

# Together

MAY/JUNE 2023 #126

magazine

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For Love's S(n)ake  
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## TRAVEL

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## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Team Karen  
Future-proof your brain  
Enhance your resilience

## INTERVIEW

Anya  
Taylor-Joy



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## Editor's LETTER

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



Anya Taylor-Joy: "I will never take anything for granted"

## En passant

I was one of the many who adored the Netflix series *The Queen's Gambit*. The series spurred a surge of interest in chess. Some people came to the game for the first time, others dusted off their long-neglected chess sets and started to dabble again. We have an interview with the actress who immortalized the role of Beth Harmon in the series, Anya Taylor-Joy. While chess Woman International Master Fiona Steil-Antoni who reassures us that it's never too late to start.

A second theme that emerges in this edition is resilience. We have an interview with Karen Northshield who was hit in the blast of the Zaventem bombings, her journey is hard for ordinary mortals to imagine. The single-minded fortitude that has brought her to where she is today is remarkable, with strength that comes from many sources, but one of her favourite expressions is 'if you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together.' Life coach, Robbie Stakelum, also offers advice on how we can all improve our resilience and Kimberley Wilson talked to us about her book on how to future-proof our brains.

We introduce you to 1Toit2Ages a non-profit organization, that matches students with householders for intergenerational housing. The system works well, benefitting both young and old. As our readers know, we are always better *Together*,

Catherine Feore  
Editor



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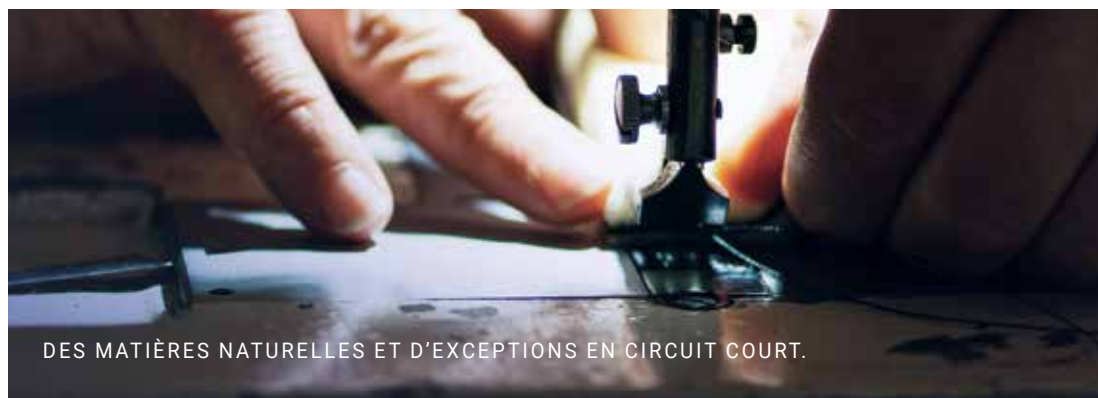
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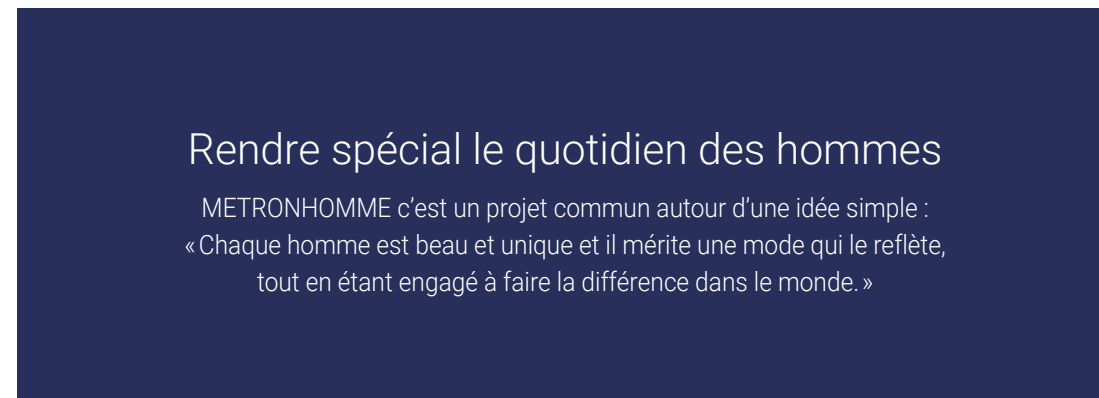
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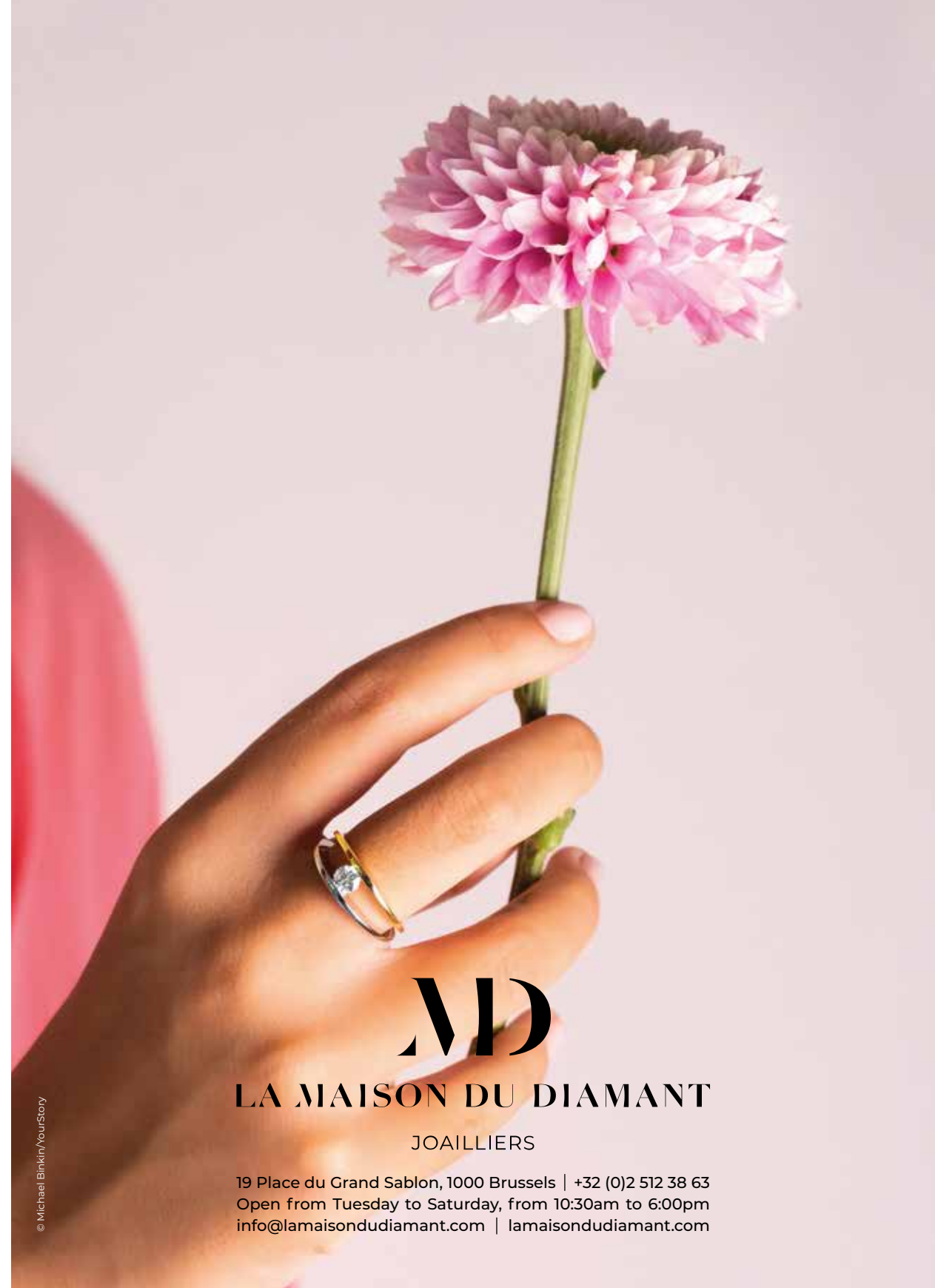
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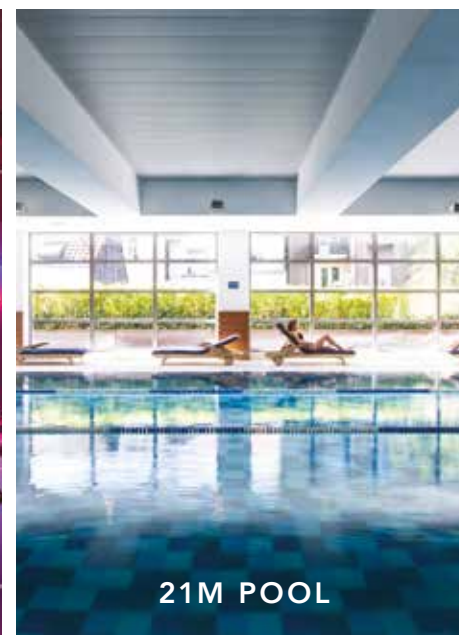


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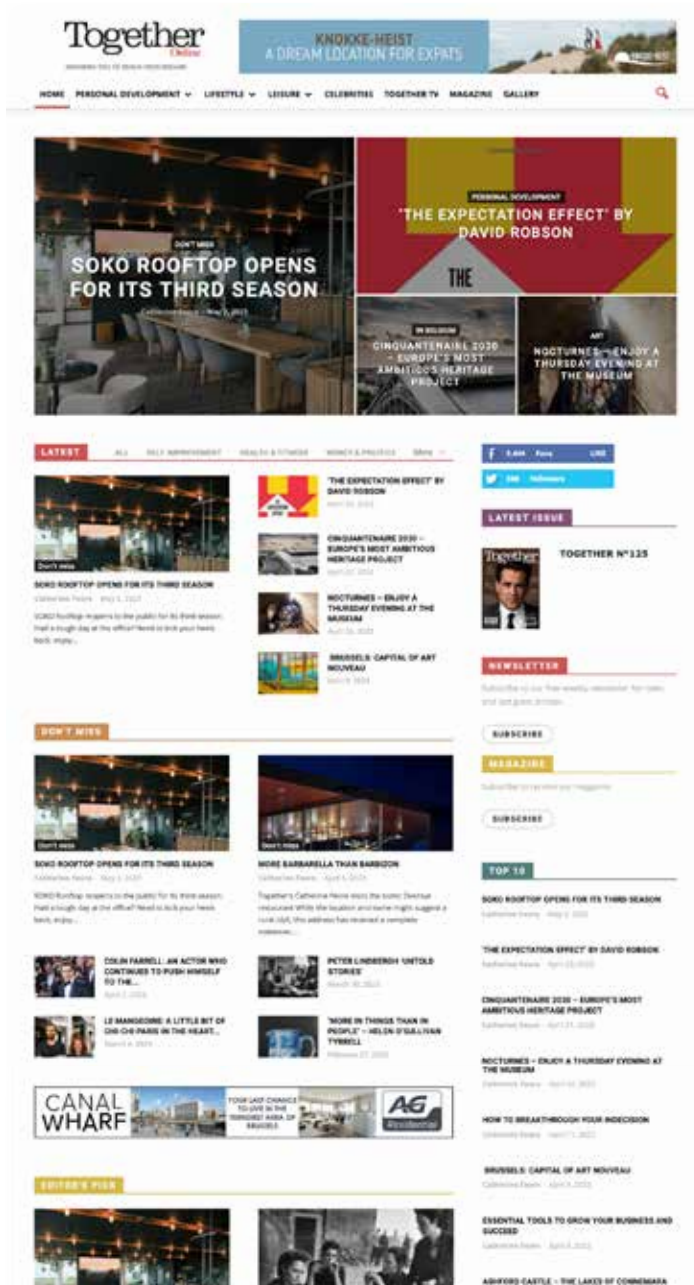


MOVING MOMENTS

# ORIENT



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### Expedition Egypt

Brussels was once considered to be the world capital of Egyptology. This fascinating exhibition in the Art and History Museum in Parc du Cinquenaire takes you through two centuries of archaeological discoveries in the land of the Pharaohs. The exhibition is also punctuated by artistic reflections by Sara Salla, born in Cairo (1991).

### AUM

Together reviews a new restaurant lounge bar with a fusion approach and a zen vibe. AUM offers a unique immersive experience. Inspired by the ancient Sanskrit syllable ॐ or 'Om', a sacred sound and invocation.

### Future-proof your brain

Kimberley Wilson is on a mission to ensure that we look after that most complex of organs, the brain. In an interview she shares her holistic understanding of how to achieve and maintain mental health.

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# Starring in Belgium

We suggest three hot tickets



Photo © Lynette Garland

## Nick Cave and Seán O'Hagan

As part of the 'Writers and Thinkers' series, songwriter Nick Cave and Seán O'Hagan will discuss: *Faith, Hope and Carnage*. Based on more than 40 hours of conversation between Cave and O'Hagan. The book takes the reader from Cave's childhood to today, passing through his loves, his work ethic and his spectacular transformation over the last few years following the death of his son Arthur: "It seems to me, that if we love, we grieve. That's the deal. That's the pact. Grief and love are forever intertwined. Grief is the terrible reminder of the depths of our love and, like love, grief is non-negotiable."

4 June

[www.bozar.be](http://www.bozar.be)



## Tenacious D

*Tenacious D* is an American comedy hard-metal duo formed in 1994. Jack Black, who might be better known for his turn in the film *The School of Rock*, and Kyle Gass were actors who met in Los Angeles and discovered their love for mocking the genre that they very clearly love. They've since recorded four albums with memorable songs like *One Note Song*. If you enjoyed *This Is Spinal Tap*, you will be like a pig in clover.

13 June

[www.foretnational.be](http://www.foretnational.be)



## Van Morrison

He's cranky, grumpy, curmudgeonly and a terrible moaner, but he's also one of the greatest blues singers, songwriters and musicians of all time. Listen, none of us is perfect. I'm pretty sure he wouldn't care less if no one turned up to his concert, as long as he received his fee, but you would regret not going. *Astral Weeks* (1968), one of his first records, is considered to be one of the greatest albums of all time. He is also prolific: this tour marks his 44th studio album, *Moving On Skiffle*. It is a return to his earliest days as a musician when he set up a skiffle band in school – it sounds a bit more cheerful than recent offerings, but make no mistake, it's still Van.

7 July

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# 1Toit2Ages – One Roof Two Ages

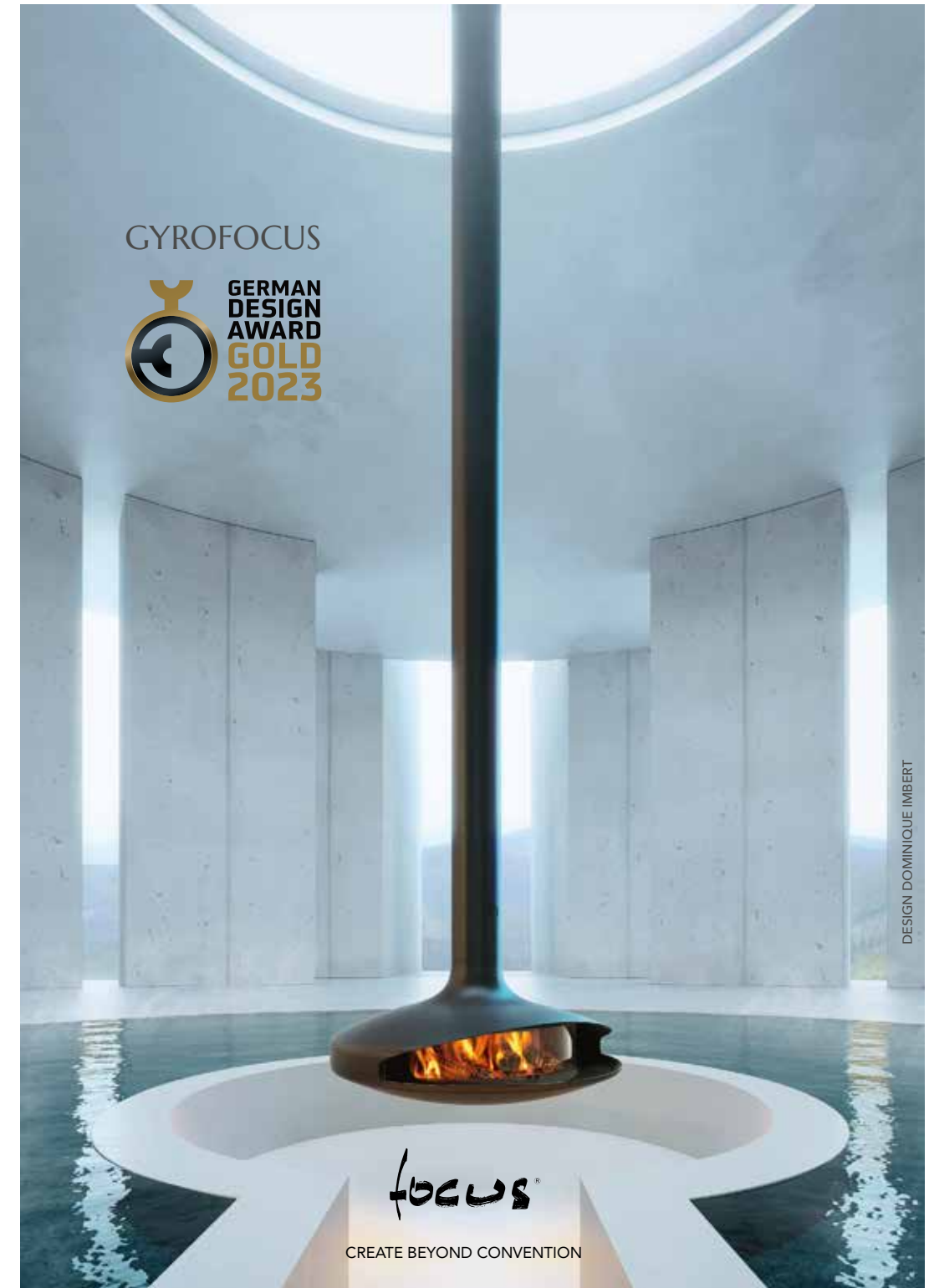
As the housing crisis in Brussels deepens, **Nuala Morgan** met with Mélanie Janssen, Brussels collaborator in the 1Toit2Ages association that matches students with householders for intergenerational housing.



