a hit. Finally, plus-size clients could also wear a high-end product, designed in Belgium.

Which takes us to 2022. Xandres is still around, with a brand name that rings a bell for several generations on end now, but for a couple of years it has been run by managing director Patrick Desrumeaux and Filiep Blontrock, managing director at

“ A BRAND NAME THAT RINGS A BELL ”

Fashion

Damart BeLux. Damart bought xandres some four years ago and has invested in the expansion of the brand ever since. Last week, a new shop concept was launched in Antwerp, integrating the former plus-size label x-line into a complete wardrobe for today's woman.

"Having a second line, focusing on plus-size does not make sense in today's world," says Didier Van den Bosch, brand manager at xandres. "I think it's no good that women should be obliged to go to another store because their size is unavailable. Let's go for absolute inclusivity. We want to dress all women." That is why all sizes, from 34 to 56, can be found at the Antwerp store. This concept will be rolled out in all of their stores, in Belgium, Holland and Germany. In January, xandres opened a showroom in Düsseldorf and thanks to well-known influencers like Diana Zur Löwen, they hope to broaden the xandres scope in that country as well.

The new retail concept even goes a step further. And that's where retail manager Liesbeth Delmote steps in. These last few months, she has been developing a new way of working in a store, combining the physical and digital experience. We all know that some clients are familiar with a website (and a collection) before going to a real store. They often know a collection better than the retail assistants (although that is another story). Through a brand new xandres app, clients can browse the collection on their phone, but also warn a store that they may come in to test their pieces of choice.

Once the client is in the real store and tries out some designs, the digital aid can be of help too. Through the same device, retail assistants can check whether a design that is missing in one store is still available in another store, without having to leave the client alone. This enhances the in-store experience.

Didier Van den Bosch, brand manager at xandres



One more thing: fashion may mean evolution, but it would be strange to see a collection that has been around for so long and does not pay tribute to its heritage. That is why xandres started the Iconic line. A small series of twelve iconic pieces that still have relevance in an ever-changing world. Think of a trouser suit, a slip dress, or even a trenchcoat. Brand manager Didier has a great story about that one trench: "I was thinking of the actress Lauren Hutton in *American Gigolo*. She seduced Richard Gere in her trench coat. Of course she didn't wear anything underneath (she says smiling)."

www.xandres.com 

“ A COMPLETE FASHION LINE ”



“ WE WANT TO DRESS ALL WOMEN ”

Shopping

Springtime shopping

From mouthwatering Easter chocolate to rejuvenating face masks, *Together* rounds up a few must-have buys for Easter



Pierre Marcolini

A gourmet delight for everyone, this year's Marcolini Easter Collection features a charming Bird Bunny combining tradition and creation. On the one hand, rediscover your childhood with delicious praline and creamy caramel-filled chocolates. On the other, be amazed at delectable new flavours including

pumpkin seeds, linseed, or black or blond sesame seeds. Sprinkles of taste and texture bring a crunch and flavours never tasted before. So whether it is irresistible eggs, pralines or chocolate nests, will you join #teamTradition or #teamCreation? www.marcolini.be



LOEWE Solo Atlas is a new perfume inspired by the Atlas mountains and impressive geological contrasts. The spectacular peaks link different worlds with a range covering the blue seas of the Mediterranean in the north and the arid desert in the south of Sahara. Composed of floral, marine and green notes, LOEWE Solo Atlas is a perfectly balanced fragrance contrasting notes of Moroccan mastic absolute with peony and mandarin, while salt contrasts with musk and amber. www.loewe.be



Valmont: Detox Pack – guarantees a good look

A sensory experience that is amazingly effective. This effervescent mask will give you a glowing face in just a few minutes, due to its detoxifying, oxygenating action. Your skin will sparkle with beauty! The pack comes in six single-dose 10ml capsules. Apply the contents of the capsule on your face and neck in a uniform layer avoiding the delicate under-eye area. The texture changes into a mousse. When most of the bubbles have disappeared (about seven to ten minutes), massage your face and rinse with water. €165. www.valmont.be

The **Maison Gemmyo** collection of wedding rings ranges from classic to daring. They are made in France and available in white gold, yellow gold, rose gold or platinum.

Meanwhile, decorated with 12 1.6mm and five 2.5mm diamonds, the **Madeleine L** ring was conceived in homage to the 1920s. Price on demand. Available from the one and only stockists in Belgium: Rue de Namur 36, 1000 Brussels. www.gemmyo.com





J'emme, a shortened form of 'j'aime' and 'gemme', is a new brand of Belgian perfume. A collection bringing energy and ambition thanks to the association of vibrating crystals and the beneficial and balancing virtues of the essences. Four unique perfumes for men and women. The perfumes are vegan, cruelty-free and primarily made from natural ingredients 100ml. €150. www.jemme.be

Eden Park is the first premium fashion brand in the world for men and women inspired by the world of rugby. The label with the pink butterfly knot was created in 1987 by Franck Mesnel. It knows how to be authentic, contemporary and elegant at the same time. Circle polo shirt. €130. www.eden-park.com



Icoone: New technology here we come

Caroline Dierckx tests out the innovative, non-invasive Icoone treatments that can improve the quality of even the most delicate and damaged skin

Promising "visible improvements in beauty, health and well-being", new technology Icoone treatments are offered in several beauty institutes in Belgium. I opted for Esthetiek Mooi in Overijse, near Brussels. This centre offers many treatments ranging from face lifts and breast enhancements to cellulite and wrinkle reduction.

I chose a treatment for the body. I always go for non-invasive treatments with no secondary effects. It is therefore a very pleasant, relaxing experience and gives a maximum of results.

The innovative Roboderm technology behind Icoone is the only one world-wide to use Multi Micro Alveolar Stimulation (MMAS). This is achieved through the set of 7mm micro holes on the microstimulators located in the icoone handpieces. Like thousands of little hands they roll backwards and forwards, stimulating every area of the skin, no matter how small, generating up to 21,600 microstimulations per minute.

The positive effects include a revitalised, strengthened skin. After just one session, blood flow in the treated area increases as elastin and collagen are produced. The skin is revitalised and reinforced resulting in improved skin quality and appearance.



"INSTANT ANTI-AGEING"

Beauty

Special treatments – face, breast and cleavage lifts

With age, the face can lose its tone with sagging cheeks, lips or eyelids or a double chin. Breasts lack firmness or suffer due to pregnancy or hormone stimulation for example. With Icoone, these zones will receive a gentle and effective 'lifting' due to MMAS. Icoone is claimed to bring about a younger, sparkling appearance and results are visible almost immediately. The treatment promises a firmer chin, naturally pulpy lips, a smoother cleavage and remodelled breasts.

Stretch marks and wrinkle reduction

Both can be reduced after Icoone treatments

With stretch marks, the skin has a sort of scar or lacks collagen and the flow of oxygen. These two problems can be rectified with MMAS stimulation. Your blood flow will improve and your skin will look better.

Icoone is also an effective treatment that claims to reduce wrinkles. By stimulating the production of collagen and elastin with the 7mm micropieces that reach all parts of the face and neck, it can restore the composition of tissue, smooth the signs of ageing and give new firmness and elasticity to the skin in a natural and painless way. And the icing on the cake? The technology is claimed to give an instant anti-aging effect. A more youthful appearance is promised only a few minutes after applying Icoone.

Countering too much sun

For skin marked by expression lines or too much sun, a dedicated Icoone treatment can bring youth to your face and neck immediately.

Icoone is a new technology that serves beauty and has everything to please. In the company's own words, "With Icoone's 100% natural treatments, we help people feel better about their bodies, so that they look in the mirror and love themselves more."

www.esthetieelmooi.be
www.icoone.com



**"A YOUNGER,
SPARKLING
APPEARANCE"**



Dolce La Hulpe Brussels: Massage your cares away

Together investigates a Spa Cinq Monde **Sublime Bola treatment** that is perfect in pregnancy

Are you expecting? Then this is the perfect time to treat yourself with this marvellous massage inspired by ancient Polynesian traditions. You can really disconnect from your daily worries and feelings of discomfort linked to pregnancy. Enjoy a moment suspended in time. Be spoilt by the expert and specially trained hands of your beautician and profit from a moment of relaxation.

The Spa Cinq Mondes meets these desires by offering its special new Sublime Bola Ritual massage. As the beautician exerts careful pressure on the back, arms, legs, stomach and face, mothers to be, sitting comfortably on ergonomic cushions, learn to manage their changing body.

Tensions disappear under the expert hands of practitioners who, with 'Bola' sound balls used in traditional Chinese medicine, reactivate the body's energy and relax it at the same time.

This new treatment, offered from the second trimester of pregnancy, lasts 50 minutes and costs €115. The longer version, Sublime Bola Grand Ritual – lasting one hour, 20 minutes and costs €165 – is for a total revitalization. It includes the Sublime Scrub with Tahitian Monoi Oil for a soft, perfumed skin and the delicate, smoothing motions of the Sublime Bola Ritual massage.

The Spa Cinq Mondes enjoys a privileged position in the 4-star Dolce La Hulpe Brussels hotel, in the heart of the Soignes Forest. At just 15km from the capital, it makes for a perfect getaway at the week or weekend.