Brussels is the leading “student city” in Belgium, with around 119,000 students, almost half of whom live in some form of student accommodation. According to the Belgian student housing market report Kotkompas 2022, average rents hover around €450/month, not including extra costs and charges. This can jump to €600 in some neighbourhoods. The shortage of affordable student accommodation is pushing up prices, a trend not likely to be reversed if supply issues are not tackled. This is not a new problem, but one

that is exacerbated with the increasing costs of energy, food and other basic necessities.

Claire and Régis de Kerautem, founders of the charity 1Toit2Ages, started tackling this problem in 2009. They saw two issues: on the one hand the lack of affordable student accommodation, and on the other, elderly people becoming isolated in a home that is too big for them following children moving out or the death of a spouse. Their association matches students or young professionals with a householder in what



they call intergenerational housing. The basic principle is simple: an older person provides a room to a student at a low cost, but the exchange isn't only an economic one.

"There are several advantages for the older person, beyond the additional income", explains Mélanie Janssen, collaborator at 1Toit2Ages. "Having a daily presence at home, combatting loneliness and allowing the senior to stay as long as possible in their home." For the student, in addition to the benefit of an affordable rent they can profit from the experience of the elderly person, and provide useful services.

Marguerite W. is one of more than 300 elderly hosts who lets a room to students as part of the association. "The house was empty. My partner died in March 2020 and even though I have children and grandchildren, there was nobody around. I was used to having students at home, I hosted my grand-daughter for 3 years, and my nephew. When I met Anne-Catherine (through 1Toit2Ages), we hit it off immediately."

There are two main options the duo can go for: the 'classic' one is based on providing accommodation with no particular commitment from the student or young worker. This option starts at €300 per month in Brussels. The 'service' option allows for a reduced contribution (€200 per month) in return for 5 hours of services provided per week to the host. The services are agreed between host and student, and could be shopping, taking out the rubbish, sharing meals, helping with new technologies or going on cultural outings.

Aurore, a student in Brussels, is convinced by her experience. "Even if I'm still slowly getting my bearings and making myself as discreet as possible, [my host] does everything to put me at ease and pampers me. A real grandmother! The bonds are slowly but surely forming over meals, games of Scrabble or computer lessons to learn how to use the tablet she got for Christmas. The little 'Bambi' that I am was quickly adopted and vice versa."

There are 556 students lodging with 407 householders across Brussels and Wallonia.

While the number of hosts has increased 8% since last year, this has not reached the levels before the Covid-19 pandemic. The average age of a host is 73, and in large majority female. This can be at least partly understood through women's longer life expectancy. The majority of students looking



## "THE BASIC PRINCIPLE IS SIMPLE: AN OLDER PERSON PROVIDES A ROOM TO A STUDENT AT A LOW COST"

## "THE ASSOCIATION HAS DEVELOPED OTHER INTERGENERATIONAL PROJECTS IN RECENT YEARS"

for rooms is also largely female - 75% of requests - although the percentage of male participants is also rising.

How does it work in practice? Mélanie explains: "We first meet the householders in their homes. This allows us to get to know them better and to find a student who corresponds to their lifestyle, their personality and their expectations. It allows us to check the quality of the accommodation too. We have an in-depth interview with the future guests to ensure that they are in the spirit of intergenerational housing and to find out their availability."

"When we think we have found a good match, we put them in touch with each other. If the meeting is positive, householders and students sign a personalized agreement and pay the membership fee." 1Toit2Ages ensures the follow-up throughout the year.

Of course, when it comes to human relations, things don't always work out as planned. In these cases, which Mélanie assures are very rare, she steps in as a mediator. In the worst case, the contract is ended and another host is found. "It can also happen that a householder dies, in which case we try to find another accommodation for the student as soon as possible, even if the family usually allows the student to stay on while a solution is found, because they

have created strong links."

This strong focus on social impact has won 1Toit2Ages a host of awards over the last decade. For Mélanie, making a real difference was one of the reasons she joined the association two years ago. "I worked for 15 years in sales and marketing but then I wanted to find a job that was more meaningful. I don't regret this choice because it is very enriching."

The association has developed other intergenerational projects in recent years.

It runs 5 intergenerational buildings in Brussels, where each student/senior duo has their own apartment but help each other out, share meals and activities in the communal area. And in 2022, they launched a project where students can take up lodgings in nursing homes with free spaces. For a reduced rent, they offer their time to organise activities, play music or tend the bar with the older residents. This brings life back to homes where the nursing staff are severely stretched. An all-round win-win!

1Toit2Ages is present in Brussels, Liège, Namur, Louvain-La Neuve, Mons, Gembloux, Charleroi, Tournai and Marchen-Famenne.

Are you over 50 years old and have a room available in your home? Would you like to help a student in their search for accommodation, to have company and to supplement your income?

Do not hesitate to contact one of our collaborators for more information: [www.1toit2ages.be](http://www.1toit2ages.be)

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# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

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**“WHAT IF THE SECRET OF YOUR BALANCE CAME FROM THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD?”**

Every year before the summer, there's a breakout of good intentions for the occasional and even for seasoned athletes. As if to atone for the winter excesses, some opt to go all out and impose

endless sessions of intense effort that are counterproductive, pushing their limits to the point of giving up.

This is exactly what you should try to avoid, with realistic objectives and a clear idea in mind: your aim is to get fit, not to suffer. The range of gentle sporting activities at Aspria is wide enough to

cover all degrees of difficulty and give everyone – regardless of their age or current fitness level – the opportunity to find the perfect mix of zen attitude and motivation.





Here are our top three proposals for you:

#### Body Balance

What if the secret of your balance came from the other side of the world? Originating from New Zealand, under the impetus of the fitness magnate Les Mills, Body Balance classes compile techniques from the most widespread gentle gymnastics, with the aim "to improve your life, your body and your mind" – nothing less.

Structured according to an international system, the course will allow you to follow any Body Balance session in other latitudes – an undeniable advantage for globetrotters who wish to maintain a regular practice despite their travels abroad.

The choreographies, repeated in each session for periods of six weeks to three months, work the deep muscles to a carefully curated Body Balance playlist. This consistent repetition as well as the adaptability of the postures and exercises by intensity level quickly offers you the satisfaction of seeing yourself progress from one session to the next.

Inspired in particular by various oriental disciplines – including yoga of course, but also tai chi, Qi Gong, and pilates – Body Balance is therefore both a sport in itself and a gateway to all the activities listed above, which are obviously accessible via other dedicated group classes.

One last important detail: at Aspria, Body Balance classes are taught by Nathalie Voude, a true expert in the field, who was one of the first to spread the practice in our country. So you are in good hands.

#### Hypopressive Abs

The term Hypopressive Abs, which intrigues neophytes, refers to a method combining a series of breathing exercises with beneficial effects on both your wellbeing and your health – from the mitigation of joint and muscle damage to the prevention of organ descent. Whether you want to reshape your figure or tone up your perineum to remodel your pelvic floor, Hypopressive Abs classes are accessible to everyone, with the advantage of delivering different benefits depending on the age and needs of the practitioner.



Since 2010, Le jardin d'Eden, private nurseries and kindergartens, has been welcoming children from 0 to 4 years old in a safe and warm environment, specifically meeting the needs of young children. Within the European quarter, the daycare also cooperates with the European Commission, and is open 12 months round.





“WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO EXPLORE THE RICH VARIETY OF YOGA STYLES, FROM THE MOST RELAXING TO THE MOST ACROBATIC – TO FIND YOUR PERFECT FIT ”



### Yoga

An overview of our catalogue of softer, zen-inducing practices would not be complete without mentioning our comprehensive selection of yoga classes. From the rigorous precision of the Iyengar postures to the meditative relaxation of Yin Yoga, via Hatha, a soothing «yoga of effort» particularly recommended to those who aim for a gentle practice, the different classes share the principles of breathing and harmonization, but offer a distinct experience.

We encourage you to explore the rich variety of yoga styles, from the most relaxing to the most acrobatic – to find your perfect fit. For instance, those who prefer a dynamic workout can be more inclined towards the popular Vinyasa - more rhythmic and sporty - or even towards Ashtanga (the so-called “yoga with eight limbs”), even more physically demanding and ideal for strengthening and toning muscles, as well as improving flexibility. The more adventurous may take a plunge and try our Watfit Power Yoga class, the ultimate balance challenge, practiced on a floating mat.

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# How to future-proof your brain

## Kimberley Wilson

is on a mission to ensure that we look after that most complex of organs, the brain, and develop a more holistic understanding of how to achieve and maintain mental health. *Together* spoke with her about the practical steps we can take.



**K**imberley Wilson's book *How to Build a Healthy Brain: Reduce stress, anxiety and depression and future-proof your brain* is in many ways a manifesto; her book is a call to action at a personal and public-policy level to address the surge in mental health problems. The book isn't just for those currently experiencing real difficulties, but for everyone. There are things all of us can do to make ourselves more resilient.

It is true that the pandemic and isolation experienced exacerbated this problem. However, over recent decades depression has already been on the rise. Depression results in impairments to our daily functioning, fewer days of attendance in school or

work, a deterioration in our relationships, it is complex and multifaceted. In Western countries suicides have become the major cause of death of those aged 15-29 after accidents.

"We really need to move towards a more integrated and holistic understanding of mental health," says Wilson. "My experience of working with psychological illnesses is that it is very disparate; there are mental health professionals over here, psychiatrists over there and everybody's working in their own silos, treating the brain as a kind of disembodied entity that has nothing to do with the rest of the body. This means that we miss out on opportunities, in particular, early

intervention and treatment, but also prevention."

Age-related neurodegenerative disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease, are also on the rise. The World Health Organisation estimates that by 2030 there will be 75 million people living with dementia. "When you ask people over 45 what is the health risk they are most frightened of, they will say dementia. However, *The Lancet* (the respected medical research journal), estimates that with lifestyle changes we could delay or even prevent 40% of global cases of dementia. So there's an enormous amount that can be done, but a lot of people believe that dementia is just determined by genes and that it's the luck of the draw."

Wilson is a trained nutritionist, as well as being a Chartered Psychologist. She was also a finalist in the *The Great British Bake Off*, a hugely popular programme in the

UK. When I ask her what are the most important changes we can make to our diet to improve brain health, she says that evidence suggests that leafy green vegetables are really important, "just a handful of spinach, rocket or kale, or dark green cabbage with whatever your eating, maybe berries a few times a week. An adequate intake of omega three fatty acids through two or three servings of oily fish, such as trout, salmon or sardines, every week; and, fibre."

"Not a single age group in the UK or the US is meeting their fibre requirements," says Wilson. "We know that when the gut's microbiome breaks down fibre it produces compounds that protect the gut's lining and the gut-brain barrier as well. It prevents potentially toxic and harmful substances from crossing into the bloodstream and

reaching the brain." However, she acknowledges that there is still a lot we don't know about.

Wilson's book is very much based on available research. At the start of the book she has a chapter on research and how the media overstates the findings of research; there's also a chapter entitled 'getting to know the brain' – which goes over some basic physiology. In the foreword, she says you don't have to read these chapters, but I found that they were a useful backdrop to the book. When I said that I appreciated the measured language used throughout the book she said she was glad to hear it: "I really want to be careful not to make sensationalist claims. I know that big, punchy claims drive sales, but I don't want

## "WE REALLY NEED TO MOVE TOWARDS A MORE INTEGRATED AND HOLISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF MENTAL HEALTH"

people to have a poor understanding of mental illness, it's a disservice to patients to oversimplify too much.

"I think that we need to understand

that something like depression, for example, is complex and multifaceted. For some people driving factors will be diet and lifestyle, but for many it won't. What I propose is a third way where we look at lifestyle support alongside therapy or medication."

Wilson's also keen that we don't give ammunition to those who think that it's all in our own hands and that there aren't wider societal problems at work: "Intervention studies have shown that giving people just a little more money can reduce the risk of depression. It's not just that it eases the burden of paying bills, but it also means people can afford more nutritious food or that there's just less family stress.

"Experiences of trauma, your experience of prejudice, poverty or the ability to recover



### Self help

or manage these are often outside of an individual's control. So much is about public policy: making sure that children born into poorer families have access to good education, access to good healthcare - including properly funded early intervention. I'm not against personal responsibility, but we need to understand that our life status and standard of living play a huge part as well."

The book goes through many areas where we could improve our brain's resilience and each chapter is concluded with a list of 'takeaways' that summarize the main changes we could make. The chapters deal with everything from sleep to social media use. The approach is more informative than didactic.

I ask Wilson what are the top three things we could do in our lives to future proof our brains. "I think the most robust evidence base we have is for physical activity, both aerobic activity and resistance training. It reduces the risk of depression and is one of the best interventions for reducing your risk of dementia. So we should try to increase our physical activity, even short bursts of activity can be supportive. Secondly, managing your blood glucose levels to prevent pre-diabetes and diabetes, research shows that high blood sugar can significantly increase your risk of Alzheimer's and dementia. Insulin resistance may also be associated with depression.

"But it's not all about eating berries and physical activity, it's important to say that your long term wellbeing and even your longevity is strongly linked to the quality of your relationships. It's really important that we understand that our nervous systems depend on other people. We're not made to deal with stress, pressure, pain, or trauma by ourselves. We need other people to support us and help us regulate our emotions. It's not always easy, but where



we can it's really important to build up connections. I know it's not always easy in big cities, but joining a book club or choir, for example, can help."

Finally, since Wilson was a *Bake Off* finalist, I ask if we can still eat cake. "Intervention studies found that people can improve their diet and still eat sweet things every other day. You don't just have to pile through raw vegetables, that's no way to live! Food is about nutrition and taking care of yourself, but it's also about pleasure and catching up with your best friend over a pizza."

Wilson has recently published a further book, *Unprocessed: How the Food We Eat is Fuelling our Mental Health Crisis* (2023). She can also be found on Instagram, for regular updates on the latest research and top tips: @foodandpsych

[www.kimberleywilson.co](http://www.kimberleywilson.co) ⓘ

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## A practical guide to improving your resilience

**Robbie Stakelum** is a life coach, trainer and yoga teacher. Do you want to enhance your resilience? Here's some practical advice on how to do so



Resilience is quickly becoming the invogue buzzword of the coaching and wellbeing sector. Where once people were asked 'have you tried being less stressed' now people are being asked to 'be more resilient'. But what does that even mean?

If you scan your workplace or social network, you would likely observe that those close to you, perhaps even yourself, are struggling at the moment. It's unsurprising with the

many global challenges, let alone personal ones, that burnouts are rising, and people are reporting increased levels of poor mental health, anxiety and depression and are losing their motivation and focus. As both a life coach and yoga teacher, I find that many clients lack the skills or tools to cope when confronted by prolonged adversity. So here is a quick rundown on not just what resilience is, and some practical and relatively simple things you can do to boost your resilience.



### Self help

#### Resilience? What's that?

Resilience is not about building immunity to experiencing setbacks or avoiding feelings of anger or stress. Resilience can often be misinterpreted as being 'strong' and burying those emotions deep to enable you to keep going and persevere. But it's quite the opposite.

For me resilience is about experiencing those emotions, sitting with them, processing them and then finding a way to power through. It is the skill set to regain not just your focus but also your motivation. The phrase '*bouncing back*' gets tangled with resilience, but when working with clients I prefer '*bouncing forward*', because resilience isn't about returning to the status quo, clearly something has not worked, instead it's about making a positive change.

There are many ways to improve your resilience but for me the most important are i) taking stock of your situation, ii) identifying and managing your emotions and iii) managing your energy levels. Below I provide some practical tools I use with clients and for myself, but I would caution that there is no silver bullet to improving resilience, it is a practice and takes time to develop.

#### Taking Stock

Resilience is the capacity to take stock of what is working, to see the positives and be grateful for what you have as a foundation to build from. But it doesn't mean you're always positive and upbeat, but taking stock provides a starting point to pick yourself up from. Here are some simple and practical exercises to help take stock:

1) Ask three people in your life, preferably a colleague, a friend and a family member, who see the different roles you play in life to describe you using three words. Clients always find this an empowering exercise because it reminds them of their strengths or opens a new way of seeing themselves or their situation.

“ RESILIENCE CAN  
OFTEN BE  
MISINTERPRETED  
AS BEING ‘STRONG’ ”



“ YOU MUST UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU’RE  
EXPERIENCING IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY  
YOUR NEEDS TO PUSH THROUGH ”

2) Practice Journaling. I journal almost every day, and I always start with three things I'm grateful for and three actions I'm going to take on that day. This activity helps to feel gratitude which creates a positive mindset to start your day from and listing three actions, which can be very small, gives you back a sense of control and empowerment, while also giving you a motivational boost when they're completed.

3) Feeding forward. In this activity you write out three things that you are doing well now, and then write out one thing that you would like to improve. This activity is helpful to find the positives, even in the challenging situation you face, while also being practical about what needs to be done differently.

#### Managing Emotions

Resilience requires emotional intelligence, to be self-aware of what you are feeling, and why. Emotions represent unmet needs. You must understand what you're experiencing in order to identify your needs to push through.

Here are some simple and practical tools that can help boost your emotional intelligence.

1) Journaling. If you have a journaling practice, start with 'Today I am feeling (insert emotion here). But you cannot use 'good' or 'bad'. You must use emotions, not adjectives. The 'emotions circle', which is easily found online, can help you improve your emotional literacy.