You can choose from a range of formulas like the Babymoon that includes the Sublime Bola Grand Ritual. This is an ideal option for future parents, giving them the chance to relax together and connect with nature before baby arrives.

www.dolcelahulpe.com

Beauty

Easter beauty

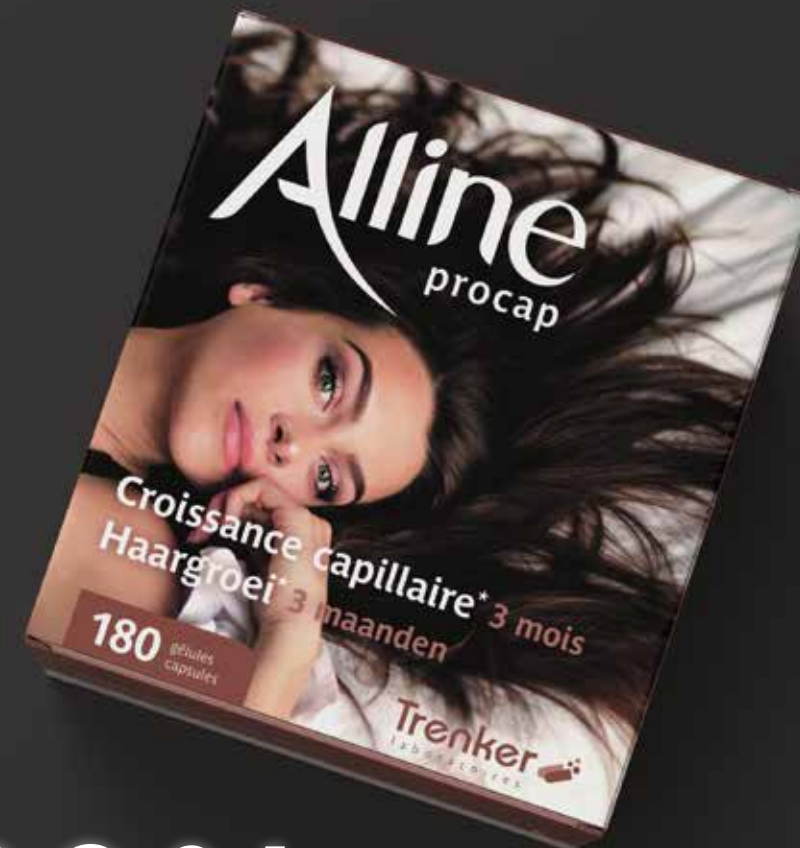
Caroline Dierckx selects some beauty delights for April

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& other Stories: Bath and Body. Neon Rush Body Scrub. 250ml.
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*Zinc contributes to the maintenance of normal hair and participates in the synthesis of proteins (such as keratin). Beer C et al (2014).



Dolce & Gabbana for Women: Limited Edition Light Blue Italian Love. 100ml. Price: **€117**. www.dolcegabbanabeauty.com



Sisley Paris: All Day All Year Essential Anti-Ageing Protection. Capable of protecting skin from external aggressions for eight hours. 50ml. Price: **€335**. www.parisxl.be



Dior: Backstage Flash Perfector Concealer. In a range of 22 shades, this new concealer gives high coverage and a natural luminosity. Price: **€31.50**. www.dior.com



Beauty Clinic

(Re)discover the Beauty Clinic for visible skin improvement at **Thermae Grimbergen**

All facial treatments from the Beauty Clinic are skin rejuvenating and also have other positive effects such as purifying the skin in case of acne or calming redness. No idea which treatment suits you? No problem! Make an appointment for a free info session and our beautician will be happy to give you tailored advice.

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Please note that these treatments are only given at Thermae Grimbergen. You can book them seven days a week, including Sundays! Call 02 270 81 96 to make your appointment.

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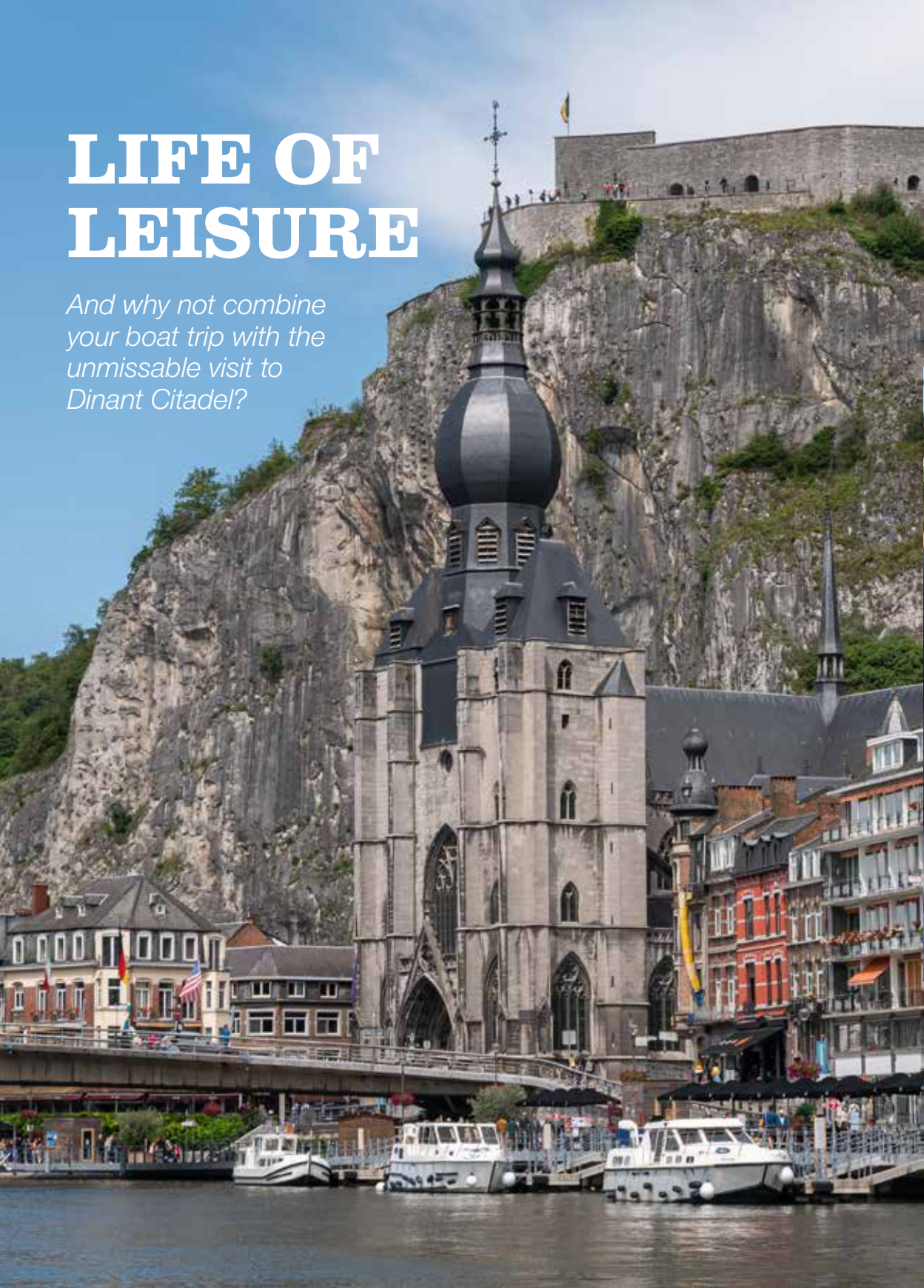


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LIFE OF
LEISURE

Interview

Robert Pattinson: Becoming Batman

In this month's celebrity interview, we talk to the actor taking on the mantle of one of DC Comic's most famous characters



It has taken eight years, 19 movie roles and a complete revision of his status as the teenage heartthrob of his era, but finally Robert Pattinson appears to have emerged out of the gloomy, seedy shadow of *The Twilight Saga* and into the dazzling, dangerous surroundings of his local gym.

The Londoner, who, professionally, has dabbled in everything from serious drama,

horror, crime, action and even biopics, is the latest big name to shape up for a role. And while excelling on screen in the likes of *Lost City of Z*, *Good Time*, *The Rover* and *The Lighthouse*, as the latest ripped and action-ready Batman, this is surely his toughest workout yet.

The big-budget Warner Bros project represents a defining experience for



the 35-year-old. In himself, physically and mentally, he admits to feeling like a different person, while professionally his full vanquishing of Edward Cullen now feels complete.

You always felt there was still a significant part of the actor's spirit left behind in something vampiric. In the end, it seems all Pattinson needed to do was hit the gym, don the famous bat suit and stoke the fires of expectation.

An implausibly long lead-up to Pattinson assuming the Batman mantle has been strung out further by the film industry's enforced shutdown in light of Covid-19; but those delays are now over, and the reinvention of one of the comic book greats is here.

Together: Did you doubt whether you'd be able to step up to this role in the way you have?

Pattinson: Doubt? Of course, lots of it! I think

any actor will go through periods where they will hesitate and question whether they can live up to a character in a script, or even the expectations that go with it.

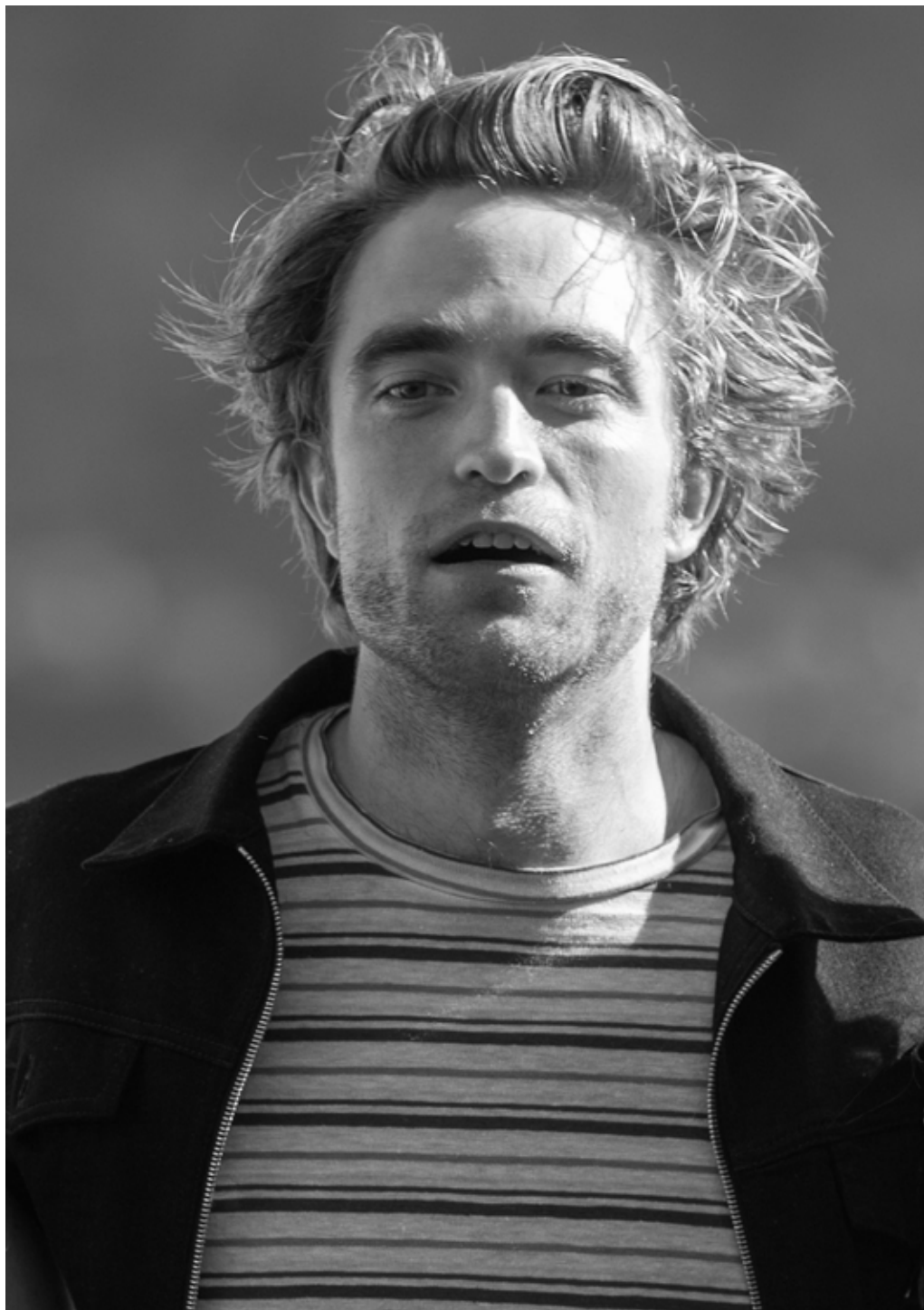
You look at the true warriors of the superhero genre – Hemsworth, The Rock, Downey Jr, Evans – and wonder if you're putting yourself in the wrong place. And yet, having spoken to a few, I know everyone is nervous when the opportunity comes about.

“ A DEFINING EXPERIENCE ”

It is all about pushing boundaries and building up to a point where you know, in the flesh, you can do justice to the physicality

required. And past that, so much of it is letting the special effects and on-screen exchanges produce the real magic. Overall, it's just very exciting.

In following the likes of Robert Lowery, Adam West – who played Batman for two decades – Michael Keaton, Val Kilmer, George Clooney, Christian Bale



and Ben Affleck in the modern era, you are placing yourself with quite a bounty of acting royalty. Does that intimidate or inspire you?

In every project I've ever taken on, I've come into it wanting to learn and to achieve new things. That's usually in the embodiment of a character, and someone who has a different personality to me; but taking on a full physical transformation as well feels even more exciting. I like the challenge.

Apparently you had to revise your body shape for the Batman role?

It was difficult, because for too long as far as health and fitness goes, I've been all in or all out, feast or famine. I realised I needed a more thorough approach to the way I undertook fitness because it's too easy for me to go one way or the other... or at least it has been in the past.

When you get to the point where you realise you need a break from your break, you've

probably gone too far backwards!

I've been looking for a structure that comes from something constant in life... a job, a relationship, a fitness programme.

In my head I've always wanted to ascend to a really peaked level of fitness and then have the wherewithal to stay there... so that's the challenge, and Batman has certainly got me to a point where I feel I am maintaining it. I guess the challenge comes now in staying there.

“IT'S ALL ABOUT PUSHING BOUNDARIES”

When you first broke through you said you found the attention quite bewildering. Do you still feel that way?

No, I don't worry about that stuff anymore. I'm used to getting stopped and commented on, so it doesn't really faze me either way. The fact is I live in London and I can go around pretty easily, even when I'm exercising outdoors. For the most part I get left alone.



**“ LOOKING FOR A
STRUCTURE ”**

Usually if someone stops me it's very polite and friendly and there's no longer that kind of frantic attention I had before. I feel that's because the whole *Twilight* thing was with a very different audience; but also because the nature of celebrity culture has changed a lot in the last few years – there are fewer paparazzi than before, and people aren't buying the gossip magazines or newspapers in the quantities they used to. Now everyone can take a photo and put it up on Instagram. I'm done worrying about it, to be honest.

Does the attention your celebrity attracts ever wear you down?

Not really. My career is an extraordinary gift and I'm so grateful for it that I can't imagine ever becoming depressed or annoyed, simply because the success that I've had is attracting attention from the public. You just learn to deal with everything and not be bothered by the attention. First of all, it's flattering and as a performer you're obviously seeking the approval of audiences. Secondly, it means that people appreciate your work. So it's pointless to let that attention annoy you because it's a contradiction and self-defeating.

If you're a performer, and that's essentially what an actor is, you are performing for an audience so you can't whine and moan about the fact that you've accomplished what you set out to do – which is to attract an audience and a following for your work.

Why do actors tend to suffer from these feelings of anxiety or get so wrapped up in their careers?

A lot of it is the nature of the business where it's so insular and your entire life revolves around your work. I've seen some of that in my own experience and you do everything you can to try to separate yourself from that unreal kind of world. But it's easy for actors to lose themselves in that delusional world

and some people get too attached to their success. And when things start to go badly in their careers they find that they have no real identity or life of their own to fall back on. It can be hard.

You don't seem afraid of failure, in any aspect of your life or career.

Definitely not. It's fair to say I'm a little bit more ambitious in the kinds of roles I'm choosing now, whereas a few years ago I would have run a mile away from anything with a box office or strength edge – where roles demand more physical preparation.

You don't advance your career by playing it safe, and perhaps it took me a little while to get to that place where I was really going after the big roles again.

Being in your position, would you say you've developed a good radar by now about the people who are false and want to be friends with you for the wrong reasons or people who have ulterior motives?

Yeah, but I mean to be honest, there are just not that many people like that. And when someone is, it's just so obvious. You have to remember that I have been in LA for quite a while and so I have quite a good group anyway. But yeah, definitely at the beginning it's strange, but at the same time, unless you are a total idiot, you are really not going to get that screwed over by people.

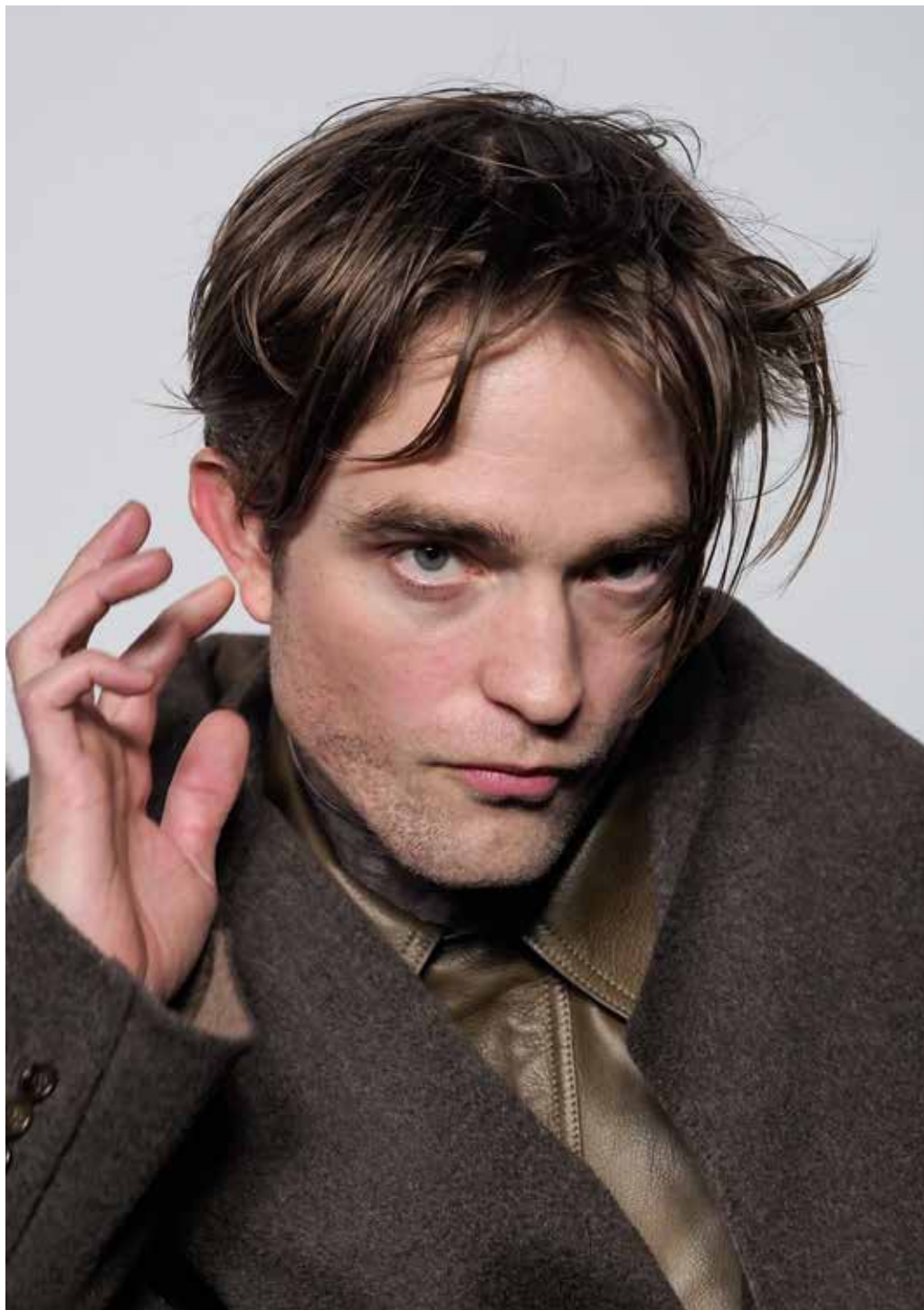
Having grown up with sisters, do you think that's informed your view of