2) When emotions feel overwhelming, you can write out the following breakdown.

1. Today I am feeling *stressed*.
2. Today I am experiencing *stress*.
3. Today a part of me is experiencing *stress*.

This may seem quite simple, but it helps to distance the emotion from you. You don't need to identify with the emotion, it is not who you are, but rather it is something you are experiencing, temporarily.

3) Put pen to paper and write out your express needs. When you think about what emotions you are experiencing such as anger, stress, sadness..., write out what you need, what would help improve how you are feeling, but remember to focus on actions you can take. Emotions are typically linked to unmet needs; for example, anger is often associated with not being heard or respected while anxiety is often linked to the need for certainty and confirmation. Identifying the correct needs helps to select the right course of action.

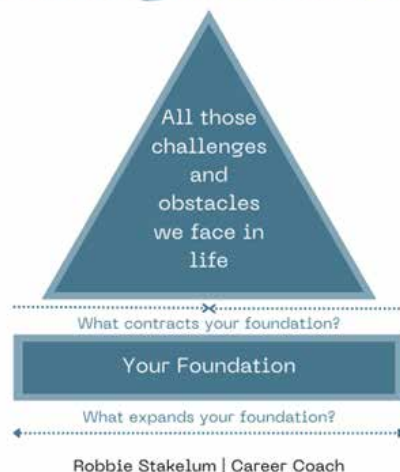
#### Managing Your Energy

Resilience is also tied to your energy levels, when you're tired and run down you feel things more intensely than you normally would. You need to ensure that you're looking after yourself. You need reserves in the tank to be able to persevere through those challenges.

There are many things we can do to improve our energy level. Here are some simple steps:

1) Journaling (again?!). Yes, when I journal, I rate my energy level on a scale of 1-4. I also mark on a scale of 1-5 my diet, exercise, sleep, and water intake. All these things are

## Building Resilience



connected, in time you may notice your energy level is linked to poor diet choice which impacts on your sleep cycle, or a lack of exercise or fresh air. You need a holistic approach to manage your energy better, and it is rarely ever just a single factor.

2) Building your base. There will always be challenges that will come at you in life, sadly there is no way to avoid that.

1. I'd suggest drawing out the graphic below.
2. In the triangle write out the challenges you face right now.
3. In the rectangular base write out all the things you can do to strengthen your base, this includes all the ways of looking after yourself.
4. Outside of the base, write out all the things you do that contract your base, the things that often negatively impact your wellbeing and contract that base.

Then make conscious decisions to choose the activities that improve your mental health and wellbeing. Or when you feel your

resilience is waning, those activities captured inside the base can be a great starting point.

Remember we all have setbacks, and our capacity to persevere ebbs and flows, but taking some practical steps can improve your resilience and help regain your momentum and motivation. My suggestions may seem simple, but as a coach of mine used to say, *'the easy things to do, are also the easiest things not to do'* and only when we reach a crisis point do we realize the impact of not caring for ourselves more routinely.

Want to work with Robbie?

You can find out more about his coaching practice, set up a free discovery call or find out if coaching is for you by checking out [www.robbiestakelum.com](http://www.robbiestakelum.com) or get in touch direct with Robbie by email via [robbie@robbiestakelum.com](mailto:robbie@robbiestakelum.com) 📧

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## The Queen's Gambit Accepted

The chess world has just crowned a new world champion, Ding Liren, after a nerve-racking tie-break final. Increasingly, women are becoming more involved in the game. **Catherine Feore** met with Luxembourgish Woman International Master and chess commentator Fiona Steil-Antoni.



Photo © David Llada

Steil-Antoni started playing chess when she was eight or nine years old. She was inspired by her father: "He had a passion for chess, he had so many chess books. He would sit over the chess board and play through games, sometimes a friend would come over to play friendly games. Eventually, I asked my dad to teach me the rules and I very much enjoyed playing. My younger brother also started playing."

At school she had friends who were competing in tournaments and encouraged her to join them. However, her first experience of attending a tournament was not good: "I was completely horrified. I was overwhelmed because I was used to playing in the comfort of my home, I really didn't like to see all these people and other people watching them play. I remember saying to my father on the way home, 'I will never play in a chess tournament!'"



## Sport

She was slowly cajoled by her friends to go to tournaments, because they convinced her it would be fun. "Chess enabled me to make some incredible friendships, it also gave me the opportunity to travel as part of the national team," she says. "I think there was a combination of two factors that motivated me to play: I loved chess and I loved the social aspect that came with it. Friends I made then are still some of my best friends."

I asked Steil-Antoni what she would say to parents, or a young person, who wants to play? "I think it's a very personal decision, and that there's no right or wrong way. You can join a club, the chess scene is thriving and you'd be surprised at how many clubs there are. They aren't always good at publicizing themselves, but I'm sure that there will be some in Belgium. That's one approach, but if that sounds a little daunting, there are so many other resources. If you want to become good you have to love the game and like everything in life, if you want to become really good that takes some dedication."

Steil-Antoni is a commentator and develops resources on *Chess.com*. The app has a basic (free) membership, which already offers a lot, but for a small fee you can have access to videos, all lessons and much more – from beginners to mastery level – with lots of different teachers. My own habit is to follow the lessons of the teachers I like, even if some of the lessons go (well) beyond my level. Steil-Antoni is one of the experts who designs and guides you through the daily puzzles, helping you to find the solutions while offering advice on how to improve your chess thinking.

"Chess.com is the biggest app these days, with thousands of games being played daily. Also, there are books, my father has hundreds, maybe thousands; and again, when it comes to books there is so much choice: biographies of chess players, books on openings, puzzles, historic games... Then there is Twitch and streamers, I really think there's something for everyone."

I ask Steil-Antoni if you can develop a decent game if you start at a later stage of your life: "Absolutely, it's never too late to pick up chess. The basic rules are quite simple, but then it becomes harder. One of the most beautiful things about chess is that it is a game that doesn't discriminate: against age, gender, disability, race. Its benefits have been scientifically proven and can really help with diseases like dementia. So I would say it is never too late."

### The Queen's Gambit

Garry Kasparov said that Anya Taylor-Joy's portrayal of Beth Harmon in *The Queen's Gambit* may have done more to promote chess worldwide than all the real-world champions, would you agree? "I don't know the exact numbers, but if you look at the Google searches for chess, after the series, they didn't just go up a bit, there was an explosion! I do think it prompted the most spectacular interest in chess in my lifetime, for sure. It also came out during the pandemic, when people were stuck at home. It prompted a lot of people to learn and for others to take the game up again."

"I very much enjoyed the series," says Steil-Antoni, when I asked her what she thought of it. "Of course, some aspects might not be completely believable, some of the tournament scenes, for example, didn't



Photo © Fernanda Figueiredo

resonate 100% with what you would witness in real life, but I think the producers did a fantastic job. I very much loved the cinematography, the music and the acting."

"I think it's maybe difficult to compare a Netflix series with real life events, but the only event that might have had a comparable impact would have been the Bobby Fischer/Spassky match in Reykjavik in 1972, but then you had the added backdrop of the Cold War."

As to whether the series will encourage more women to learn the game, she says that the scene has already changed a great deal since she started playing chess 25 years ago, "I think there's been a lot of progress, there are many more role models. There is still a long way to go, women are still a big minority in the game, but I'm hopeful that things are changing. I'm seeing more initiatives for girls to start playing and to keep playing, so we're definitely moving in the right direction."

As for her own role models, she says that she's never really had a chess hero, per se, but when she was young she admired Alexander Morozevich, "There was a big

chess tournament in Germany that my father took me to. Morozevich was playing and he played a very enterprising, very aggressive, very tactical chess. I remember he opened with the King's Gambit, one of the romantic attacking openings in chess. I met him once and even spoke with him. He didn't speak English or German, but a friend translated between German and Russian. My mom took a photograph, it's one of my favourite photos."

She admires a lot of the current generation of players: "Like most people in the chess world, I think it's a great pity that Magnus Carlsen decided not to defend his title. He has done a lot for the game and has been reigning world champion for a decade. Of the new generation there are players like Gukesh D (India) and Nodirbek Abdusattorov (Uzbekistan). As a commentator, I've interviewed a lot of them and I feel almost an emotional component, because I've seen a lot of these players when they were ten or eleven, when I first spoke to them some of them could barely speak a word of English. To see them grow up and succeed is really great."

There is also a very competitive Belgian player, Daniel Dardha: "He became Belgian champion for the third year aged only 16. He became a grandmaster at 15, so he's one to keep an eye out for. He has a very high FIDE (International Chess Federation) chess rating of 2631. He's going to be playing at one of the strongest tournaments in the United Arab Emirates and I'm hoping to interview him. He seems like a bit of a character."

To learn more about chess in Belgium visit the site 'The Royal Belgian Chess Federation' (RBCF), the official national chess federation of Belgium.

[www.frbe-kbsb-ksb.be](http://www.frbe-kbsb-ksb.be) 1





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## The secrets of whole-brain Speaking

This is the third article in *Together's* Public Speaking Masterclass from **Matthew Cossolotto**



Matthew's career as a CEO-level speechwriter and communications expert spans both sides of the Atlantic, from NATO Headquarters in Brussels to the Speaker's Office in the U.S. House of Representatives. In this Master Class series, Matthew shares some of the insights contained in his book, *The Joy of Public Speaking*. Thank you for joining us on this exciting journey toward enhancing your leadership skills and reaching your peak potential as a speaker.

This third article in *Together's* Public Speaking Master Class focuses on the secrets of what I call Whole Brain Speaking.

Speaking with your whole brain – while also addressing the whole brain of audience members – involves balancing elements of both the left brain and the right brain in every presentation. Striking the right balance is key to becoming a more comfortable, compelling, authentic, and joyful speaker.



Self help

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

In my previous article in this series (See “The Seven Steps to Joy”– *Together* edition 125, I provided a brief overview of Step 5: Don’t be content with content. As a quick reminder, I’m using “content” in the first instance as an adjective meaning satisfied, happy or contented. I’m using the word “content” as a noun referring to the substance, the facts and data, the message, or the subject matter of your speech.

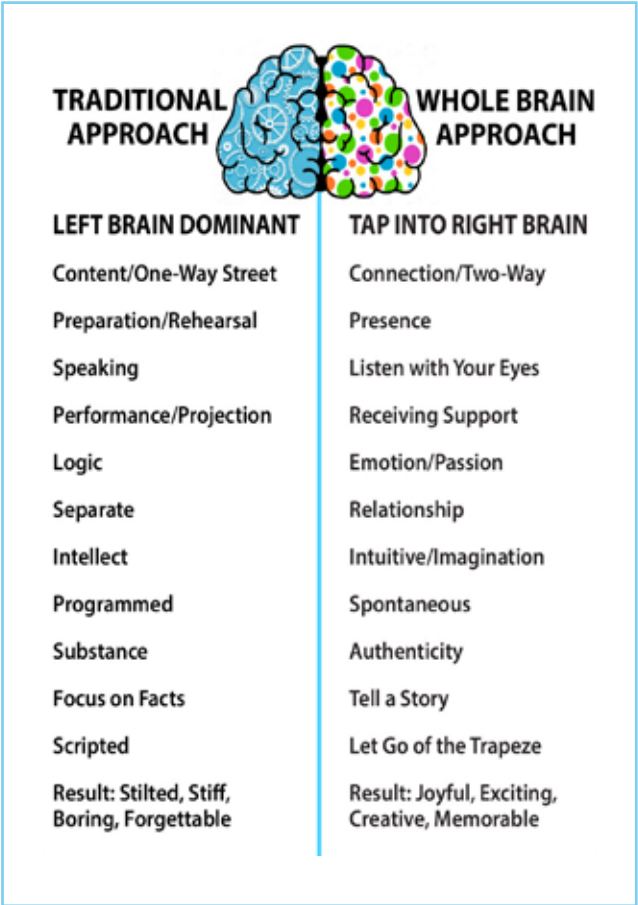
I mention this “don’t be content with content” step now because this approach opens the door to ‘whole brain speaking.’ As I referenced in the previous article, the mental jujitsu involved requires you to go beyond the facts, information and data contained in your speech. Those are what I call left brain qualities. You should go beyond your content and tap into your right brain – and the right brains of your audience. That’s where the magic is. That’s where you’ll find personal stories, imagination, connection, heart, intuition, enthusiasm, passion, emotion, and relationship. Joy and delight also reside in the right brain.

Every speech or presentation is a real-time relationship between speaker and audience. This is true whether you’re speaking on stage in a crowded ballroom or online in a Zoom-assisted webinar. As a speaker, you show that you value the relationship by being prepared, but not overly programmed.

Yes, it’s essential to prepare, to organize your material effectively and to

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

**Combine left brain and right brain attributes**  
As you’ll see in the chart below, qualities like preparation, performance, and rehearsal are classic left-brain functions, while attributes related to such things as presence, connection, and authenticity reside on the right side of the brain.



In this table, the column on the left summarizes the traditional left-brain approach to public speaking. These qualities are important to any successful presentation, but total reliance on them will produce an unsatisfactory experience for both the speaker and the audience.

Depending too much on these left-brain qualities turns speeches and presentations into nothing more than boring, stale, uninspiring data dumps. My revolutionary Whole Brain Speaking approach is more holistic, interactive, and relational. The idea is to take the left-brain qualities as the bare essentials and then go the extra mile by tapping into the right brain.

‘Whole Brain Speaking’ is the value-added approach to speaking. The qualities in the left column get you part of the way there. To really wow your audiences, however, you need to add the right brain attributes. The goal is to transform a merely competent, informative speech into something truly moving and memorable.

The best way to use this chart is to pick a few attributes on the left side of the page and then consider ways to also incorporate right brain qualities from the right column. For example, once you’ve developed, rehearsed, and mastered the content of your speech, give some attention to connecting with individual members of the audience.

Similarly, now that you’ve prepared your remarks, remind yourself to be present in the moment. While speaking to the audience, remember to also listen — with your ears and your eyes. Practice the art of hearing with your eyes, as Shakespeare refers to it in Sonnet 23: “To hear with eyes belongs to love’s fine wit.” This is a love sonnet, and there is something to be said for speakers “falling in love” with an audience.

Don’t just project outward. Remember to receive the audience, especially the support from the audience. Don’t rely on logic and facts alone. Include an appeal to passion, emotion, and imagination.

**Let go of the trapeze**  
If you watch trapeze artists at the circus, the real excitement begins when they let go of the trapeze bar. There isn’t much interest in watching someone swing back and forth hanging listlessly from a trapeze bar. The magic happens between the bars.

For speakers, being too scripted and programmed, anchoring your talk exclusively in left-brain attributes is essentially the same as clinging to the trapeze bar and just swinging back and forth. You – and your audiences – deserve more than that. That way boredom lies – for both the speaker and the audience.

Instead, demonstrate some degree of spontaneity. Tell an unscripted personal story. Bring along your personality and let it shine.

“ PUT SIMPLY, SUCCESSFUL SPEAKERS FIND WAYS TO PACK AUTHENTIC PRESENCE INTO EVERY PRESENTATION ”

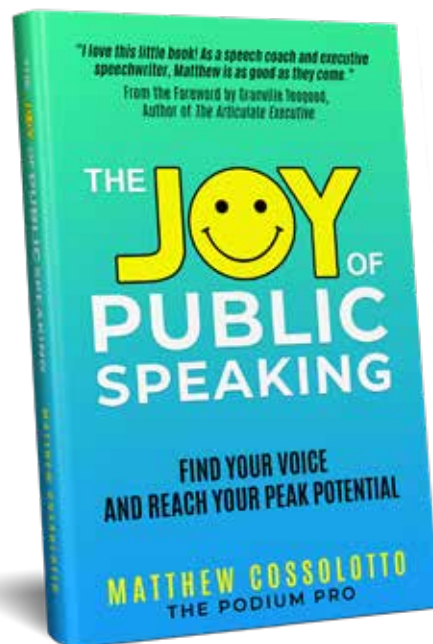
“ THE GOAL IS TO TRANSFORM A MERELY COMPETENT, INFORMATIVE SPEECH INTO SOMETHING TRULY MOVING AND MEMORABLE ”

“ IF YOU WATCH  
TRAPEZE ARTISTS  
AT THE CIRCUS,  
THE REAL EXCITEMENT  
BEGINS WHEN  
THEY LET GO OF  
THE TRAPEZE BAR ”

Make sure the real you shows up. Let go of the trapeze now and then. Mix healthy doses of authenticity with your great, finely honed substance. Turn your talk into a two-way relationship instead of simply a one-way information transfer. In short, study the right-hand column carefully and incorporate some of these elements into your next speech or presentation. If you routinely feature this value-added approach in your presentations, you will find yourself enjoying the experience much more — and so will your audience.

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

Remember this: Audience members are using their whole brains – both the left and the right brain – when they listen to your presentations. And their right brains crave some attention. As a speaker, you can provide it by employing the secrets of ‘Whole Brain Speaking.’



#### About the Author

A former NATO speechwriter, Matthew Cossolotto is the author of *The Joy of Public Speaking* and the forthcoming *Embrace Your Promise Power*.

Matthew provides coaching and conducts public speaking workshops and other Personal Empowerment Programs (PEP Talks) in Brussels and beyond.

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# A school is not a factory: But what should it be?

*Together* shines a light on an international school that takes a different approach to learning



Traditionally, schools have been, and often still are, set up like factories. Students are batched according to age and put on a conveyor belt to squeeze them into a mould where everything must be done at a set time, in a set way. Some come out nicely, others are deemed defective in some way. However, at BEPS International School, we believe that schools should be the complete opposite of this.

Many international schools use the International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes, as they provide a strong academic foundation.

How can a school make a difference? When designing their secondary school, BEPS International School started with the belief that every student is a unique individual, with their own character, dreams, learning journey and life mission to identify. BEPS balances the academic needs of the IB whilst also allowing for individualisation of the curriculum to develop young people into independent, caring, change-makers.