**“ MY CAREER IS AN
EXTRAORDINARY
GIFT ”**

women in terms of being comfortable around them?

Yeah. I think so. I mean, I wasn't when I was younger. I kind of think also because

I went to an all-boys school and then went to a coed school when I was twelve, and I didn't realise that there were coed schools. I think because I was so amazed by it, I sort of think it changed my whole opinion on girls.



**“ I DIDN’T
REALISE THERE
WERE COED
SCHOOLS ”**

Whereas for most of my friends, they went to all-boys school their whole school life.

How would you describe your teenage years? Were you rebellious?

Not really. I was kind of fairly normal, and then I started working quite young, and then when I was 16, I kind of got my first big-ish role. It's gone on from there, but I've always regarded myself as a grounded person, despite it all, and I always want to be that way.

If you could go back and give yourself advice what you say to yourself?

Not much.

Well that's a good sign. You've done all the right things then?

I don't know. Perhaps, or maybe I am not seeing it yet [laughs]. ❶



Welcome to
Wallonia

Discover Wallonia, a region full of promise

Together takes a stroll through one of Europe's most beautiful areas

Wake up your senses. The smell of freshly cut grass. The feeling of sun on your cheeks. The sight of nature waking up. The desire to sing at the top of your voice. In spring, our senses awaken!

It is time to get some fresh air. And what could be better than a walk, a cycle ride, a horseback ride, with a pram... for every level. Wallonia offers all lovers of flowers and animals, occasional or seasoned walkers the possibility to choose numerous walks and hikes.

The region is extremely varied and allows you to (re)discover breathtaking landscapes, heritage or historic monuments, boat trips, castles... by bicycle, car or on foot. It is very easy to organise your preferred outing. Wallonia is full of hidden treasures!

For all families with babies, there are even circuits specially designed for walks with pushchairs. There will be no more need to

fold or carry them up the stairs. So you can organise a stress-free family walk.

When the weather is better, the bicycle returns as a transport of choice for outings in the great outdoors. With your family, friends or solo, you can travel for kilometres on the RAVEL cycle tracks, via the numbered cycle points or by following specific signposted itineraries. And it is very simple with the map which you will find on the website that guides you across Wallonia with many circuits created by the network of Wallonia's tourist organisations.

You can recharge your batteries and get your fill of energy in Wallonia. It is an extraordinary region from every point of view.

Wallonia also means enriching activities, places and addresses to discover... And just some of its many delights await you in the following pages.
visitwallonia.be/spring

Les Croisières Mosanes

invite you to discover the landscapes of the Meuse valley, an exceptional site on the architectural and nature front.



Through a multitude of personalised services, from classic or combined cruises to themed tours (dinner on board, night cruise, etc.) and through the organisation of private or professional events from 2 to 60 people, you will enjoy a pleasant trip that always meets your wishes.

www.croisieres-mosanes.be

And why not combine your boat trip with the unmissable visit to **Dinant Citadel**?

From the glass cabin of the cable car, you will see the bustle of Dinant below in detail.

Perched like sentinels on the edge of the ramparts, you will enjoy seeing the Meuse flowing far beyond to the borders of the country. Inside

the fortress walls, you can visit the Weapons Museum, the dioramas and the reconstitution of a shelter bombed in the First World War 1914-1918, that will bring the highlights of Belgian and European history to life.

Our large terraces or our restaurant will welcome you for a pleasant break during this unforgettable day.

www.citadellededinant.be

In urgent need for a dose of fun? Walibi will surprise you!

From rapid rollercoasters to family fun, Walibi's **43 attractions** guarantee a sensational day out for the whole family. Whether you visit Walibi with small children or friends who love a shot of adrenaline, you are sure to make some **amazing new memories**. Wait, there's more! **Fresh new attractions and experiences** were added to the park recently. Step inside the evocative *Karma World* to get a taste of Bollywood and head over to the *Grand Maharaja Movie Theatre* to pop some corn in the best attraction of 2019: *Popcorn Revenge*! Can you hear the drums beating in rhythm with your heart? Then you must have stepped inside the faraway land of *Exotic World*, a brand new zone that offers yet another thrilling new



experience: **Kondaa, the highest, fastest and most terrifying megacoaster in the Benelux.**

SPECIAL OFFER: 5€ discount with promo code KONDAA22 from 01/04 to 30/09/22

Conditions of the offer:

- Dated ticket, valid once on the chosen date
- Valid for 1 person > 1m
- Max. 10 tickets/person

Go quickly to www.tickets-for-parks.be and enter your code KONDAA22

To benefit from the special rates for groups of 20 people or more, please contact our team: reservations.be@walibi.com



On 18 and 19 June, Napoleon's Last HQ and the Memorial of the Battle of Waterloo organise their bivouacs.

Allied bivouacs at the Hougoumont farm

This year again, the British, Prussian and Dutch troops set up their camp between the Butte du Lion and the Hougoumont Farm.

There are 1000 soldiers and horses who settle there for the weekend, for the greatest pleasure of the visitors of the Memorial of the Battle of Waterloo. The bivouacs are open to

the public and maneuvers and demonstrations are organized during the day. It is a unique opportunity to confront the reality of soldiers in 1815, and to relive the aftermath of the battle of June 18.

Information and booking :
www.waterloo1815.be

On the French side

Napoleon's Last HQ will host 1,000 French reenactor troops including infantry, cavalry and artillery. Throughout the weekend, you can visit the Emperor's campaign tent, meet Napoleon and his General Staff, as well as the soldiers' camp. There are non-stop activities for adults and children on both days. Some focus on the military while others, with the emphasis on fun, are based on the life of civilians in 1815.

Program and booking: www.dqgn.be



© MTBW

VISIT WATERLOO & BEYOND

From the battlefield of Waterloo to the abbey of Villers-la-Ville, via the Collegiate Church of Saint-Gertrude in Nivelles or the Château d'Hélécine, there are many traces of the past in the territory of Walloon Brabant in Wallonia. Our artistic soul is woken at every turn in the L Museum, in the company of Tintin at the Hergé Museum or even when entering the giant book at the Folon Foundation. You can also stroll along country roads, in parks

or woods, on foot or by bike. There are pleasurable things to see and pleasures to taste!

How would you like to explore the Walloon Brabant region? The Walloon Brabant Tourist Office has concocted **5 themed adventures** to help you (re)discover our beautiful province. There is always something to experience, so let go and be inspired!

5 trips to discover:

- In the footsteps of Napoleon: Relive history on a 2-day trip.
- Walloon Brabant, a land of Artists: 2-day trip, by car or bicycle.
- Heritage secret with 2 different journeys: In the Footsteps of Monks and Knights (72km by bike) or spend a weekend cycling in the Hesbaye countryside (117km).
- For the Adventurous.
- Sweet life to enjoy wellness stays

More info at: www.waterlooandbeyond.be



The Eau d'Heure Lakes with family or friends There are many activities to discover. Walks on foot or by bike on RAVel all around the lakes, Amphibus tree climbing, aquatic pool, wellness centre, sailing, windsurfing, paddle, golf, playgrounds, jet-ski, water skiing, diving, tele-skiing, visiting the dam and its panoramic tower...

Also enjoy quality accommodation by the lakeside. At the Eau d'Heure Lakes everything becomes possible and accessible for an unforgettable moment.

Info: reservation@lleh.be
www.lacsdeleaudheure.be

SPARKOH! Scientifically proven emotions!

Embark on a captivating journey into the world of science through interactive exhibitions, 4D films and workshops. At the heart of a former coal-mining site, **SPARKOH!** is an interactive science adventure park where the whole family can spend a full day discovering the role of science in our daily life.



Science exploration in themed exhibitions A Thunderstorm simulator, shoes made out of pineapples and interactive backdrops brought to life by augmented reality... science never stops amazing us! Look, listen, touch, experiment and ask yourself questions about the world while having fun in an original place.

Science experiments during workshops

Molecular cuisine, robotics, experiments in a lab... during the holidays, our team organises workshops for families.

Immersive 4D auditorium In The Palace of Images, films are projected on the inside of a giant cube,

immersing the audience into a world of 100m² images. Feast your eyes on our new animated movie « Pas Bêtes », a film that puts the spotlight on animal intelligence!

Get outdoors to enjoy nature! The adventure isn't just indoors, but outdoors as well. Enjoy being outside in the playground facilities, explore the Biodiversity Garden and the slag heap.

Ready to live out some exciting and unique experiences? SPARKOH! is the place to be!

www.sparkoh.be

Travel

The Haute Ardenne, the right, highly natural Belgian address!

The Haute Ardenne is a small territory located south of Liège, 170 km from Brussels. It brings together the municipalities of Gouvy, Lierneux, Trois-Ponts and Vielsalm. And just by mentioning its name, you want a change of air, you imagine the wide landscapes and the forests...

Inspiring, sacred, wonderful, the Ardennes Forest keeps the memory of stories linked to witches, goblins, the devil and wolves. It invites you to hike, cycle or mountain bike, horseback or donkey, over short or longer distances, a real family destination! You are also traveling back in time, as this region retains the marks of a turbulent history, from



© aline lejeune

Celtic culture to the Battle of the Ardennes. If you are a fan of motor sports, the Spa-Francorchamps circuit is very close! It's not a legend, we eat well here: artisanal beers, smoked charcuterie, cheeses, trout, mushrooms...

you will find the best of Ardennes know-how at our producers and in our restaurants! For your comfort, our hotels, holiday villages, campsites, holiday homes and unusual accommodation in the heart of nature open their doors to you. In truth, here, there is space, you can distance yourself from the daily hustle and bustle, take time to get together with your family! Sit comfortably by the corner of a wood fire, enjoy... You'll feel so good in the Haute Ardenne!

www.haute-ardenne.be

Waterloo Battlefield

The 1815 Pass is a combined ticket offering access to the 3 main museums of the Waterloo battlefield with a comfortable discount on the total price.

The Waterloo 1815 Memorial, the Wellington Museum and Napoleon's Last Headquarters are located closely in Brabant Wallon.

The Memorial, an underground museum down the Lion's Mound, offers more than 2000m2 of exhibition space, access to the Panorama of 1912, to the Hougoumont farm and to many historical animations. Housed in a 1705 building, the Wellington Museum is the former headquarters of the Duke, and its location in the center of Waterloo gave its name to the famous battle. An exceptional collection of weapons and authentic objects is presented to the public.



©Memorial bataille de waterloo 1815 champ de bataille butte logo

Napoleon's Last Headquarters focuses on the events of the Emperor's last night before the battle of 18 June. The visitor moves around in an authentic setting and discovers a place classified since 1951.

Price : 23€/adult – 14€/child

Information and booking:

Memorial of the Battle of Waterloo 1815
Route du Lion 1815 - 1420 Braine l'Alleud
www.waterloo1815.be

Wellington Museum
Ch. de Bruxelles 147 - 1410 Waterloo
www.museewellington.be

Last HQ of Napoleon
Ch. de Bruxelles 66 - 1472 Vieux Genappe
Program and booking: www.dqgn.be

Charleroi, the quirky and unusual

Charleroi, the quirky and unusual, has become a new trendy destination: UNESCO heritage, historic centre, museums, shopping, bars and nightlife. The metropolis offers a brand new urbanistic face.

Boucle noire

A further 22 km circuit at the GR412, for the most demanding hikers. Extending as far as Charleroi railway station, the circuit passes by particularly attractive places, such as the Marchienne and Monceau castles, the Martinet site and slag heaps and the Dampremy-La Docherie chain of slag heaps. The tour includes climbing the four slag heaps connected to each other by passages,



© Leslie Artamonow

paths and short crossings over secondary roads.

Urban explorer ?

Starting from Charleroi-Sud station, the Carolo Street Art Tour offers an opportunity to discover the urban art scene, from the lower to the upper part of the city, from one work to another: urban murals and sculpture and street

furniture, customised electricity boxes, "free expression" wall...

The mapped tour covers 19 stations, each of which is the subject of a short introductory text. The maps are available at the Maison du Tourisme du Pays de Charleroi.

Maison du Tourisme du Pays de Charleroi
Place Charles II, 20 – 6000 Charleroi
www.cm-tourisme.be

Royal Museum of Mariemont

Treat yourself to a break in the Estate of Mariemont, near La Louvière, a mere 60 km away from Brussels!

When entering the 45-hectare park (there is free entrance all year long), you will discover huge trees, some of them a hundred years old, sculptures and statues by renowned and local sculptors and even a few sociable animals.

In the heart of this park you will find the Royal Museum of Mariemont, a Museum of Art, History and antiquities that will take you from ancient Egypt and Greece to the Hainaut, through China and Gaul (free entrance



© MRM

for the permanent collections). Diversity is key: you can find an Egyptian mummy next to sculptures of Roman goddesses, alongside a smiling Buddha, antique Gallo-Roman jewels, a large collection of Tournai porcelain and a Japanese tea house.

Most of the exhibits in the permanent collections come courtesy of Raoul Warocqué, a rich coal magnate from the 19th century. He bequeathed his castle, his collections and his park to the Belgian State.

Do not hesitate to come and discover the Park, which is wonderful all year round – and to be amazed by the wealth of artefacts exhibited in the Museum.
www.musee-mariemont.be

Travel

Visit the “Pays du Centre”, a surprising and eclectic journey

Known as the “Pays du Centre”, it’s right between Mons and Charleroi, 45 km from Brussels and its capital is La Louvière. It’s famous for its carnivals, has a quirky vibe and is packed with culture, as well as being criss-crossed by some attractive canals and its boatlifts. There are also impressive industrial sites, an array of museums (each one more surprising than the last), some UNESCO marvels as well as plenty of must-see breweries, parks and castles ! Well, what are you waiting for ?



You have a question?

Contact the Tourist Office : 21-22,
Place Jules Mansart, 7100 La Louvière
- +32(0)64/26.15.00 - info@centrissime.be
www.centrissime.be

Sleep in a church on the edge of the Ardennes!

Pack your bags at the *Quartier Latin* hotel, located in the small town of Marche-en-Famenne in Wallonia. This family-run 4-star hotel is nestled in the walls of a former Jesuit church from the 18th century.



The *Quartier Latin* invites you to relax, with its 70 rooms, its wellness centre and its two large terraces all under one roof. You can also discover the two restaurant areas: and enjoy Adrien's gourmet and local cuisine in the Brasserie, as well as Raphaël's refined three-course menus in the Salle à Manger.

Situated between the Famenne and the Ardennes, it is the ideal starting point to

discover this beautiful region on foot, by bike or with a classic car. Indeed, the *Quartier Latin* can aid your explorations with its rental service offering (electric) bicycles and two vintage cars. In addition, the management has created special roadbooks to help you discover the most beautiful roads in the Ardennes during your stay.

From your welcome at the reception desk to showing you to your room, Caroline and her team will guide

you and give all the details for your stay, so you can make the most of the time you spend at the hotel.
Hotel Quartier Latin
www.quartier-latin.be 📍

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Experience an unforgettable moment in the Haute-Meuse at Dinant.
Discover the pleasure of a private cruise with the captain and on-board staff for a refined meal or the organisation of your exclusive event.



history



tradition



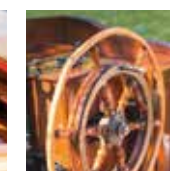
classic



excellence



comfort



authenticity

The Secret is Out!

Mark Browne explores Sölden resort in the Oetz valley, a jewel in Austria's skiing crown

As the ski season draws to a close, those seeking a last outing to the spring snow in Europe face a limited number of reliable options, especially if the preference is for a resort that combines snow security with a lively nightlife and good entertainment options. Fortunately an answer is at hand – Sölden in Austria!-

Sölden is the largest ski resort in the Oetz valley, one of the longest valleys in the Tyrol, a region famous for its skiing and beautiful alpine scenery. Once just a collection of buildings along the mountain pass, the village has grown extensively in recent years and is located in a sunny location at just under 1,400 metres in altitude. However, it is surrounded by a series of high mountains, including three peaks over 3,000 metres, one of which, the Wildspitze, at 3,768m is the second highest mountain in

“ BEAUTIFUL ALPINE SCENERY ”

Austria. Access to the ski areas is afforded by two giant lifts including the Giggijoch cable car at the entrance to the village, which passes over the higher winter sport hamlet of Hochsölden (at around 2,000 metres), and the Gaislachkogel. These bring skiers up to enjoy the over 140km of ski pistes on the slopes above the village.

And what slopes they are! Including more than 25km of black slopes as well as a series of adrenaline raising race runs and glacier skiing, it is little wonder that the resort regularly hosts the first World Cup races of the season: typically, a giant slalom scheduled for late October on the Rettenbach glacier. However, it's not just about racing – the resort also caters for tobogganing runs, fun parks and an ice skating rink, as well as having nearly 60km of blue ski pistes for those preferring to take it



easier or still learning the sport. Furthermore, with the end of Covid restrictions in Austria in March, Sölden has once again assumed its position as a hive of lively après-ski entertainment renowned throughout the ski world and beyond.

A unique feature of the resort is the new 007 Elements cinematic installation. Constructed following Sölden's appearance in the James Bond film "Spectre", it is housed inside a bespoke building at the summit of the Gaislachkogel Mountain at over 3,000 metres – a spot worthy of a Bond villain's lair!