Firstly and foremost, BEPS has innovated and reorganised time, space and resources to make their vision a reality. The unique

**“ WHEN DESIGNING  
THEIR SECONDARY  
SCHOOL, BEPS  
INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL STARTED WITH  
THE BELIEF THAT  
EVERY STUDENT IS A  
UNIQUE INDIVIDUAL ”**

building design of their secondary school mirrors the co-working office spaces providing students with flexible co-learning areas.

Similarly, the students' schedule is personalized in order to meet diverse learning needs, additional support or the potential to deepen knowledge. They work towards personal goals and explore diverse projects to support the school and the wider community. Mentors coach them to help prioritize and organize each individual student's time. Students have the support of all the teachers who value their voice and their choices; in this sense it is very much a student-centred

approach. Having small classes of not more than 18 students means that teachers can manage classes with mixed levels of ability and students who have different learning needs.

BEPS is located in the centre of Brussels, but considers itself a school without walls. This means a commitment to connect with professionals and experts in the wider community, to provide authentic learning experiences and an audience with which to recognise and celebrate individual student achievements.



The school's entire focus is on creating a responsible and positive impact on the life of each student, their future and the world in general. Students themselves organize and lead workshops for each other to support local or international charities, celebrating-international mindedness, caring about others and our planet.

BEPS is known for its family feel that it has carefully nurtured over the past 50 years. It means the school is committed to maintaining a close-knit community where each child, from early years to the end of secondary school

**“ THE SCHOOL IS COMMITTED  
TO MAINTAINING A CLOSE-KNIT  
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# Strong leadership is crucial for any organization

As the leader you set the direction and tone of your company and are responsible for the overall success or failure of your business



Being a strong leader is essential to reach your goals and objectives. Leadership in business has many benefits, including providing direction and guidance, motivating employees, and creating a positive workplace atmosphere.

So, what makes a great business leader?

Strong business leaders inspire, motivate and manage employees to achieve organizational goals. A great business leader is one that can bring out the best in the people

they lead. The most successful business leaders have certain traits that make them stand out from the rest. From a strong work ethic to an unwavering commitment to the organization's mission, these traits are essential for any leader.

Here are a few of the other qualities that make a great business leader:

1. Visionary: You have a clear vision for the future of the organization. As the leader you are able to articulate that vision and inspire

others to get on board. You have the ability to look beyond the short-term and consider the long-term implications of your decisions.

2. Communicator: It is important to be a great communicator. When you understand the importance of clear and concise communication and can effectively communicate the organization's goals and objectives to your team, you are already winning half the battle. Next to being able to communicate your own vision and goals properly it is also imperative that you are a good listener and take the time to understand your team's views and opinions.

3. Decisive: Being able to make quick decisions and take decisive action when needed is what sets great leaders apart.

Having a strong leader can help a business reach its goals and objectives more efficiently and effectively. You can create a cohesive team, foster innovation, and build relationships with customers and other stakeholders.

As a strong leader you have the ability to make difficult decisions and take risks. You are not afraid to take action and make changes when necessary, and are willing to take the time to carefully evaluate the situation and make the best possible decision. By providing clear direction, setting expectations and giving feedback, you will help employees work together to achieve the goals of your organization and allow them to have fun and grow whilst doing that. Leaders set the tone for a business. A positive attitude and outlook will help create a positive workplace atmosphere and inspire employees. Being open to feedback and suggestions and being willing to listen to your team allows you to create an atmos-

phere of mutual respect between you and your employees and it will help them feel valued and appreciated, which will inevitably lead to better performance and higher morale.

Next to that, having a strong leadership network is essential to ensure that your organization is able to reach its goals and objectives. Without a strong leadership network, an organization can become stagnant, unable to make decisions and progress. Your role as the leader in your business is to provide direction, set goals, and provide guidance to the team. You must have the ability to motivate, inspire, and drive the team forward.

Establish a strong team environment that encourages collaboration and innovation so you are able to foster relationships and create an environment where everyone is able to contribute and work together to achieve the organization's goals.







A leadership network is a group of people who meet regularly, either in person or online, to discuss leadership development and strategies, and to share their experiences and insights with each other. It provides an opportunity for individuals to learn from each other and to build relationships with other leaders in their field.

So, within your organization you can create your own leadership network or team leaders to help identify and develop leadership talent, while providing a platform for executives and managers to share their experiences and strategies. By connecting with peers and mentors, your team can learn best practices and become better equipped to lead their teams. Leadership networks can also be created between different businesses to provide a platform to collaborate on industry-wide solutions. By working together, organizations can develop strategies that benefit the entire industry, while also strengthening your own individual business. This collaboration can lead to the development of innovative solutions and the sharing of resources that can improve the overall performance of the industry.

**“ IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT  
YOU ARE A GOOD LISTENER  
AND TAKE THE TIME TO  
UNDERSTAND YOUR TEAM’S  
VIEWS AND OPINIONS ”**


Leadership networks are key to the success of any business. It is important to ensure that the leadership network is structured and effective. It should be composed of individuals from different areas of your business or between different businesses that can provide a wide range of perspectives. This will allow the organization to make informed decisions based on the expertise of all its team members.

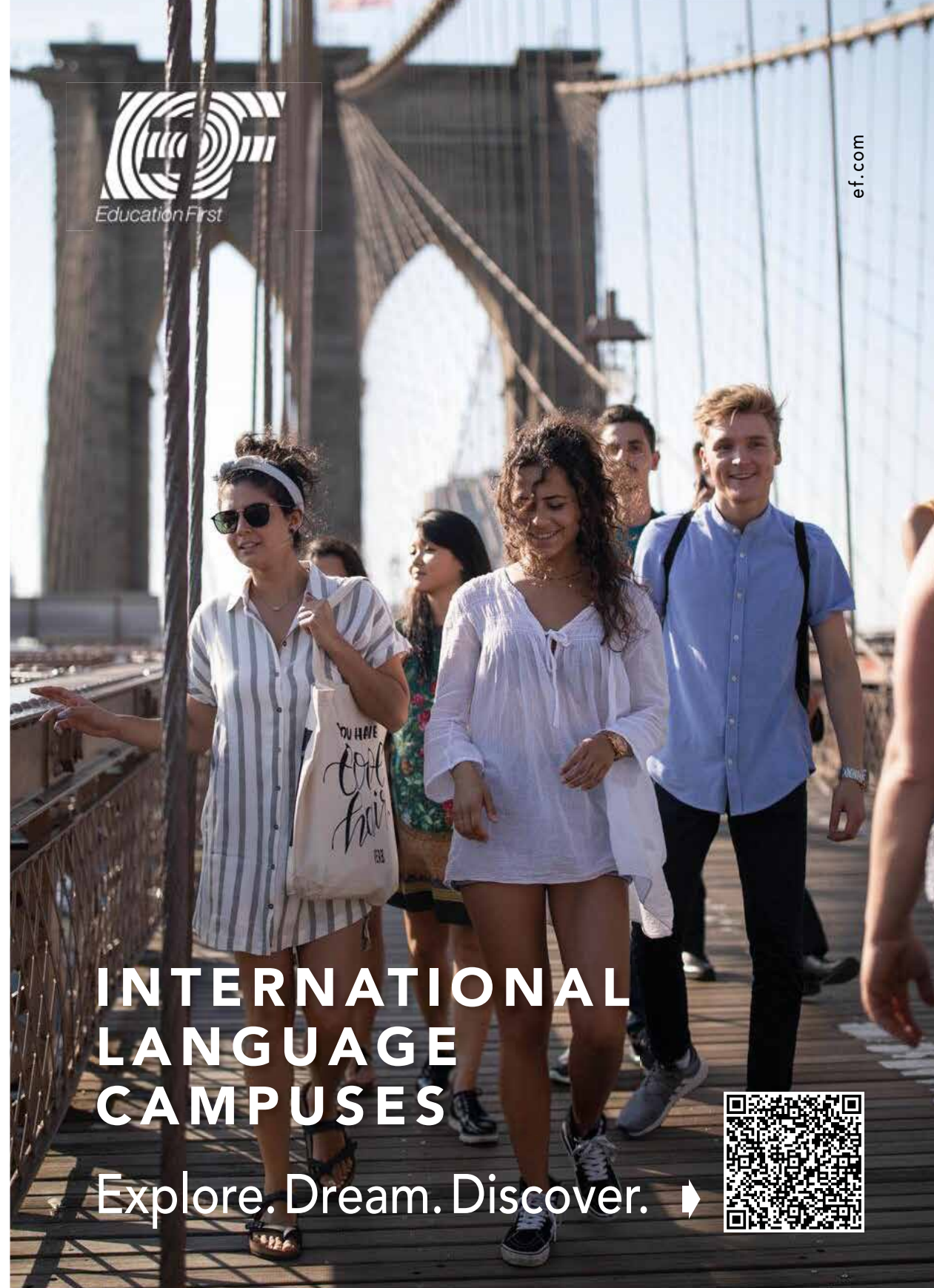
Your in-house leadership network should be flexible and able to adapt to changing circumstances. This will ensure that you can respond quickly to any situation and make decisions that will benefit the long-term success of your business. You are able to remain competitive and succeed in the future. It is time you and your ‘team of leaders’ to take action and build your success now and for the future to come.

Want to learn essential leadership abilities such as problem solving, communication, and decision-making? Gain a unique perspective on the

natural world vs the Business World, build relationships with like-minded peers, and gain the skills to become a Great Leader in your own business and life? Join Arnon Barnes on his next upcoming Safari Leadership Experience and discover the natural leader you are.

For more information on the Safari Leadership Experience or coaching, contact Arnon Barnes’ office via [info@arnonbarnes.com](mailto:info@arnonbarnes.com) or check out his website [www.arnonbarnes.com](http://www.arnonbarnes.com).

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# How a digital euro will prevent future banking crisis

Positive Money Europe's Vicky van Eyck offers her perspective on the possibilities a digital euro could present



The fall of Silicon Valley Bank and the bailout of Credit Suisse has resurged the possibility of a wider banking crisis. This debate is forcing us to ask ourselves once again what the purpose of banking is and how it can best serve society. Once we acknowledge that money and payments infrastructure are public goods, it becomes clear that we should treat them as such by introducing a public digital euro.

With everything going on in the world, from the cost of living crisis to increasingly grave climate crisis warnings, why should we care about the latest financial turmoil resulting from the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank and Credit Suisse?

The crisis that has emanated from the US banking system reveals once again the core tension between the two main functions of banks, and the inherent fragility that emerges from their combination.

Firstly, banks provide a critical public service by processing payments. Unless you are willing to keep all of your money in cash, you are forced to lend your income to a private bank. This is because banks are the only institutions with access to central bank money, the publicly-issued money required for settling payments between banks, in digital form. Meanwhile we, the public, are only able to access central bank money through banknotes and coins.

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## Finance

The second main function of banks is to make profits by remunerating themselves against risky lending. By doing that, banks are supposed to play a critical role in financing the needs of households and companies to run their businesses and make investments.

Combining these functions makes banks inherently fragile, because of the mismatch between the deposits collected and the longer maturity of the loans they issue. As customers can theoretically withdraw their deposits at any time, the banks are always potentially on the verge of going bankrupt, if customers suddenly lose trust in their banks.

### Too big to fail banks

Letting banks fail would be fine if only the consequences would not be so dramatic for society. But money and payments are one of a number of key public goods that the very functioning of our society is dependent on, alongside utilities such as water, electricity and telecoms. If a bank fails, businesses will be unable to pay workers, and households would be unable to pay their bills or buy essentials like food. And if the bank failure is big enough, it could drag the entire economy down with it, as we saw in 2008 with the failure of Lehman Brothers. No other private industry has been given such free rein to make business through risk-taking, and cause as much damage as banks have.

The immense power of banks rests on their ability to create and take the money deposits that we rely on for making payments.

Although risky bank deposits and non-risky central bank money (e.g. banknotes) are not technically the same, in practice their value is kept equal because the state has put in place deposit insurance schemes. These insurance schemes aim to avoid the situation where a bank failure results in the destruction of millions of people's well-earned savings.

To avoid this, governments have committed to reimburse customers' deposits even when a bank fails. Under EU regulation, this protection goes up to €100,000 per bank account.

This protection sounds great in principle, but it creates a moral hazard, as it offers a safety net for banks to make risky loans without having to pay the price for it in case the bank fails.

In practice, deposit insurance schemes are only very rarely activated. As we saw in the case of Silicon Valley Bank and Credit Suisse, governments decided to step in to avoid the need to activate the deposit insurance scheme. One way or another, it's the public that has to pay for the failure of banks.

This then begs the question of why we continue letting them get away with using their privileged position as a basis for making bets where the rewards are privatized and losses socialized, as we saw with Silicon Valley Bank.

### Digital euro: safe money without banks

Fortunately, there is a better and simpler solution to protect bank deposits. The intro-

## “ THE CRISIS IN THE US BANKING SYSTEM REVEALS ONCE AGAIN THE CORE TENSION BETWEEN THE TWO MAIN FUNCTIONS OF BANKS ”

## “ BANKS ARE ALWAYS POTENTIALLY ON THE VERGE OF GOING BANKRUPT, IF CUSTOMERS SUDDENLY LOSE TRUST IN THEIR BANKS ”



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duction of a digital euro, as currently being envisaged by the European Central bank, has the potential to solve this problem once and for all. With a digital euro, anyone would be able to hold central bank money in a safe digital wallet. Just like banknotes and coins, digital euros would be totally free of risk, because they will represent a claim on the central bank, which has the power to create money and cannot go bankrupt, and not on private banks.

In other words, as Financial Times's commentator Martin Sandbu wrote, a digital euro *"would provide precisely what seems to be missing today: a means by which businesses could keep cash completely safe, without any need for banks."*

This analysis was also shared by Lucrezia Reichlin, a former European Central Bank official, who wrote that the current situation "forces us to ask whether it would not be more efficient to bypass the banks altogether by allowing depositors – both retail and corporate – to keep their funds at the central bank, through the issuance of a central bank digital currency. That would be a comprehensive form of deposit insurance ex ante."

In this way, a digital euro would also simplify the system. It would get rid of the need to paper over the cracks with an increasingly complex maze of regulation very few can understand, as has been the response after every recent crisis.

The digital euro offers us the opportunity to finally re-establish money as a truly public good that serves the interests of society as a whole. In addition to improving the stabi-

lity of the financial system, it would provide a universally accessible and safe electronic form of public money, in particular for those on the margins of the economy, who currently do not have access to financial services.

The exact details of how a digital euro will be introduced remain to be seen, as the European Commission is preparing a legislative proposal for the digital euro to be released in June. Yet already many people have already voiced concerns for privacy, the disappearance of physical cash, and for the inclusiveness of this new system for all members of society, especially the most vulnerable ones.

The underlying worry is that the type of digital euro that the ECB has in mind is being designed with and for the interest of the banking sector. This is manifested for example by the insistence of the ECB to talk about

introducing digital euro solely through the intermediation of banks, thus carefully avoiding putting into question the powerful role of banks.

As an institution designed to serve the public good, the ECB must ensure a true democratic debate involving a plurality of voices takes place before deciding on how to introduce the digital euro. Only in this way can the EU hope to win over the public, and to prevent the project from dying an early death due to public backlash.

*Vicky Van Eyck is the Executive Director at Positive Money Europe, a non-profit organization based in Brussels working towards a fair, democratic and sustainable economy. ①*

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# Should I own my own home?

Property entrepreneur  
**Yannick Callens**  
guides you through  
the pros and cons  
of home ownership

In real estate we speak a lot about what's 'an active' and what's 'a passive.' 'An active' is something that brings you money in your pocket and 'a passive' is something that takes money from your pocket.



One of the biggest financial decisions you'll make in your life is whether to buy a home or rent one. Both options come with their own set of advantages and disadvantages, and the one that's right for you depends on your individual circumstances and lifestyle. Here are some of the pros and cons to help you decide.

## Advantages of Owning a Home

First and foremost, a property is an investment that can appreciate in value over time. Over time it's likely that the value will increase and that you will have a store of equity. Additionally, owning a home gives you a sense of security and stability - you don't have to worry about a landlord raising the rent or selling the property.

Another advantage of owning a home is that it allows you to customize and personalize your living space. You can redo your kitchen, knockdown a wall. Owning a home also offers potential tax advantages - homeowners

may be able to deduct mortgage interest, property taxes, and other expenses from their taxes.

## Disadvantages of owning a home

On the other hand, homeownership also comes with its own set of challenges and disadvantages. One of the biggest drawbacks is the cost of maintaining and repairing the property. If something goes wrong - like a leaky roof or broken boiler - it's up to you to foot the bill.

Additionally, you usually need to put down a substantial down payment, which can be a significant chunk of your savings. And if you take out a mortgage, you'll be making monthly payments for years to come, which can impact your ability to invest in other goals. Real estate markets can also be volatile - if the market takes a downturn, you may owe more on your mortgage than your home is worth.

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### Real estate

#### Advantages of renting

Renting is often cheaper than homeownership, particularly if you're living in an expensive city or area. You don't have to worry about a down payment or mortgage payment, and your rent can include other expenses like maintenance and repairs. With the soaring cost of living, a rental agreement that has fixed utility costs can be particularly advantageous.

Renting is also a more flexible option - if you need to move for work or other reasons, you don't have to worry about selling your home or paying a penalty for breaking your mortgage. There are tax and legal costs to purchasing a home and you may find yourself with a property that is no longer fit for purpose.

#### Disadvantages of renting

However, renting also comes with its own set of challenges and drawbacks. One of the biggest disadvantages is that you'll never build equity in your living space - every euro you pay in rent is gone forever. Additionally, landlords can be unpredictable, which can lead to inconvenient maintenance problems, rent hikes, or even eviction.

Landlords may have strict rules about decorating or remodeling, and you may not be able to make changes that reflect your personality and style. Finally, renters don't have the same tax benefits as homeowners.