Its space-age aspect somehow blends seamlessly with the inspiring beauty of its natural surroundings. It is also located next to the location for the "Hoffler Klinik" in Spectre, where James Bond meets Dr. Madeleine Swann before an epic snow pursuit sequence begins. Today that building can be enjoyed by visitors as the Ice Q restaurant. An essential spot to visit for Bond fans, 007 Elements is also of general interest as it affords not only incredible insights into the big-budget movie industry, but also a microcosm of the evolving views of Western society as reflected in the cinema. And that is without even mentioning the gadgets and film costumes on display! It is a spot for all the family to enjoy.

Where to stay

Sölden has grown hugely in popularity as a resort so that it can now offer over 15,000 beds to meet all tastes and budgets. However, at the luxury end, it now has a new pinnacle in the form of a brand new resort location – The Secret Sölden.

Constructed to the highest standards, with an eye for French flair and influences, The Secret Sölden combines the luxury and quality of a 5-star spa resort with a relaxed and welcoming ambience that is evident right from the entrance lobby and gives it a charm that can be lacking in larger hotels of this calibre. Located very near the main Gaislachkogel lift, guests have easy access up to the pistes and can ski all the way back down to within 50 metres of the hotel.



There is a keen focus on wellness. Apart from a selection of saunas in the spa, “Le Feel”, a highlight is the well-heated outdoor pool accessible as a swim through from inside the pool area of the hotel into the gardens beyond.

While the nightlife generally – and the après-ski in particular – in Sölden is well known for its exuberance, Skybar “The Vue” located in the penthouse of The Secret Sölden offers a much more refined and relaxed, luxurious environment in which to unwind and enjoy an exquisite cocktail after a day on the slopes – or in the spa! It affords incredible panoramic

views over the surrounding mountains as well as dramatic widescreen multimedia visuals once darkness descends. Meanwhile, for evening dining, the LA’LIV restaurant on the ground floor serves up first class gourmet French-Alpine fusion cuisine and afternoon tea, including drinks, which is served throughout the afternoon and included as part of the resort price.

With the ski season in Sölden continuing until May and Easter special deals being offered, The Secret Sölden is an ideal place to treat yourself and indulge in luxury with family and friends this April!





How to get there

Sölden is only an hour's drive from Innsbruck airport, 2.5 hours from Munich, 2.2 hours from Memmingen or 3.15 hours from Zurich. There is no train line all the way to the village, but public transport options are available in the form of local buses and private transfers. Those who do wish to travel by rail can reach the Ötztal Bahnhof at the end of the valley before getting a transfer for the last stretch of the journey.

Mark Browne was a guest of The Secret Sölden.

www.the-secret-soelden.com/en ⓘ



Gastronomic delight on the outskirts of Brussels

Caroline Dierckx enjoys fine dining in a gorgeous location

The 'Maxime Colin' restaurant in Kraainem is a unique place set between a castle and a lake where it is good to go and discover or rediscover tasty and inventive cooking.

Its location is atypical – a former old 17th century presbytery in a bucolic style that is warm and welcoming. Inside, the renovation carried out a few months ago reveals a contemporary tone. For the warm days to come, the large terrace at the edge of the lake offers an open view to the nature beyond. It is a perfect place to have an aperitif or a meal. In addition, a large carpark is just 50 metres away.

As for the chef, Maxime Colin, just 34 years old, is already well-known in the Belgian gastronomic landscape, since he took over the ovens of the then Michelin-starred 'La Villa Lorraine', Uccle, in 2016. At the same time, the passionate chef that started cooking at the age of 13 has earned the title of 'young chef of the year Gault & Millau 2016'. A few years earlier, he also took a leading role alongside Pascal De Valkeneer at Uccle's 'Le Chalet de la Forêt'. It is not surprising that Maxime Colin's brand definitely and confidently counts in the landscape of really fine dining in Belgium.

Maxime Colin's cuisine is a real artform. It is authentic, full of flavours, surprising and very tasty. Maxime makes it a point of honour to choose seasonal, locally produced ingredients with care. He knows every product by heart. He works with them with



© MorganeBallPhotography

his own unique approach, which is translated to the plate as frank and personal cooking.

Maxime offers several choices of menu in three or five courses. There is also a selection of cheeses from Julien Hazard.

A word of advice, let yourself be guided by the chef's suggestions. It is a lovely way to be surprised and it will thrill your tastebuds. Do the same for the wines. The wine cellar is not to be outdone. Once again, let yourself be seduced...

What we really appreciated was the attentive and impeccable service provided by all members of the Maxime Colin team. A harmonious partnership between the hotel manager, waiter, cook but also Chef Maxime himself. It was always kind, leaving room for conversation and a human touch.

We had a great time, and we will come back to enjoy the terrace and the Chef's new ideas!

www.maximecolin.be ⓘ

Lamb, glorious lamb

Together looks at Irish lamb – a classic for Easter

To celebrate Easter in its right and proper way, the Irish agrifood promotion agency Bord Bia is proud to present Irish lamb as an exceptional product.

In Ireland, animals benefit from the Irish terrain which is outstanding for breeding. The island is surrounded by the Atlantic Ocean. It rains more than 180 days a year and the temperature is rarely lower than 0°C in winter and higher than 20°C in summer. The grass therefore grows ten months a year and makes up the lambs' food almost exclusively, apart from their mothers' milk.

In addition, the Irish smallholdings are family farms. The farmers are extremely attached to their land, some not hesitating to take on breeding work as well as their other professional employment which is sometimes far removed from the agricultural world so they can enhance their land.

Some 70% of Irish lamb is produced according to these specifications which commit breeders to reduce the environmental impact of their activities and integrate them into the fabric of the rural economy more efficiently.

Expert advice on Irish lamb

So now you understand a bit about Irish lamb, how should you make the most of it? Stéphane Grulois, chef of Mons' gastronomic restaurant 'Maxens' is pleased to give you a few tips.

A connoisseur of Ireland and its products, Grulois is a pillar of the Chef's Irish Beef Club. This institution for Irish chef meat



Stéphane Grulois: "I am never disappointed at the quality of Irish meat"

ambassadors has 90 members in nine countries, including Belgium.

We asked the expert to explain what makes Irish lamb so special.

Why do you use Irish meat?

Stéphane Grulois (SG): For me, Irish meat is a guarantee of taste and tenderness. I am never disappointed at its quality that remains high at all times of the year. And when I go on trips to Ireland, I have been able to see how the breeders work on their land, which has reinforced my belief.

What is your favourite part of lamb for Easter?

SG: I work mainly with two parts of lamb, the pure fillet and the rack.

The rack brings a very particular strength

of taste with the bone. I love to cook my meat under a vacuum to preserve its natural flavours as much as possible. As for the pure fillet, I love its tenderness above all. I like to sear it quickly then cook it very fast at a high heat, before finishing it by gently cooking in the oven. This way you get a fine duo



of textures – an almost crunchy crust and tender meat just pink.

What are your tips for cooking a leg of lamb?

SG: The key to cook a leg of lamb in the oven successfully is above all not to let it dry out. So I advise you to cook the joint covered with aluminium foil. The aluminium will keep the steam and flavours around the meat and stop it drying out. Once the lamb is fully cooked, take it out of the foil and just sear it on all four sides in a very hot pan to give it a nice colour and a nice crust.

Finally, a little trick to impress the gallery?

SG: I like to add a handful of Crau hay [French hay that has been covered by the Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (the first animal feed to benefit from it) since 1997] to

the filling. This 'Rolls Royce' of hay will emit an unique aroma during cooking and goes very well with lamb. After cooking, do not hesitate to reduce the cooking juices with a small quantity of lamb stock before whisking it in butter to obtain a nice shiny sauce with a little taste of the prairie.

Where to find Irish lamb?

Delhaize, Carrefour and Colruyt stock it all year round and have great promotions for Easter, with Makro, Match, Cru and Rob's Market other major sources. Irish lamb is also available in butcher shops.

And finally, here is a special recipe idea, perfect for Easter.

Irish leg of lamb in the oven

Serves four, preparation time 15 minutes, cooking time, 45 minutes


Ingredients:

- 1 leg of Irish lamb • 3 cloves of garlic
- 5 sprigs of rosemary • 5 sprigs of thyme
- 1 bay leaf • 3 turnips
- 3 sweet onions • 3 carrots
- Fleur de sel salt
- Salt and pepper • Olive oil

Method

1. Take out the leg of lamb three hours in advance.
2. Make parallel, shallow cuts at the top of the lamb.
3. Rub the lamb with the fleur de sel, rosemary and thyme.
4. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
5. For the filling, cut the turnips, carrots and onions into four pieces.
6. Make a bed of vegetables in a baking tray and place the lamb on top.
7. Bake the lamb for 45 minutes and baste it every 10 minutes.
8. Leave the meat to rest for 25 minutes before slicing.
9. Use the juice at the bottom of the tray for the sauce.

Bon appétit!

www.boeuf-irlandais.fr 

Wine

German wines and... asparagus

In this month's wine page, **Paul Morris** reveals some humble eye-raising pairings...

The misconception of German wines relying on 'pairing' with bratwurst and suckling pig is definitively debunked when you visit the Wines of Germany website.

Asparagus anyone?

They explain: "Asparagus's slightly bitter notes can make it a tricky partner when it comes to wine. It often clashes when paired with the standard fruit-driven varieties.

Possible alternatives:

Silvaner, Weißburgunder, Grauburgunder and Rivaner (Müller-Thurgau). With their round acidity and delicate fruity aromas – reminiscent of pears, apples, nuts and flowers – they lull these savoury stalks into submission, even coaxing out a bit of sweetness."

Asparagus bears the poetic folk name 'sparrow grass' and is synonymous with the coming of spring. Through the ages across the planet it has also been celebrated as an aphrodisiac. When you pair this tight bundle of fresh vegetables with German wines they are a marriage made in Bayern and elsewhere in Germany.

What goes with what?

White Asparagus boasts mild, almost sweet and pleasantly bitter flavours, a match for the



German winemaking town Rüdesheim am Rhein

subtle aromas of Silvaner from Rheinhessen, the largest of 13 German wine regions, as well as Gutedels from Baden. Violet Asparagus – with slightly richer aromas – cosies up well with a fresh Rivaner from Franken. Whereas Green Asparagus is more intense – Pfalz Rieslings and powerful Grauburgunder and unoaked Chardonnay

make an ideal complement.

Let's not leave out the meat-eaters. "Veal or pork cutlet, or a mildly-spiced roast, can feature an expressive range of aromas. For expressive, robust wines with the rich aromatic range to more than hold their own, try Weißburgunder, Grauburgunder or Chardonnay." www.germanwines.de

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Books

Escher illusions in your hands

This month, **TASCHEN** showcases a genius whose intricate patterns and mind-boggling graphics have kept viewers guessing for a century



Mysterious and mathematical, the magical visual world of Dutch artist M C Escher (1898–1972) has captivated scientists and scholars and made its mark on popular culture, inspiring book covers, album art, films, posters, and puzzles.

Indeed, long before the first computer-generated 3D images, Escher, whose work perfectly incarnates his belief that “wonder is the salt of the earth”, was a master of the third dimension. His impossible geometry and illusions, bordering between the scientific and psychological, pay homage to the possibilities of the human mind.



The set of drawings chosen for ‘Kaleidoscopes’ puts Escher’s tessellated wonders right at your fingertips with 17 easy-to-assemble paper sculptures. Folding along the score lines, you can transform the artist’s geometric designs into three-dimensional polyhedra with forming and reforming patterns. The creations include fantastic arrangements of flowers, butterflies, lizards, and seashells.

The book has already garnered high praise: “This TASCHEN book about the artist featuring paper puzzle kits that allow you to actually build [Escher’s] paradoxical structures at home, unlikely as that may seem,” says the Guardian. For laweekly.com, the book “Puts Escher’s impossible objects in your hands.”

The accompanying work to Kaleidoscopes, ‘Visions of Symmetry’, includes a review of the geometric principles and artistic invention underlying Escher’s optical marvels as well as concise instructions.

Escher’s path through life

Amazing though it may seem, Escher thought he had no mathematical ability. However he met with the mathematicians George Pólya, Roger Penrose, Harold Coxeter and crystallographer Friedrich Haag, and carried out his own research into tessellation.

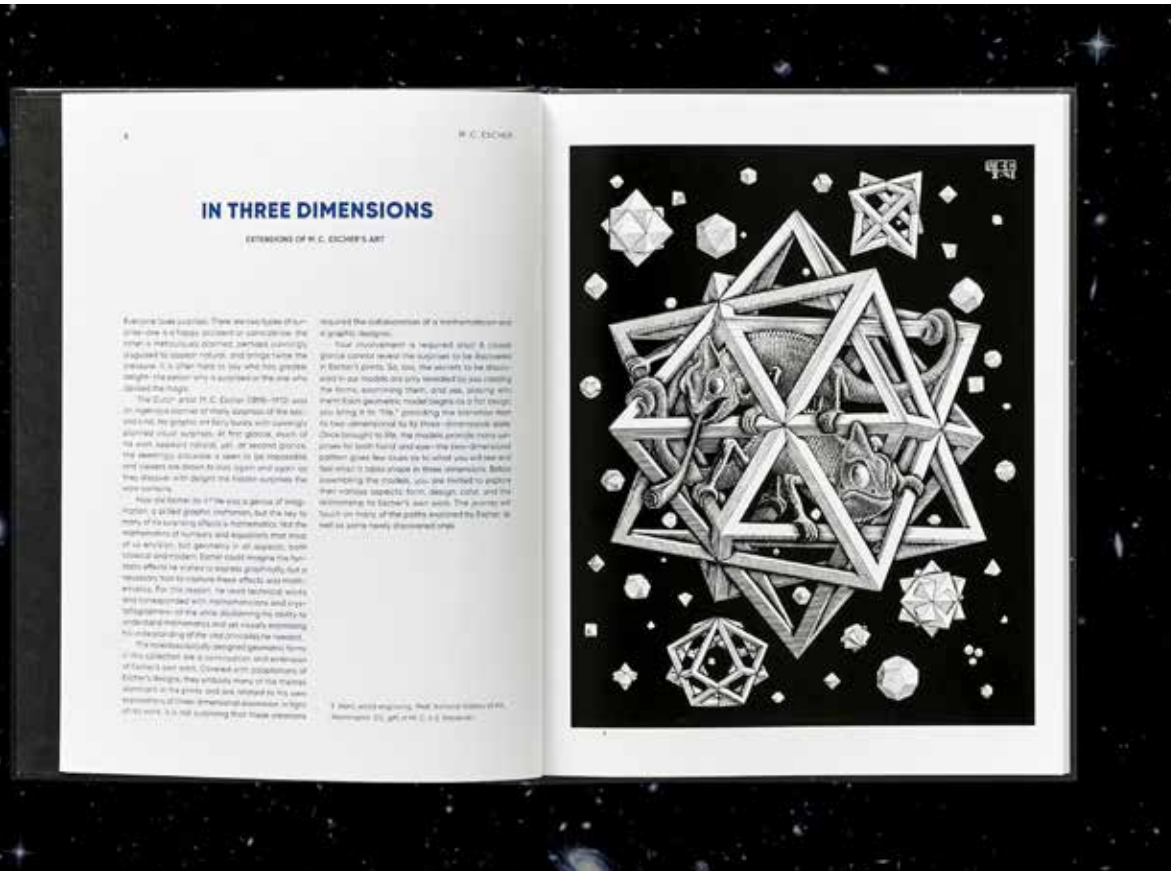
Early in his career, he was inspired by nature, making studies of insects, landscapes, and plants such as lichens, all of which he used in his art. He travelled in Italy and Spain, sketching buildings, townscapes, architecture and the tiles of the Alhambra and the Mezquita of Cordoba, and becoming steadily more interested in their mathematical structure.

Despite wide popular interest, Escher was neglected in the art world, even in his native Netherlands for most of his life. He was 70 before a retrospective exhibition was held.

The authors

Wallace G. Walker spent most of his career

**“ A MASTER
OF THE THIRD
DIMENSION ”**



as an independent artist living in New York City. He was a graduate of Cranbrook Academy of Art, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan and the inventor of IsoAxis®. He worked for I.M. Pei and Partners and taught at both Parsons School of Design and the New York Institute of Technology. He had numerous shows and exhibits in cities across the USA. He returned to his hometown of Shreveport, Louisiana in 1989 and continued his artistic activities until his death in 2003. Doris Schattschneider is Professor Emerita of Mathematics at Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where she taught for 34 years. Her dual interest in geometry and art led naturally to the study of M.C.

“FORMING AND REFORMING PATTERNS”

Escher's work. Active as a teacher, lecturer, editor, and writer, she has published widely on Escher's work. Her book 'M.C. Escher: Visions of Symmetry' gives a complete account of Escher's symmetry work, with colour photographs of all 150 of his symmetry drawings.

The details

17 easy-to-assemble paper sculptures and book, 21 x 27cm, 64 pages, in a box, 26 x 32.3 x 4cm. Edition: English. €50

Available from:

TASCHEN Store Brussels, Grand Sablon/
Grote Zavel 35, 1000 Brussels.
www.taschen.be

What's On International: Bilbao rags... and riches

This month we look at the upcoming Bilbao International Art & Fashion (BIAAF) Design competition



The first thing to say is that if you have not been to Bilbao, then cancel everything and head to the hilly, wonderful Basque country. Fashion is one of the region's main passions. The beating heart of the region has announced the emerging designers – the 30 finalists – who will battle it out for the prizes during its 8th Edition.

Under the motto 'Create! The best is yet to come!' BIAAF bets once again on the transformative power of design, discovering and supporting young creatives worldwide. BIAAF* is gearing up for a key edition that will have €25,000 in prize money for three categories: Best Garment Design, Best

Accessory Design and Best Local Emerging Designer.

BIAAF, through this very special contest, aspires to act as an engine for new creative industries, providing access to quality training and enabling emerging designers to have a presence in new markets.

A local jury selected the finalists out of over 1,300 participants coming from 92 countries. The winners will be selected by an international jury on 13 May, and all finalists' and winners' works will be showcased in a final exhibition that will be displayed on the occasion of the awards ceremony in June.

What's on

BIAAF continues consolidating its links with the most important fashion and design schools at a global level, not only thanks to the prestige acquired as a benchmark competition to promote young creative talents who use art as inspiration for their collections, but also thanks to the interest aroused by the city of Bilbao's Guggenheim [modern and contemporary museum] effect in terms of culture and creativity.

BIAAF has managed to set up a unique ecosystem, capable of attracting, developing and professionalising creative and innovative talent, with the aim of empowering these young creatives to launch their own business initiatives in an innovative way, highlighting their talent and supporting their professional development.

In the words of Victoria Cañas, President of BIAAF: "It's about adapting means that are bold enough, against all odds, to pursue change and invent new models. Our contest aims to reaffirm one of the most precious values: creativity."

It is worth mentioning that among the chosen artists is Lara Dheedene from Belgium, finessing her creativity at Hasselt's PXL-MAD School of Arts, Jewellery department.

*BIAAF – Bilbao International Art & Fashion BIAAF is the leading European platform for emerging fashion design. After 15 years of



activity, BIAAF is in connection with some 700 schools and has reached some 7,000 designers from around the world through its activities.