#### Do current interest rates make a difference?

Current interest rates are an important factor to consider when deciding whether to purchase a home or take out a mortgage. Low interest rates can make it easier to afford a home, as your monthly mortgage

payments will be lower. However, the era of 'cheap money' is over, a return on your property investment is no longer a slam dunk.

For the smart investor this presents opportunities to start, or to build, a portfolio in a less crowded market. Many will be taking a 'wait and see' approach, results from the January 2023 ECB Consumer Expectations Survey suggest that consumers expect mortgage rates to increase further over the next 12 months causing hesitancy from some buyers and difficulty for those trying to sell. This is a prospective market for the canny.

European Union Construction Confidence Indicator has also shown -2.2% decline since the start of the year, that slow down

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YOU’LL MAKE IN YOUR  
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TO BUY A HOME ”**

in construction puts a squeeze on supply, which can - depending on the area - lead to later price increases. The ECB also reports an overall weakening in housing demand largely due to a significant

deterioration in financing conditions and significantly increased construction costs. Bad news for some, but good news if you can finance your investment now.

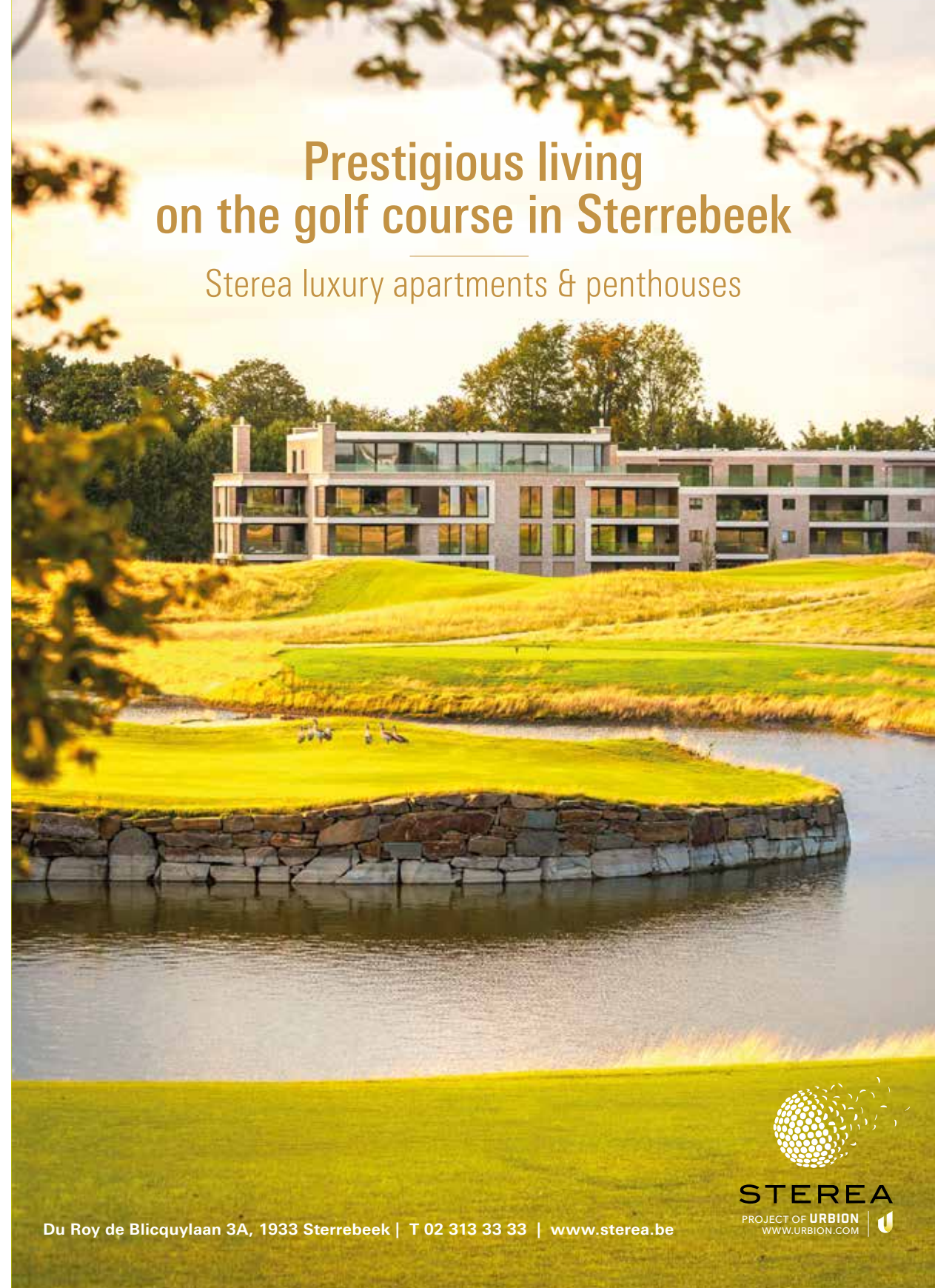
In summary, it all depends on your personal financial situation, investment strategy, and personal preferences. It's important to carefully consider all the factors and consult with a financial advisor before making a decision.

If you have any question regarding real estate, don't hesitate to contact my team or myself by email [info@immo-champion.com](mailto:info@immo-champion.com).

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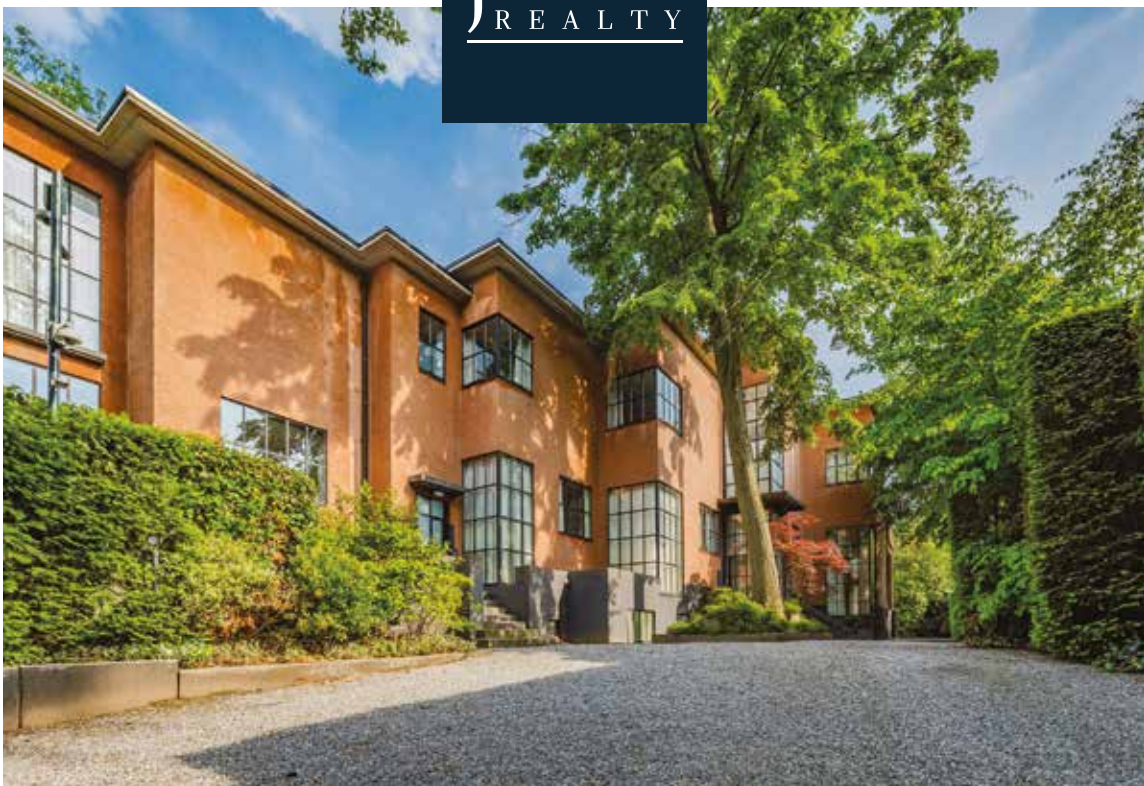
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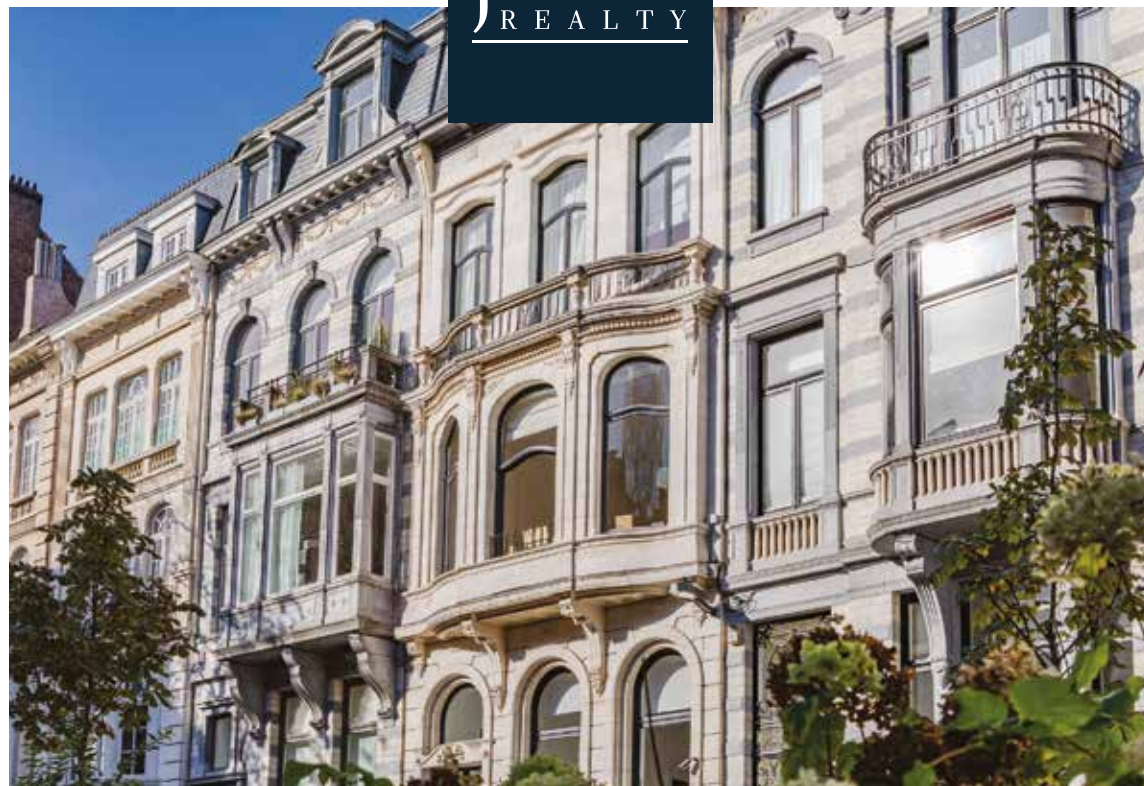
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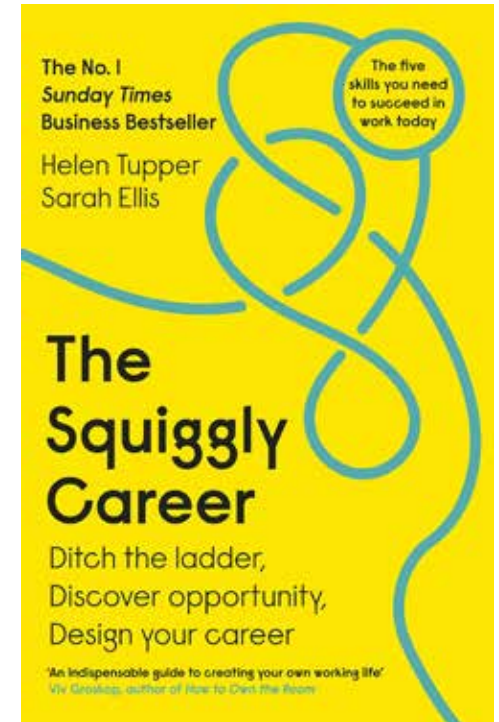
We asked Robbie Stakelum -  
life coach and *Together*  
contributor - if there was a  
book that he found inspiring,  
he suggested this self-guide  
that takes a different approach  
to career development

**'The Squiggly Career:  
Ditch the Ladder, Discover Opportunity,  
Design Your Career'** by Helen Tupper  
and Sarah Ellis

If you're feeling lost in your career, and un-  
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gate your career.

Often self-development books can be in-  
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the principles you've just read. In *The Squi-  
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cal approach, with each chapter filled with  
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you back to your strengths and values and  
provides you with a framework to re-think  
your career.

*The Squiggly Career* is one of the most pro-  
found and impactful books I've ever read  
and transformed my thinking around what  
career development means. Traditionally  
we think of careers as a ladder, which you  
gradually climb over your lifetime, but the



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der metaphor, and embrace new learning  
opportunities, take risks, follow our passions  
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### Books

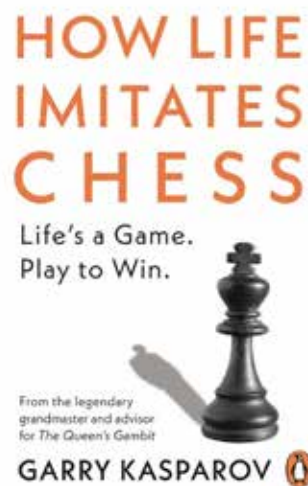
#### 'How Life Imitates Chess: Life's a game, play to win' by Garry Kasparov

Garry Kasparov is probably the greatest chess player of all time. He became world champion at the age of 22 and was the world's top ranked player for over two decades. *How Life Imitates Chess* was first published in 2007 and was republished in 2021, following the roaring success of *The Queen's Gambit*.

In the foreword to the new edition Kasparov acknowledges chess's debt to the TV show. The director asked him to act in the film, but finally he agreed to be a consultant instead. "It's terrible when you see a game in a movie and the position on the board is random rubbish," he writes. "It's insulting, even if few people notice. And in a prestige show about chess, it had to be real." He also thought that it was important for the actors to look and behave like real players and as someone who had grown up in Soviet Russia he could advise on how this could be made more realistic.

Kasparov has written many books on chess aimed at the cognoscenti and has become one of the most outspoken voices against Vladimir Putin; in 2015 he wrote a book entitled: *Winter Is Coming: Why Vladimir Putin and the Enemies of the Free World Must be Stopped*. As we know, that regrettably didn't come to pass.

Kasparov says the book, which he started when he retired from professional chess, is about the tools the game gave him to analyze and improve his evaluations and decisions in all situations. The goal behind the advice given is to mull over these tools



and apply them to your own work. In chess he points out that good strategies can fail because of bad tactics and vice-versa. Neither can be ignored, tactics may allow us to seize opportunities and maximise our strengths, however one cannot afford to lose sight of the longer game.

There is no doubt that intense dedication and hard work are critical to success in the game, but at the highest levels flights of imagination, intuition and nerve are also called for. Kasparov talks about the different psychological battles at the highest level of the game and how he beat Deep Blue. In a world where AI has increasing power and adaptability it is reassuring to think that while software and machine learning may easily surpass human computational ability, it can fail in longer-term planning and maneuvering.

The most enjoyable aspect of this book is when it sticks to chess, without trying to draw awkward lessons for entrepreneurs. There are enjoyable anecdotes and observations about the greatest names in chess: Morphy, Steinitz, Botvinnik, the 'Magician of Riga' Mikhail Tal and other greats. At the end of each chapter there are stories about different games and contrasting characters who have played over the years, from the single-minded dedication of a player like Alexander Alekhine, to the charming non-chalance of José Raúl Capablanca. My advice would be to skip the business advice and enjoy a great master of chess's reflections on his own game and those of others, told in a way that is accessible to mere mortals. ❶



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# Karen Northshield: A survivor and a fighter

*Together* editor Catherine Feore met Karen Northshield to learn about her incredible story



On 22 March 2016, Belgo-American athlete, fitness coach, Aspria yoga and fitness trainer – and one of *Together's* inspirational contributors – Karen Northshield arrived at Zaventem airport to catch her flight. She had come to the airport three hours in advance to check in her luggage and go through the rigorous US-gate security for her flight from Brussels to the sunshine state of Florida, where she was looking forward to a long awaited visit to see her grandmother and other family members. As she waited in line, to

her left, a suicide bomber was also there. At 7:58 Karen's life would change forever.

Three suicide bombers entered the departures hall of Zaventem airport that same morning. One bomb exploded at 7:58, a second one went off within seconds, wreaking havoc. Later that morning at 9:11, a bomb would explode in Maalbeek metro station causing more death and injury. In total 32 people were murdered and 340 injured. Brussels was in shock, the world horrified. Ordinary people, going about their business,

found themselves in the middle of the most deadly attack on Belgium since the Second World War.

This year we marked the 7th anniversary of the bombing. At the end of December 2022, the trial started of the ten accused, six of whom have already received convictions in June 2022 for their role in the Paris terrorist attacks of November 2015, which murdered 130 and injured more than 416 people.

## 'Injured'

"I'm still trying to comprehend what happened on that day," says Northshield. "It's beyond imagination, it's beyond my imagination. I was standing next to the terrorist, when the bomb exploded, I was swept off my feet, landing dozens of metres away, but I was conscious. If I hadn't stayed conscious, I would have vanished, I would not be here today. So the fight, for me, started at that same moment."

Incredibly, Northshield stayed conscious for over an hour and a half, until the emergency services finally arrived. She lost consciousness once in the ambulance and didn't come out of her coma until several weeks later in Erasmus hospital.