Its main objective is to give international visibility to emerging designers, enhance their employability and offer them a high-performance education through scholarship programs that allow them to develop as professionals, always with a vision of a fashion industry that is responsible to the environment and respectful of human rights. www.biaaf.com

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Cinema: The best of the big screen



Liz Newmark looks at three top movies showing in cinemas this month


Batman

One thing is clear. This nearly-three hour blockbuster is also very dark on the lighting front – so best not to go if you are tired. Director and co-writer Matt Reeves' classic was always going to be better than its predecessor – a film that Ben Affleck would probably rather forget. Christian Bale and George Clooney's Batmen fared better. Reeves' *Batman*, based on the DC Comics, is closer to the original 1966 version. It focuses on Gotham City's underworld when a sadistic serial killer (the Riddler, played chillingly by Paul Dano) leaves behind a trail of cryptic clues after killing the city mayor. Robert Pattison, very convincing as Bruce Wayne operating as the vigilante Batman, is reinvented as a rock star recluse. He needs to find the killer helped by the police department and then finds out to his dismay that his family is involved. The excellent supporting cast includes, as well as Dano, Colin Farrell as the Penguin, Zoë Kravitz as a feisty Catwoman and Andy Serkis as the villain Ventriloquist Alfred Penn. Random trivia – Pattison's attempts to choose a different voice for Batman were deemed atrocious and the film brought his girlfriend Suki Waterhouse to tears.
Reviews: IMDb 8.4/10, AlloCine 4.2/5, Rotten Tomatoes 85%
Running time: 178 minutes

Belfast

Kenneth Branagh's "most personal film" is a semi-autobiographical account of 11-year-old Buddy – a young working class boy's childhood during the tumultuous late 1960s in the Northern Irish capital. The cast is starry, with James Dornan excellent as the typically Irish occasional gambling dad, Caitriona Balfe magnificent as his continually worrying mum and Judie Dench wonderfully quirky as his grandmother. The period details are amazing and the film's drama and authenticity is heightened by being shot in black and white and by its Van Morrison score. A Belfast native himself, Morrison provided a new song 'Down to Joy' for the film as well as classics like 'A Bright Side of the Road'. Buddy (Jude Hill) is the natural star of the often nostalgic show. His escapades, including attempts to steal sweets or laundry detergent with his cousin Moira, bring humour to what could be a dark film set in streets divided by the Troubles. As Catholics and Protestants clash and the family decide to move, Buddy continues to hope he might marry his sweetheart Catherine – even though she's a Catholic.
Reviews: IMDb 7.3/10, AlloCine 3.7/5, Rotten Tomatoes 87%
Running time: 102 minutes

Un Monde

Any parent about to send a child to primary school should possibly not watch this film. It is a chilling, gripping immersion into a child's world – the school playground and all its terrors. Seven-year-old Nora (played incredibly by Maya Vanderbeque) hugs her father desperately before starting a new school with her beloved 10-year-old brother Abel (another fantastic performance by Günter Duret). It gets a whole lot worse when she realises he is the subject of vicious bullying. Caught between the demands of her father to tell all, of her brother to keep quiet and her own desire to fit in, you see all the time her struggle with loyalty. Director Laura Windel shot the film in Forest's Athénée Royal Andrée Thomas [in the 2021 summer holidays] at child's level. You rarely see the adults' full height, this emphasising the tension and drama. No judgements are made and there is no happy ending. But as well as horrific set pieces there are lighter moments with Nora and her friends in the canteen. And the original and authentic dialogue is mainly made up by the child actors themselves.
French, Dutch subtitles. Reviews: IMDb 7.3/10, AlloCine 3.7/5, Rotten Tomatoes 100%
Running time: 72 minutes 

What's on

Go wild in the capital

After two years in the dark, Brussels is welcoming clubbers back in style with the Volume Pass

After an initial launch last November, playasbl, in collaboration with visit.brussels, has created a new Volume Pass offer. For only €29, clubbers will have access to no less than 10 Brussels nightclubs in one night. It is perfect for an unforgettable evening in the capital – from bars to nightclubs and from hip-hop Saturdays at Mirano to the techno and underground atmosphere of Fuse and C12, not to mention the crazy parties of Madame Moustache...

Brussels has so much to offer experienced night owls and curious clubbers alike. To introduce as many people as possible to the varied faces of the capital's nightlife, playasbl and visit.brussels are launching the Volume Pass. It guarantees you entry to Brussels' wildest nights out. In addition to the chance to dance at 10 Brussels clubs, the Volume Pass lets you complete the experience with an extraordinary activity the day after – a visit to the Atomium, the monumental architectural landmark that symbolises the capital of Europe.

Useful information

Get your pass: www.volumebrussels.com
Dates: From 1 March 2022 to 25 June 2022
Validity: Friday or Saturday night, 1 pass per night, 6pm to 6am
Value: €29

Access to the following nightclubs: Fuse, Bloody Louis, Mirano, C12, Spirito, Madame Moustache, La Cabane, Jalousy, Chez Ginette, Dyoukes



Fuse – a legend on the Brussels' clubbing scene

Access to the following places the next day:
Atomium, Design Museum Brussels.

About visit.brussels

visit.brussels, a Brussels-Capital Region public interest organisation which employs 180 people, is the tourism and culture communication agency of the Brussels-Capital Region. The organisation brings the city to life and creates unique experiences for its inhabitants and Belgian and foreign visitors.

visit.brussels aims to promote and reinforce the image of Brussels as the capital of 500 million Europeans, both on the local and international scenes. A true 'world city', home to more than 183 different nationalities, Brussels is Europe's most cosmopolitan city. Famous for its diversity and openness, Brussels is also a haven of the good life and creativity.

www.visit.brussels.be

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What's on

Teen Spirit

Liz Newmark investigates Charleroi's contemporary art museum's rock and roll journey through adolescence via art

Charleroi's cavernous concrete BPS22 Hainaut Province Museum of Art, at the top of a city that is evolving constantly and trying to escape the clichés of the past, is a perfect backdrop to highlight the many facets of adolescence through contemporary art.

Inspired by Nirvana's iconic 1991 single for disenchanted youth marked by social decline, 'Smells like Teen Spirit', the exhibition explores adolescence via some 90 works by more than 30 artists, many of them Belgian. Big names include the painters Charlotte Beaudry and Joseph Beuys and the photographer Vincen Beeckman.

For curator Nancy Casielles, the show seeks to express "the particularity and complexity of the time between childhood and adulthood by examining the concept of adolescence itself." Adolescence is hard to define – indeed it did not really exist until after the Second World War when the term became synonymous with 'rebellious youth' or almost as a tool to push 'trendy' clothes or accessories. Before that, and really not until the 1950s with its Teddy Boys or the 1960s, the time of Mods and Rockers, a child became an adult without a transition period.

The selection of works in *Teen Spirit* aims to show media rarely used in adolescence, hitherto seen almost exclusively via photography. It seeks to avoid caricature by trying to extend the perception of youth via contributions from different plastic arts – from huge installations, videos and film to



ceramics, huge chunky jewellery and what looks like giant stuffed toys.

Teen Spirit is therefore exceptionally varied.

Beeckman's amazingly real portraits of teenagers in the streets of Charleroi, at the local youth club or on top of Black Country 'terris' (grassy mountains) show adolescents' quieter side; while Joseph Beuys' jeans with holes challenge materialistic society. Eric Croes' 'tits vase' and 'booze jug' look at sexual identity and Maen Florin's mutant attractive and repulsive dolls depict teenage anxiety of how to adapt to different groups.

Meanwhile, Thomas Hirschhorn's oversized chain alludes to the big necklaces worn by rappers, originally a reference to chains

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What's on



that bound slaves, whereas Emmanuel Van der Auwera looks to the future: namely artificial intelligence, video games and the virtual world. His 'Perfect Days' (a nod to the Lou Reed song) is a documentary on a 'metaverse' created in lockdown.

Teen Spirit addresses not only the more classic themes of the commercialisation of adolescence and loneliness of the virtual world and social media, but also how young people idle around in a way that is far from the stereotypical – in the words of the famous Ian Dury song – “sex and drugs and rock n’ roll”.

Beeckman illustrates this beautifully with his photographs of teenagers hanging out at the back of Charleroi's out-of-town Decathlon. As he puts it, these are people that we see but do not really look at. What this exhibition perhaps does above all is to make us rethink, look again and see teenagers in a new light.

BPS22 – from industrial icon to cultural hub

A pioneer of Charleroi's cultural development, the BPS22 (open Tuesday to Sunday 11am to 6pm) was set up first as a cultural space

in 2000 and then as a contemporary art museum from 2015. It has a fascinating social and architectural history. The gigantesque industrial glass and iron structure was erected in 1911 for the Fine Arts Pavilion of Charleroi's Commercial and Industrial Exhibition.

The museum makes concerted efforts to make Charleroi – particularly its younger generation – feel the Museum's missions and activities are also theirs. Its fascinating 'Little Museum' space of learning for children displays paintings and photos from the BPS22 and Hainaut collections with challenging themes.

The current show – “Is it for a boy or a girl!?” – addresses gender stereotypes.

In addition, the BPS22 project “Les Audacieux/the Audacious” invites four groups of young people from different backgrounds to discover the museum. On 14 May, during the BPS22 free weekend for children, ‘Les Audacieux’ will take over the museum and give guided tours of not only the Little Museum, but also, in a fitting partnership, show their personal favourite from the *Teen Spirit* exhibition.
www.bps22.be

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