The bomb had fractured her hip, leg and foot in multiple places, there was an open intestinal injury, she was suffering from asphyxiation, her hearing had also been hit by the blast, to name just some of the injuries. The prognosis was not good. Northshield was at death's door and nearly died on several occasions. She was confined to a gruelling three-and-a-half years in hospital, where she underwent more than sixty surgical interventions, had multiple life-threatening infections, and was subject to many antibiotic treatments and experimental medicines.

"My entire life was shattered," says Northshield. "My body was shattered, my body was traumatized. I get around on crutches, I have multiple other handicaps. It will take an entire lifetime to reconstruct myself, but I will never be finished with my reconstruction because there are parts of me that are no longer there. I've lost vital organs, including my stomach and spleen, I'm missing pieces of my leg and I have post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD). I was polytraumatized and no doctor expected me to be alive today. Each injury requires its own reconstruction, its own rehabilitation, its own care."

I met with Karen at Aspria's La Rasante country club in Woluwe-Saint-Lambert, which I learnt is where she comes to for a lot of her rehabilitation work, swimming and physical therapy. I had done some background reading about Karen and was looking for someone who clearly had to be in a wheelchair, probably with several tubes coming out of her body. Then I received a message, she was in the café, seated in the corner. There was indeed a young woman, sitting in the corner with a laptop, but she wasn't in a wheelchair and she looked very 'normal'.

Later in the interview I confessed that this is not what I had expected. "That's my strength," she retorted. "Most people are expecting somebody who has the attitude and behaviour of a victim. I worked very hard to preserve my body, although the doctors would have preferred to amputate my leg, which was severely damaged, knowing that this can often lead to complications with the danger of infections. Thankfully, I was spared this, because I'm an athlete, my body is my instrument, I need my body. Sometimes I wake up and I feel disassociated from my body, it operates in a

**" IF I HADN'T STAYED  
CONSCIOUS, I WOULD  
HAVE VANISHED,  
I WOULD NOT BE  
HERE TODAY "**





## “ I WAS THROWN IN THE MIDDLE OF A WAR SCENE, I HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO FIGHT ”

different way, there are parts that feel stuck, or lazy, or slow. I've had to learn to cherish what is still there and work with it.”

### Three pillars

It is very difficult to think of words to describe what Karen has had to overcome to be where she is today. I highly recommend watching her recent TEDx talk, where she takes us on a metaphorical flight and shares at least part of her approach.

## “ EACH INJURY REQUIRES ITS OWN RECONSTRUCTION, ITS OWN REHABILITATION, ITS OWN CARE ”

Karen says that there are three pillars that have brought her to where she is today, each one has been critical to her survival. The first pillar is her will to fight: “Life was throwing a tremendous challenge at me, I was thrown in the middle of a war scene, I had no choice but to fight.”

In some ways she could draw on her experience as an athlete and knowledge of yoga, through which she had already developed a strong and focused mindset. In her TED talk she says we need to ask the right questions. Instead of waving our fists at the heavens and asking, ‘why?’ We need to think like a professional sports person, we need to ask ‘what?’. Assess our situation and ask what we can do to change it, to focus on goals. These goals were about her own rehabilitation, but as a trainer she was also asking herself how others could draw lessons and learn from her experience. Karen’s done this in a number of ways. She is a motivational speaker, what she has achieved by dint of hard work and perseverance is almost superhuman, there are valuable lessons that she can share.

The second pillar of her path to recovery has been her family and friends: “There’s an expression I really like, ‘if you want to go fast, go alone; but if you want to go far, go together.’ I found myself in a very long fight, one that continues today. In some ways every day is a marathon. I was going to need additional winds to help support me, family and friends to give me love and to give me hope.”

### TEAM KAREN – Brussels 20K Running for the victims and survivors of the Brussels Attacks

Northshield has taken this approach to her ‘Team Karen’ project. Team Karen will run in the Brussels 20k for the fifth time this year. Karen can no longer run the race, but she is equipped with a wheelchair and a team of around 10 pushers who she motivates to “pulverize the finish line.” She says the team are her legs, but she is their wings. Her presence motivates them in the race and their lives: “We’re very excited about this year, we will carry a symbolic heart for all the victims and survivors of the Brussels terrorist attack. We have a very powerful message about hope, determination and resilience.”

The final pillar is, of course, the remarkable medical treatment she received here in Belgium: “If the doctors were not there from day one, if they had chosen to give up on me at any point, I would not be here today.”

### A to Z

Karen has written a book, *Dans le souffle de la bombe* (In the blast of the bomb, Kennes Editions), currently available in French and Dutch, but an English edition is in development. The book is a sort of psychological A to Z, in a sense it is a mental map that starts with Chapter A for Attentat (attack) and ends with Chapter Z (Zaventem).

“For me it was also necessary to reconstruct with words,” says Northshield. “The bomb created chaos, physical chaos and mental chaos. Writing a book forced me to concentrate, to remember what happened and to put the pieces of the puzzle back together, but there are pieces that are missing.”

“There are a lot of victims who are suffering from PTSD. Although I am still in recovery and rehab and have flashbacks, I choose to wear a smile on my face and be optimistic.”



## “ TEAM KAREN WILL RUN IN THE BRUSSELS 20K FOR THE FIFTH TIME THIS YEAR ”

tic as I share my story and resilience with others. I choose to help others in finding meaning in their lives when faced with adversity and how to find and use the strength within ourselves.”

When I ask Karen about the trial that started at the end of 2022, she says she sees it as a necessary process: “I believe in a democratic country and the law. For many victims it is a necessary step, a milestone. But in my case, it’s not something that will change my life, my life has already been changed.” Northshield is critical of the government for failing in their responsibilities towards the many victims of the attack who still have to fight for compensation and assistance.

There’s a chapter in her book called F - Freddie Mercury, I asked Karen about this, and she explained that though she has





Karen Northshield practising yoga in 2015

**“ I CHOOSE TO HELP OTHERS IN FINDING MEANING IN THEIR LIVES WHEN FACED WITH ADVERSITY AND HOW TO FIND AND USE THE STRENGTH WITHIN OURSELVES ”**

lost much hearing she can still connect to music, the music of Freddie Mercury was extremely important to her as she lay in her hospital bed, trying to distract herself from the pain she was in: “I needed energy from another source, I’ve loved Mercury since I was eight or nine. I remember at swimming championships we would parade around the pool to ‘We are the Champions’, that was a magical moment for me. I found it energizing and powerful, it resonated with me.”

I hadn’t listened to the song for some time. There is the victorious chorus of the title, but what I had forgotten about the song is that it is about overcoming adversity and injustice, and defiantly and resolutely fighting back, with ‘no time for losers’, the single-minded determination of the champion, a spirit that Karen Northshield embodies.

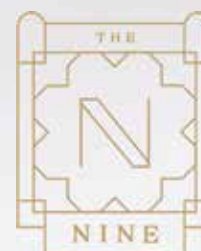
Karen Northshield  
Motivational speaker  
[www.karennorthshield.be](http://www.karennorthshield.be) ①



Support TEAM KAREN

## START THE WEEKEND AT THE NINE

OPENING TO PUBLIC



From April, THE NINE, Belgium’s first female-focused private members club, is opening its bar and restaurant to the public every Friday.

At lunch, Head Chef Joao Silva proposes a modern & international menu that champions seasonable & sustainable ingredients. In the evening, the restaurant offers both a la carte menu and sharing plates from the bar menu.

The bar opens from 12:00 until 22:00. In addition to wine, champagne, and mocktails, its famous cocktail list offers a twist on traditional favorites, all named after strong women from history.

In warmer months, drinks & dining also available in the large garden terrace.

By reservation only.

# LIFESTYLE

*Not just a look, but a way of living*

## Italfama: Italy's leading producer of luxury chess sets

Chess is fundamentally a very democratic sport, you can purchase a vinyl tournament board and weighted plastic pieces for around €35. However, chess sets are also objets d'art, nowhere is this better understood than at Italfama, which produces some of the most prized chess sets in the world.



Italfama was founded, near Florence, by Aldo Marsili in 1976. It was born of his passion for the game of chess, which was matched by this passion for craftsmanship and artistry. He made his first chess boards for his friends. The sets were so success-

ful that very soon what started as a simple hobby became a fully-fledged life's work, making Italfama a world class factory in the production of high quality chess pieces and chess boards.



**Medieval chess set**

€69.500,00

A unique chess set, made in bronze, finished using 24 karat gold. Each piece is signed by the sculptor. The chessboard is made in onyx and bronze with a frame in bronze and gold. Stools in bronze with velvet seats.

**Classical flower chess set**

€490,00

Chess men made of gold plated metal, King 7.5 cm. Briar wood chess board, hand inlaid 42 x 42 cm.

Italfama offers chessboards in both classic and contemporary styles, as well as historically themed chess pieces such as those from famous battles and characters from ancient and modern history.

To create the Italfama chess boards, precious materials are carefully chosen, like elm and walnut briar wood, semi-precious stones like onyx, Carrara marble and malachite. The chess pieces are fashioned with the use of many metals, including solid brass and bronze, in various finishes that span from gold to silver.

In 1999, Italfama acquired the 'Piero Benzon' factory in Milan, famous for the production of exclusive chess pieces and chessboards in limited editions, handmade in bronze using the wax-casting process, an ancient method handed down by the famous sculptor Benvenuto Cellini in 1550 and still used in the jewellery sector to this day.

Italfama also acquired the factory 'La Bottega del Vasari' in Milan, which specialized in the production of artistic chess pieces and chess boards made in bronze, all completely handmade.

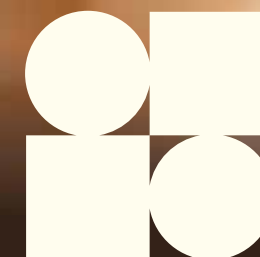
Sons Tommaso and Marco are continually innovating with new product lines and new finishes.

Italfama opened its own official point of sale in Florence in 2002, in Borgo San Jacopo near Ponte Vecchio. It has become a place of pilgrimage to their dedicated customers, who visit from across the world.

[www.italfama.it](http://www.italfama.it) 

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# Tissot: A brand rich in history

Tissot, the renowned watch brand, has been synonymous with precision, innovation, and excellence for over 160 years.



The brand has a rich history, starting from its humble beginnings as a small watch workshop in the Swiss town of Le Locle in 1853, to becoming a global player in the luxury watch industry.

The founder of Tissot, Charles-Félicien Tissot, was a skilled watchmaker who had a passion for creating high-quality timepieces. He founded the company in 1853 along with his son Charles-Émile Tissot.

The early years were challenging for the company as it struggled to make a name for itself in the highly competitive watch industry.

The Swiss watch industry was already dominated by established brands such as Omega, Patek Philippe, and Rolex, and it was not easy for a new brand like Tissot to gain a foothold.

Tissot had to innovate and differentiate itself from its competitors to stand out in the market. In the late 19th century, Tissot introduced some ground-breaking innovations in the watch industry. In 1885, Tissot became the first watch brand to produce a pocket watch with two time zones. The watch was a great success and helped Tissot establish a reputation for innovation

and quality. In 1915, Tissot launched the first mass-produced wristwatch with a minute repeater, a complication that allowed the watch to chime the time when a button was pressed. This was another industry first for Tissot and helped the brand gain a reputation for technical innovation.

Despite its early successes, Tissot faced some challenges in the early 20th century. The First World War disrupted the Swiss watch industry, and Tissot had to adapt to the changing market conditions. The company shifted its focus to producing more affordable watches to cater to a wider audience.

Tissot also started to produce watches with more practical functions, such as water resistance and shock resistance, to meet the needs of customers who wanted watches that could withstand the rigors of daily life.

Like many companies In the 1930s, Tissot suffered as the Great Depression took a toll on the global economy. The company had to reduce its workforce and cut back on production to survive. However, Tissot emerged from this difficult period stronger than ever. The company continued to innovate and produce high-quality watches that were in demand, even during tough economic times.

During the Second World War, Tissot had to adapt to the changing market conditions once again. The war had a significant impact on the Swiss watch industry, as the supply of raw materials was disrupted and production was hampered. However, Tissot turned its attention to the needs of the Swiss army by focusing on the production of military watches.

After the war, Tissot continued to grow and expand its product range. In the 1950s and

## “ IN THE 1950S AND 1960S, THE COMPANY INTRODUCED SEVERAL ICONIC MODELS ”

1960s, the company introduced several iconic models that became synonymous with the brand, such as the Tissot Visodate and the Tissot Navigator. Tissot also expanded its international presence, opening branches in several countries around the world.

In the 1970s there was a quartz crisis which hit the watch industry. The crisis caused upheaval in the watch industry as cheap, battery-powered quartz watches from Japan

flooded the market. Many Swiss watch brands struggled to adapt to the changing market conditions, and some even went bankrupt. However, Tissot managed to survive by diversifying its product range and introducing its own quartz watches

In 1983, Tissot was acquired by the Swatch Group. This acquisition brought new resources and opportunities, allowing it to continue to thrive in the competitive watch industry. The Swatch Group is a well-known







TISSOT - T-Race Chronograph - €595

acquisition of Tissot brought about a new era of growth and development for the brand.

Under the Swatch Group, Tissot has been able to expand its product offerings and distribution channels, allowing it to reach more customers around the world. In addition, the Swatch Group has been able to provide Tissot with the resources needed to invest in research and development, allowing the brand to continue to innovate and stay ahead of the competition.

The acquisition also allowed Tissot to benefit from the Swatch Group's expertise in marketing and branding. Tissot was able to leverage the Swatch Group's experience to develop a stronger brand identity and reach a wider audience. The Swatch Group has also helped Tissot to expand its presence in the sports industry, which has become a key area of focus for the brand.

Overall, the acquisition by the Swatch Group has been instrumental in the continued success of Tissot. It has provided the brand with the resources, expertise, and opportunities needed to grow and thrive in the competitive watch industry.

The values of Tissot as a brand can be traced back to its rich heritage of quality, innovation, and precision. Since its founding in 1853, Tissot has been committed to producing high-quality watches that combine the latest technology with timeless design. Today, the brand is known for its Swiss-made watches that are both elegant and functional.

According to François Thiébaud, CEO of Tissot, «We believe that watches should be accessible to everyone, without compromising on quality or style.» This statement reflects the brand's commitment to making high-quality watches that are accessible to a wide range of consumers. Tissot has always been a brand that is focused on innovation and technology, and this commitment is reflected in the watches that it produces.

One area where Tissot has been particularly successful in recent years is its partnership with the MotoGP. As the official timekeeper of the MotoGP, Tissot has developed a strong association with the world of motorsports. This partnership has allowed the brand to showcase its precision and technical expertise, as well as its commitment to innovation.

One example of Tissot's involvement with the MotoGP is its collaboration with Enea Bastianini, the rising star of the motorcycle racing world. Bastianini is the newest ambassador for Tissot, and he recently helped launch the Tissot T-Race MotoGP™



TISSOT - T-Race MotoGP Chronograph 2023 - €725



## “ TISSOT T-RACE MOTOGP™ LIMITED EDITION WATCH IS LIMITED TO JUST 8,000 UNITS, MAKING IT A HIGHLY SOUGHT-AFTER ITEM AMONG WATCH COLLECTORS ”

Limited Edition watch. This watch is designed to capture the excitement and precision of motorcycle racing, and it features a number of innovative features that make it a favorite among racing enthusiasts.

The Tissot T-Race MotoGP™ Limited Edition watch is limited to just 8,000 units, making it a highly sought-after item among watch collectors. It features a number of unique design elements that are inspired by the world of motorcycle racing, including a brake disc-inspired bezel, a dashboard-inspired dial, and a tire tread-inspired rubber strap. The watch also features a chrono-

graph function, as well as a date display and a tachymeter function.

In addition to Bastianini, Tissot has worked with a number of other ambassadors over the years, including Tony Parker, Deepika Padukone, and Virat Kohli. These ambassadors represent a wide range of industries and cultures, but they all share a commitment to excellence and a passion for innovation. By working with these ambassadors, Tissot is able to showcase its commitment to quality and innovation. ❶



# Your house *is your home*



Lucia Esteves designed the interior space of this modernist home built in 1958 and owned by Jacques Dolphyn and Christophe Gevers into a stylish and characterful place.

*Text and photos by Mireille Roobaert*





Her approach is to first listen to the occupants of the house to enable her to create a world that is in keeping with the style and personality of the people who live there.

Here is an architectural design in perfect harmony with nature, with each room looking out across the landscape through large window sections, offering a live view at all times and from any room in the house, giving a sense of space and freedom, with everything bathing in an energising natural light.

Lucia Esteves believes any home should be an extension of the people that live in it. So she starts out by listening to the occupants of the house as she seeks to establish a sense of connection between them and their own home interior, literally and meta-

**“ LUCIA ESTEVES  
BELIEVES ANY HOME  
SHOULD BE  
AN EXTENSION  
OF THE PEOPLE  
THAT LIVE IN IT ”**

phorically. The homes people live in are not just about being functional living quarters, they tell a story, reflect emotions and are imbued with a soul.

To bring out the very essence of this home, she first and foremost drew on her main tools which are colours and materials. Decorative objects and furniture pieces are next. Sometimes she will simply suggest changing the way in which rooms are arranged, using what is already in the home.

For the colours, Lucia uses the colour palette of Resources. In the dining room she went with a Nude punctuated by a table and vintage chairs from Italian designer Tobia Scarpa that have been done up and repainted by Via Antica. On the wall is a diptych from Mireille Roobaert which engages in dialogue through citrus-inspired colours with a piece of ceramic art by Tinka Pitoors, purchased from the Forêt Divonne Gallery. In front of the window are two exceptional tables from Maison Armand Jonckers decorated with two glass sculptures made by Katherine Huskie bought from the Spazio Nobile Gallery.

In the living room, the originally white brick wall has been decked

**“ HERE IS AN  
ARCHITECTURAL  
DESIGN IN  
PERFECT HARMONY  
WITH NATURE ”**



**“ THESE FUNCTIONAL  
KITCHENS WITH  
STANDARD-SIZED UNITS  
WERE FIRST CREATED  
IN 1930 BY HERMAN  
DE CONINCK ”**

out in black, around a fire place and a glass and metal book case by Christophe Gevers, all of which contributes to making the room feel intimate, with touches of black velours in the sofa from Maison de Vacances. The velours brings texture and depth, with the low black table adding dark and shimmering tones.

Above the fireplace is a sunflower from the *This Is Not The Sun* series made by the artists at Les Gai-Lurons.

The kitchen has been left intact. This is a Cubex, in its original Magnolia colour which helps create the sense of charm of the era.

These functional kitchens with standard-sized units were first created in 1930 by Herman De Coninck. They are still being made to this very day by [cubex.be](http://cubex.be).



**“ THE RESULT IS A HOUSE LIKE AN EAGLES’ NEST  
WHICH FEELS AND MAKES ITSELF FELT LIKE  
A REAL HOME ”**

The main room was designed to deliver a subtle vibe with shades ranging from curry yellow, rosewood to brass in the soft furnishings, curtain linen, plaids and drapes by Celso De Lemos and a skin carpet by Carine Boxy on the wall to offset the atmosphere. On the side wall is an anamorphic composition by Mireille Roobaert created at the Solvay building as part of her Remember Souvenir artwork. The white armchair is by Gervasoni.

up on the home’s vibe, its personality, elegance, style, flow and quirky character. The wooden staircase was custom-designed for the owners by Christophe Gevers, as was the beautiful brushed metal banister and the wall lights that subtly light this space.

The result is a house like an eagles’ nest which feels and makes itself felt like a real home. ❶

Upon setting foot inside the home, in the entrance hall Lucia immediately picked



# 72

*Photographer* Xavier F.Martin *Art Director* Nicholas Sirot  
*Make up* Elke Binnemans *using* SISLEY COSMETICS,  
*for Hair* Elke Binnemans *using* Moroccanoil.  
*Model* Lisa @ UNIT MODEL MANAGEMENT  
*White socks:* Falke

CICLIA WAS THE FIRST TO GO.



Sweat-shirt: Adidas  
 Skirt: Lacoste  
 Socks: Falke  
 Sneakers: Nathan Baume (W-2023)



Cap: La familia  
 Turtleneck: Zara  
 Jacket: Tommy Hilfiger





*Pink jacket:* Stand Studio  
*Skirt:* Lacoste  
*Make up:* Sisley Cosmetics:  
exfoliating enzyme mask-ecological compound  
phyto teint nude OON pearl-stylo lumière 1  
phyto sourcils fix 2  
le phyto gloss 8 milky way  
*Hair:* Moroccanoil: luminous hairspray finish strong



*Polo shirt: Zara  
Panties: Chantelle  
White socks: Falke  
Shoes: Nathan Baume (W-2023)*





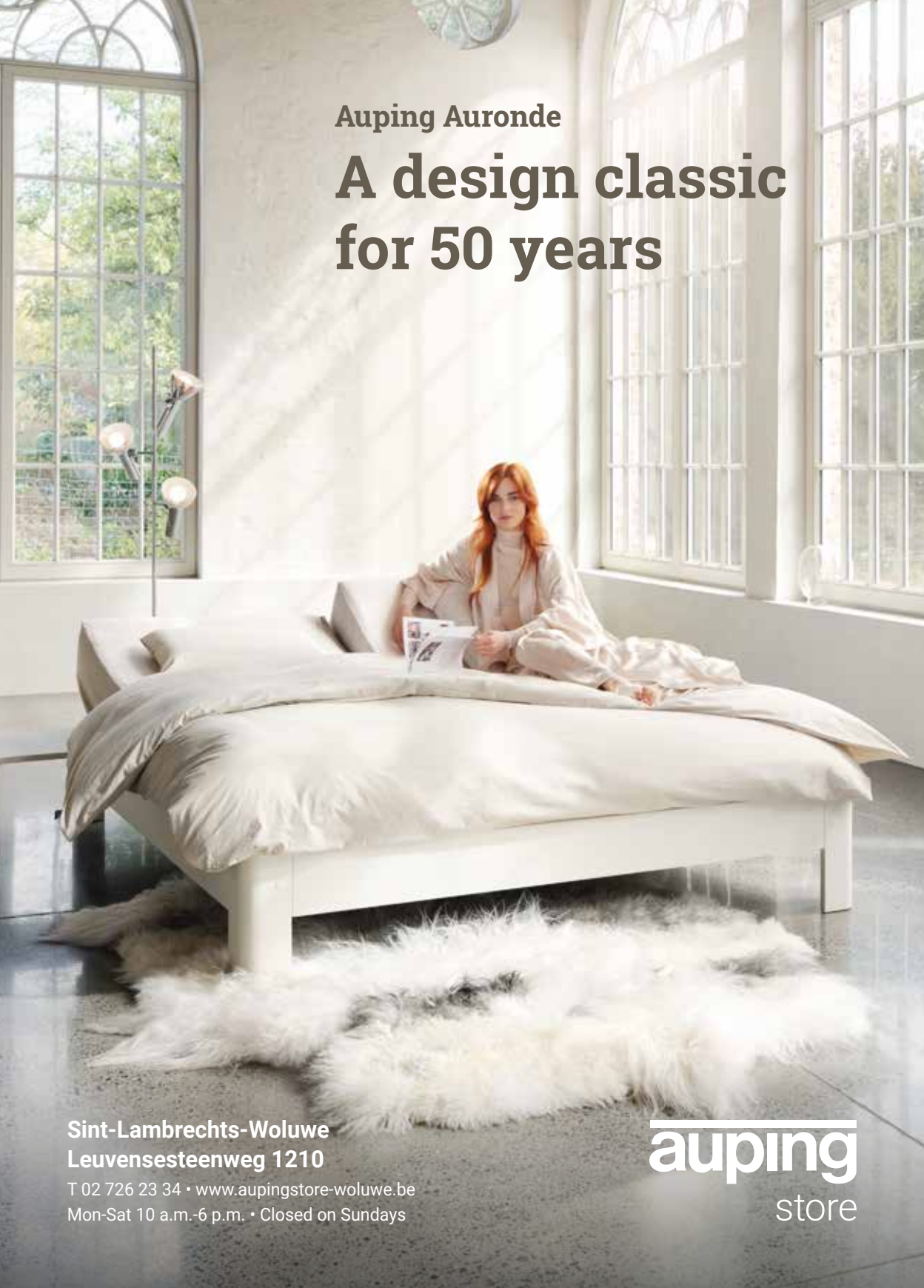
*Jacket: Arket Short: Love Stories Socks: Falke Shoes: Nathan Baume (W-2023)*



*Coat: Lacoste  
Socks: Falke*

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## Longchamp Brussels takes the stage

*Together's* Coralie Tilot visits the revamped Longchamp boutique on Avenue Louise, which has just unveiled a new concept



Crossing the threshold of a Longchamp boutique anywhere in the world, you'll feel like you've been welcomed into a friend's Parisian apartment. The mise-en-scène reflects the passions, experiences and personality of each boutique. Longchamp's new design concept reflects its heritage and craftsmanship, energy and optimism.

Unlike shops that advocate the same decor, the French family-owned fashion house opts for a personalized atmosphere in each of its shops. Sophie Delafontaine, granddaughter of the founders, and artistic direc-

tor of Longchamp, explains this: "By giving each Longchamp boutique its own identity, we offer customers an experience, a glimpse at an art of living."

Inspired by the idea of the typical Parisian apartment, the decor creates a warm and welcoming atmosphere, and highlights the values shared by Longchamp and its customers, in particular a curious, artistic and cosmopolitan spirit. "The Belgian client has a real knowledge of craftsmanship. There's an attachment to 'casual chic,' audacity, aesthetics and design," says Delafontaine.



“ EACH LONGCHAMP BOUTIQUE HAS ITS OWN IDENTITY, WE OFFER CUSTOMERS AN EXPERIENCE, A GLIMPSE AT AN ART OF LIVING ”



The lounge area and the library, where bags, ready-to-wear, shoes and accessories are displayed, encourage you to take your time and discover the new collection. What could be nicer than sitting on the comfortable sofa designed by Pierre Paulin and leafing through magazines and books inspired by the latest trends of the season.

The shop benefits from a very beautiful space, composed of a ground floor and an upper floor. The store's double-height facade adds a transparency making the interiors visible and very impactful. The walls are adorned with wickerwork to support



the sleek, natural and elegant appearance of the shop. An oak Wave table by designer Pierre Renart in the window also adds a certain warmth.

Ceramics by Dutch artist Floris Wubben and a vintage Italian chandelier, as well as two works by Toulouse artist François Bonnel entitled 'Park Life 1 & 2' aren't what you expect in any other boutique. A key element of this new concept is the presence, in each boutique, of at least one item from the Longchamp archives. Longchamp began by making pipes and smoking articles covered in leather. A retro advertising poster from the era of leather-covered pipes takes its place above the small leather goods cabinet.

This reopening marks the launch of the Longchamp Summer 2023 collection with a colour scheme that makes you crave travel and sunshine! ☀

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# Shopping

As more and more people become concerned about the potential health and environmental risks associated with the chemicals found in many beauty products, there has been a growing trend towards natural skin and hair care. Fortunately, there are now brands offering products free from potentially harmful substances such as parabens, phthalates, and sulphates.

In addition to being better for the planet, these products are also less likely to cause skin irritation or other adverse reactions. Whatever your beauty needs, it's worth taking the time to seek out products that are kinder to both you and the environment.



**Annayake**  
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**Coelho**  
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# Swept away

By Nicholas Sirot

It's time to put away your winter fragrances. The cedar woods, musks, tuberoses, bergamot are wonderful in the winter months, but as the sun shines and spring is in full bloom it's time to be swept away with some fresh floral scents.

Hermès in-house perfumer Christine Nagel was inspired by her trips to Greece to create *Un Jardin à Cythère*. The perfume carries you away to the azure blue skies and the scents of golden grasses. Dior is inspired by Provence. At Rochas, inspiration comes from the Mediterranean. For Lanvin and Roger Gallet it is the poetry of a bouquet of flowers, for Aqua Di Parma it is the essence of a citrus fruit and finally, for Sisley, the depth and lightness of a dream of seduction. Now it's up to you to compose your trip, your bouquet... or simply to dream.



**Dior**  
La collection privée DIORIVIERA.  
125ml. Price: **€255.**



**Hermès**  
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100ml. Price: **€123.**



**Acqua di Parma**  
Arancia la Spugnatura.  
100ml. Price: **€170.**



**Roger & Gallet**  
Rose. 100ml.  
Price: **€41,20.**

**Rochas**  
Citron Soleil.  
100ml. Price: **€79.**



**Lanvin**  
Les Fleurs de Lanvin.  
90ml. Price: **€59.**



**Sisley**  
L'eau Révée d'Isa.  
100ml. Price: **€141,50.**

# LIFE OF LEISURE

LIFE OF LEISURE

Interview

## Anya Taylor-Joy: Style and substance

*Together* meets the actress who caught the world's attention through her portrayal of Beth Harmon in *The Queen's Gambit*

Anya Taylor-Joy is a happy person now she is able to work again. Yet for how long, she doesn't know. That's because while the lockdown period we all experienced is over, the sense of apprehension remains for the actress.

The 27-year-old has made great strides in TV and film, prompting *Time* magazine to place her in their annual 100 Next feature in 2021. Legendary chess world champion Garry Kasparov said that in her role in *The Queen's Gambit* she learnt to move the piece and her body the way a professional player does. As Kasparov acknowledges, her portrayal may have done more to promote chess worldwide than all the real-world champions. She's managed to pick up a number of honours for her acting, with a Golden Globe Award for her portrayal of Harmon.

Since *Gambit* she has had a number of roles in cutting edge films with ensemble casts of Hollywood's brightest and best: *Last Night in Soho*, *The Menu* and *Amsterdam*.

More recently, the American – born in Miami, but raised in London – has lent her



voice to the *Super Mario Bros* movie and stars in the post-apocalyptic thriller *Furiosa* and romantic action flick *The Gorge* coming up in the next year.

It seems with every new project, the actress is furthering her reputation as an exemplar of quality over quantity. It all means that if she can overcome the insecurities that she, quite candidly, discusses, Anya Taylor-Joy is truly set to become an icon of her generation.

*Experience adventure in Belgium,  
London and beyond*





**“ I’VE ALWAYS ADMIRER ACTORS WHO CAN BE CALM AND NOT NERVOUS WHEN THEY DON’T HAVE PROJECTS ON. I’M NOT LIKE THAT – I COULDN’T BE ”**

**Together:** You’ve spoken about how it took you a while to get back to normal after the pandemic. It was refreshing to hear such honest views.

Anya: Thank you. I am back to normal, but it’s clear a lot of us aren’t, and I do find that very sad. It has affected some people perennially – it’s still in all our consciousnesses; so maybe I am not totally back to normal, but I am certainly in a place where fear is no longer prevalent.

For a long time it was – that feeling that this is something we may not emerge from; and even if we do, we may find ourselves plummeting into once again further down the line.

I don’t actually think those things are true, but when you have the very fabric of your life ripped from beneath you, it’s difficult not to view things from a really hopeless perspective.

What is true is that after so long working in different ways – and for a spell of time not working at all – I am dedicated and driven to take every opportunity and to work harder than ever before and that’s what I have been doing.

**Indeed, your work methods haven’t changed much though, have they?**

Well, no, because in many ways I’ve always worked at 100kph. I’ve always admired actors who can be calm and not nervous when they don’t have projects on. I’m not like that – I couldn’t be.

I need to be active, moving along, looking for the next thing. I am lucky in the sense that I’ve always had momentum in the projects I work on, without taking on too many and diluting what it is I give to each.

**You’ve been on the cover of Vogue in several countries, how was that experience?**

It was a fantasy thing, I guess – something most young girls dream of when they begin to find a way in entertainment and culture.

Of course the perception versus reality is very different with these things, likewise when you discover what is involved in making a movie. That whole process of putting together an hour-and-a-half of drama is something that is very stunted, drawn-out, laborious and very un-Hollywood; yet what you see in the end result is everything you imagine this industry to be like. And I guess in a way photoshoots are much the same thing – they are regimented, finicky, awkward too.

So I guess what I am saying is that the idea of the cover is in some way greater than the actual experience and perhaps that’s true of so much of what we undertake, look forward to and, indeed, look back on in life.

Perception is almost always different to reality – not necessarily better or worse, just different.

**Your films over the past year have been very stylish – *The Menu* and *Amsterdam*. Can you ever see yourself doing something that isn’t polished and pristine?**

Well, yes, since I am providing the voice for princess on the *Super Mario Bros* movie [laughs]. I feel your movie choices ultimately reflect your tastes in life and mine have always been about a look, an image, perhaps with a classy, or luxurious edge.

That’s not to say I think of myself in that way, but it is certainly a look and an image I aspire to, as I guess many of us do. All that

## Interview

said, I am certainly hoping to evolve and refine my film choices, as I believe that is important too. In the next year or so I'm branching out into new genres, as I think it's important to show your versatility and - as much as anything else - your willingness to learn. I don't want to get stuck making one type of film, as I think that's a path for an audience to quickly become bored of you!

**I can't believe that would ever happen?**

Just watch... [laughs].

**I hear that you had a bit of an unorthodox way of learning English when you were young...**

I actually learnt a lot of English from the Harry Potter books. They were the ones that connected me with the English language when we first moved to England, and as much as I rebelled against that at first, ultimately, I was swept along by those stories and they opened my eyes to the language at the same time.

Yet the thing is that although I do speak with a clear and soft English accent because of my time in London and growing up there, I don't always speak that way. My accent varies a lot depending on the people who I am speaking to and who I am around at the time.

So, I may seem as if I am a quaint and well-spoken young English lady, but say I am with other English people who are dropping a few letters and speaking a bit more Cockney, that can rub off on me. I think it's good to be able to change a little bit and who knows it could help me get future roles that I would never have even thought about reading for in the future [laughs].



**“ I DON’T WANT  
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## Interview

**There are lots of rumours surrounding *The Queen's Gambit*, the huge Netflix hit from 2020, and one that broke records. You have been quiet on the prospect of a second season, but can we be optimistic?**

It was a lovely role and, of course, I was absolutely thrilled that it became such a big hit, but some things do need to be left and the producers were clear that there was an endpoint. I think we wrapped it at the right place.

It was one of those projects that had such wonderful cinematography. Even before we started, I had read the book and it became so apparent to me that I was falling completely head over heels in love with the main character, Beth.

As soon as I had read the book – which didn't take me long, because I couldn't put it down – I felt like it would be an amazing adaptation if someone was thinking about

making it, and lo and behold, director Scott Frank had decided to make it. I did think it would be a great watch and I was intrigued to see how he would adapt it for the screen. But did I think it would reach the astronomical number of viewers that it has on Netflix? Not for a second.

The thing is, I wasn't aware that it was blowing up because – what happens if you catch a good run of roles – I was already working almost immediately on the next project. I was actually up on the side of a mountain, barefoot, in the freezing cold when the whole thing was blowing up and it was becoming clear people really liked what we had done. It was very special.

They're turning it into a musical and I think that is a sensitive way of extending its lifespan. I don't think a second season can take you anywhere beyond where you have been.



**But we should never say never in this industry?**

I guess not, and I guess that is true, but someone would need to write a second book first!

**With so much success, including your cherished Golden Globe, you must now have the confidence that this is a career that will build and continue to flourish?**

I will never take anything for granted. I am eternally grateful for the success I have had, but I won't progress any further in my career without hard work, dedication and humility.

I never assume the next project is around the corner. In fact, I usually assume there is a challenge waiting for me. It's a fear of the future that actually energizes me and I am grateful for that perspective and approach.

1

**“ I WILL NEVER  
TAKE ANYTHING  
FOR GRANTED.  
I AM ETERNALLY  
GRATEFUL FOR  
THE SUCCESS  
I HAVE HAD ”**





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### Château de Chimay

Chimay Castle in Hainaut dates back to medieval times. Like many castles, it has undergone several changes over the centuries and was in part destroyed in a fire in 1935. It has now become one of the most charming castles to visit in Belgium. It is open to groups all year round, and to individuals from 1 July.

It has a rich and interesting history that you can learn about by visiting the Maison des Artistes on the castle's grounds. There you can watch a film narrated by Stéphane Bern, journalist and television presenter, who is known as a specialist in nobility and royalty. The film tells you the fascinating thousand-year history of the castle, from the Prince of Chimay to the current inhabitants.

There is also a smartphone app, giving visitors the freedom to visit the castle at their own pace. There is an impressive Arms Room, the Thierry Bosquet Salon – a room permanently dedicated to the artist who has close ties to the Princes of Chimay – a Portraits Salon, the Winter Garden, the Chapel, and the Theater, which is classified as an Exceptional Heritage of Wallonia.

Unusually, the Château de Chimay is still a regal residence. On one side of the castle there are the apartments of Prince Philippe and Princess Françoise de Chimay. And on the other, those of the Prince's mother, the 97-year-old Princess Elisabeth, who – if you're very lucky – you can meet from time to time during your visit to the castle.

The tour has been renovated in recent years with new attractions that will appeal to all ages.

### A mini-golf course has also been created

Alongside the visit to the Château and screening the film there is a mini-golf course. It's a fun addition for families to play on before, or after, their castle visit. The course is beside the imposing facade of the castle.

### Escape room

An escape room has also been added ([www.escaperoomdechimay.be](http://www.escaperoomdechimay.be)). Your mission, should you choose to accept it, is to find the grail! Philippe de Riquet de Caraman-Chimay, the 22nd Prince of Chimay, has disappeared and has not been heard from for several days. In case of disappearance, the Prince had warned his secretary that he had to call on his chosen ones, the only people capable of gathering the relics of his ancestors in an hour, to find the Grail and the sword which will allow him to summon the Council of the Heirs of Chimay... Can you do it? You have one hour to unlock the secrets.

### Music

The castle has its own mini-theatre. There are concerts dotted throughout the year. The next one will be on 24 June, when the Royal Chambre Orchestra of Wallonie returns in 12-string formation for an exceptional end of season concert. The programme will include Tchaikovsky's Souvenir of Florence and Mieczysław Karłowicz, Serenade for Strings. It's a unique opportunity to enjoy music in a very elegant setting.







Photo © Sca Art Photography

### Charleroi, the quirky and unusual

Charleroi 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, 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*  
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## DOMAINE & MUSÉE ROYAL DE MARIEMONT

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... and with the return of spring, come and enjoy the gardens, rare foliage and sculptures of the estate! Here no need to choose between nature and culture : alongside the art collections within the Museum are works by the hands of Rodin, Meunier or Lambeaux that line the paths of the 45 acres park. Ponds, flower beds, castle ruins and various architectural decors accompany the natural history and flora collections that can be appreciated up close or enjoyed from the higher viewpoints offered by the vast windows of the Museum building.

Domaine & Musée royal de Mariemont, 100 chaussée de Mariemont, 7140 Morlanwelz | Open : Tue – Sun , 10am to 6pm (last entry at 5) | The permanent collections are available free of charge.







### 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 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](http://www.musee-mariemont.be)



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[www.haute-ardenne.be](http://www.haute-ardenne.be)

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# London Calling!

"When a man is tired of London, he is tired of life," so claimed Samuel Johnson to his biographer Boswell. **Mark Browne** took a trip to put this to the test visiting two of the city's most iconic neighbourhoods for *Together*: Covent Garden and Liverpool Street.



There is no doubt that along with Paris, London is one of a few European cities that can be described as truly global in stature. The recent coronation of King Charles III has put London and its historic landmarks in the spotlight. Historic London sites like Buckingham Palace and the Tower of London are powerful draws for tourists, as is the city's theatre land and thriving City of London district, which remains one of the most attractive capital markets in the world.

## Covent Garden

One of the most popular tourist destinations in central London, Covent Garden is a vibrant area that offers a wealth of attractions and activities that can appeal to visitors with a wide variety of interests and ages. The eponymous Covent Garden market itself has been operating since the 17th century and is still a thriving venue, offering culinary and fashion wares from the restored historic covered market halls,

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Travel

outdoor stalls lining the surrounding streets, as well as the restaurants and cafes housed within.

Nearby Seven Dials Market is a much more contemporary incarnation of the market concept. Housed in a former warehouse, it features a large international food court and hosts DJ evenings. The adjacent Covent Garden Piazza is a lively square, often featuring street performers and surrounded by shops and restaurants. In fact there is a wealth of spots of interest for those with an awareness of architecture, including the nearby regal beauty of The Strand and Cecil Court..

Beyond these sites, Covent Garden is perfectly located to access some of London's primary cultural attractions. These include the Royal Opera House as well as the theatres of the nearby West End. For those with an interest in cinematography, the London Film Museum may be of interest, while the multiplexes of Leicester Square offer current releases. However, it is probably best situated for those wishing to enjoy London's art collections. The National

Gallery and the National Portrait Gallery are both located nearby, as is Somerset House, which houses several galleries featuring visiting exhibitions. Other popular sites include the London Transport Museum, which features an impressive collection of vintage buses, trains, and trams.

**“ COVENT GARDEN IS A VIBRANT AREA THAT OFFERS A WEALTH OF ATTRACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES THAT CAN APPEAL TO ALL VISITORS ”**

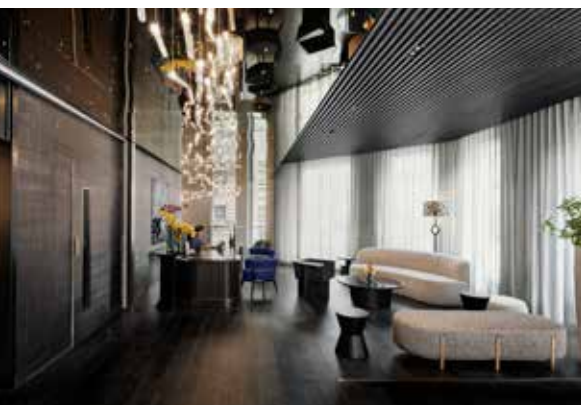
**Where to Stay**

As a popular base for London tourists there is no shortage of local venues. However the newly opened AMANO hotel offers a modern and stylish option with a cosmopolitan feel. Its rooftop bar affords fantastic views across the city in the evenings

while the signature restaurant, Penelope's, is a lively venue offering an immersive dining experience where guests can enjoy an exciting fusion mix of first rate Israeli-Spanish cuisine from Executive Chef Fez Ozalga, against the backdrop of a DJ-fuelled party ambience. Just the spot for visitors to base themselves – and experience – while also enjoying this cultural quarter.

**Liverpool Street**

Further to the east, Liverpool Street is a bustling area in, and adjacent to, London's financial district, often referred to as



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EXECUTIVE CHEF  
FEZ OZALGAN ”**

“the city”. While it would traditionally have primarily appealed to business travellers, it can also act as an interesting base for recreational visitors to London, especially as the Liverpool Street train station makes it readily accessible and gives access to one of London's main travel hubs.

Located right in the heart of the city, the area allows visitors to see architectural gems both of a historical nature, such as the Bishopsgate Institute, or St Paul's Cathedral, as well as modern buildings such as 'The Gherkin' or 'The Cheese grater.' It is also convenient to iconic London sights such as Tower Bridge.

Popular spots for shoppers include the Old Spitalfields Market, the Petticoat Lane Market and Brick Lane. They sell everything from vintage clothing and accessories to artisanal cuisine. There are also local cultural attractions including the Whitechapel Gallery, specializing in contemporary art. The neighbouring district of Shoreditch is now among the most trendy parts of London and offers many different styles of food. Street food or quirky bars and gastro pubs offer an impressive range of cuisines. The choice is almost dizzying.


#### Where to Stay

The relatively newly opened Pan Pacific Hotel, located in the heart of the area and very close to Liverpool Street station, is an

excellent 5 star cosmopolitan option for visitors. Combining the attractions of a modern luxury hotel with the high service standards one would expect of this chain, this gracefully themed destination hotel affords fantastic views over the surrounding area.

However, it has two elements that really set it apart from other hotels in the area – its wellness and restaurant facilities. Boasting an entire floor dedicated to wellness, the amenities in this 1,083m<sup>2</sup> exclusive facility really raise the bar. The highlight is an 18.5m infinity pool with panoramic views onto the city plaza outside - but that's just one element of the top level features available. With top-tier treatment rooms, a cutting edge gym with the latest equipment from TecnoBody®, as well as steam and sauna rooms, this facility offers the definitive venue to focus on fitness and wellness in the heart of the city.

In terms of cuisine, the hotel's Straits Kitchen restaurant, headed by Head Chef Jun Yung Ng, offers an enticing melting pot of authentic cuisines from Singapore's many cultures designed to tempt every palate. Little wonder the hotel has won a host of awards including the Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star Award.

Mark Browne was a guest of the AMANO Hotel and the Pan Pacific Hotels. 

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# Nissa la Bella

**Mark Browne** visits Nice, a city often viewed as a gateway to the Cote d'Azur, but also a beautiful and historic city that is well worth a visit in its own right



It could have been so different. French journalist Jean Quatremer recently lamented in *Liberation* that Nice was the first option considered as European capital, not Brussels. At a gathering of the French branch of the European Movement in Nice, Quatremer met Georges Berthoin, Jean Monnet's chief of staff when he was president of the High Authority for Coal and Steel, he told Quatremer: "the communities' institutions should have occupied the Sophia Antipolis site" in Nice. Apparently the choice was dismissed at the time because it was considered too 'Club Med' and not

serious enough for the drab business of industrial production.

It is true that the Cote D'Azur, or French Riviera, is a name that immediately evokes images of sunshine, glamour and Mediterranean panache. Nice has a long history as a destination, especially among Europe's aristocracy. The British upper classes were particularly attracted to its balmy shores and mild winters. Following the demise of Napoleon the popularity of the city and surrounding area increased among wealthy international visitors. During la Belle Epoque



(1880-1914) many impressive new buildings were erected, and the number of hotels grew to serve the city's glamorous international clientele.

The city has a far more ancient history, dating back to around 350 BC. It was originally founded as a Greek colony before falling to the Romans in the first century BC. In the middle ages the city was governed by the counts of Provence and then those of Savoy. It had been occupied by France on a number of occasions and was ceded to it in 1860.

The bold Mediterranean light of Nice inspired the Fauvists like Marc Chagall and Henri Matisse whose works can be found in the city's many museums, including the Musée des Beaux-Arts and the eponymous Musée Marc Chagall and Musée Matisse. Writers flocked to Nice for inspiration and rehabilitation; Nietzsche, Joyce and Chekhov to name but a few.

Since the Second World War tourism in the city has become more democratized, with shorter stays rather than visitors staying

for entire seasons - though you may very well want to stay for a season once you've visited.

## What to See

Naturally a city with such an illustrious history of international tourism boasts an impressive array of imposing sites, many with interesting backstories. The Cathedral of Saint Nicholas has a distinctly Russian feel – and with good reason as it was built in honour of a young prince of the Russian royal family who died in the city in the early 19th century. It initially appears in stark contrast to the more austere exterior of the city's main cathedral, until the interior of this 17th century baroque masterpiece is revealed.

There are several other fascinating museums: The Museum of Asian Art, the Place Massena museum of modern and contemporary art, and the Museum of Photography. The Musée Massena is a particularly magnificent Belle Epoque edifice, the former residence of the Duke of Rivoli, it is conveniently located on the Promenade des Anglais and celebrates local history.





Those wishing to experience cultural events will also enjoy the Theatre de l'opera, or Nice Opera, an architectural masterpiece rebuilt after the old theatre was destroyed in a fire in the late 19th century. It regularly hosts ballet and concerts.

For those wishing to relax after cultural excursions or simply wanting to enjoy a post-prandial stroll, there is nothing better than the English Promenade to enjoy the beautiful 'Baie des Anges' (Bay of the Angels).

There is also a lively contemporary cultural scene in Nice. This includes events and concerts, but also sporting occasions in the local stadium. With so many interesting places to see, visitors on a shorter break would be advised to just pick a small selection and then enjoy the ambience of the city and the architectural gems which reveal themselves around every corner. Just walking around and taking in the sights is a joy in itself, as is soaking in the ambience in the numerous bars and restaurants of the old town, or flower market.

#### Where to Stay

As a prominent tourist destination Nice is well served by accommodation at all levels, including top quality hotels. Our location of choice is the newly refurbished Hotel La Perouse. A boutique hotel of only 53 rooms, it has an intimacy and charm lacking in many larger establishments. Having just reopened following an extensive renovation project conducted during the past winter it is back to looking its best. A member of the Small Luxury Hotels of the World network, it fits this characterisation admirably.

One of the primary features of the hotel is its spectacular setting on the cliffs on the promontory at the edge of the old town, affording it unrivaled views overlooking the "Bay of Angels" as well as the "Promenade des Anglais" at the water's edge further along the coast. From this spot guests can savour





the same incredible views enjoyed by many celebrity visitors over the years, including James Joyce, who commenced his literary masterpiece 'Finnegans Wake' here in October 1923. A nearby plaque marks this today. The view is so celebrated that many members of the public climb the adjacent tower, "Le Bellandrium", a construction which originally formed part of the city's defences. Hotel guests however have the comfort of enjoying the view from the comfort of their room, balcony or even the hotel's rooftop terrace!

The setting of the hotel, in a hillside, means that it features an irregular layout characterized by multiple connected levels and a number of angles. In practice this means that each guest room is quite different in terms of layout. Some have views out to sea rather than along the coast while others have both, so guests may wish to specify their preference when booking. The hotel has also employed a variety of styles in décor to afford each room its own ambience and further emphasize the boutique nature of the property.

The courtyard dining terrace in the heart of the hotel and the heated pool, hewn into the rockside, are other lovely features to be

enjoyed. The hotel's Patio Restaurant & Terrace was relaunched as part of the renovation project and under new head Chef Damien Andrews, former right-hand man of Michelin-starred Chef Patrick Raignard, this redesigned culinary oasis now offers a tempting menu highlighting the taste and flavours of the local region and Mediterranean sea.

#### How to Get There

Nice is well served by the local airport, Nice Côte d'Azur. Conveniently located at the edge of the city right by the sea, this ensures that as planes arrive and depart passengers can enjoy fantastic vistas over the city and surrounding sea as well as the foothills of the nearby Maritime Alps. The airport serves multiple airlines including budget carriers. But there is no need to go to the airport to reach Nice. High speed trains can take you there in hours. What better way to unwind than by taking the train and a good book to enjoy some slow travel to Nice la Belle.

Mark Browne was a guest of the Hotel La Prouse.

[www.hotel-la-prouse.com](http://www.hotel-la-prouse.com) ⓘ

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# Meet Vitalie Taittinger

Vitalie Taittinger is the first woman to become the President of Maison Taittinger, founded in 1734



Born into a family of winegrowers and growing up surrounded by vineyards, Taittinger was always destined to work in the world of wine.

Vitalie has been both an inspiration and an ambassador of the brand for eleven years and she plays a direct role in representing the Champagne House in France and abroad. Initially, she had not envisaged working in the family business: "I was brought up with the idea that you have to find your own path in life and not follow one that has already been set out for you."

Since then she has become imbued with a passion and energy for the challenge: "You should not just do things for no reason. They should be part of a story and have a clear intention".

Driven by the entrepreneurial spirit that runs in her veins, Vitalie Taittinger founded her own business in 2002 and embarked on several projects in the world of gastronomy and wine. In 2007, she joined the family business as product manager, then took on the role of artistic director, before climbing the ladder to become president in 2019,

following her father Pierre-Emmanuel Taittinger. It is with the help of Damien le Sueur and her brother Clovis Taittinger (Managing Director) that she took charge of her new duties.

The Taittinger family has managed the Champagne House for nearly a century. Its aim has always been the pursuit of excellence. "Having our family name on a bottle places demands and responsibilities on every detail. The name on the bottle conveys both the skills and knowledge of the past and a commitment to the future."

In addition to her professional achievements, she is the mother of four and somehow manages to juggle both career and motherhood. She is a rare thing, a female leader in a traditionally male-dominated industry. This might be seen as a burden for some, but she carries the role lightly.

Under her stewardship, Taittinger continues to innovate while respecting centuries-old traditions of champagne production. She has launched a new range of wines in collaboration with chef Guy Savoy, which uses older varieties of grape to produce wines with even more character. She has also launched a limited edition of bottles in homage to the city of Reims, where the champagne house is located.

Vitalie has a strong love of art. She collaborated with Gilles Bernard to write a monograph on the surrealist painter Alfred Courmes, published by Le Cherche Midi in 2004. She was fascinated with the painter from an early age as her father had collected his works. It became an inspiring and life-long passion. Vitalie Taittinger has maintained her interest in art and assumed the presidency of the Champagne Ardenne Regional Contemporary Art Fund in 2017.

There are so many fine Taittinger champagnes to choose from, but we recommend



Price of the 75cl bottle: **€64.99**

the exceptional Rosé Prestige Brut made of a selection of the best pinot noir and a high proportion of Taittinger's signature chardonnay. The pinot noir grapes give this Champagne its luminous pale pink colour. On the nose, aromas of red fruits and gooseberry are revealed, as well as subtle floral hints. On the palate, this wine is fresh, with the elegance and finesse you would expect from this legendary Champagne house. It would work perfectly with a wide variety of dishes, such as fish, shellfish, white meats and even fruity desserts. Its delicacy and complexity make it a wine of choice for special occasions, but also for more intimate and convivial moments. ①



# Humphrey's: The best Filipino food in Belgium

**Catherine Feore** visits a little bit of the Philippines in the heart of Brussels



There are a few things that make a great restaurant. Top quality authentic food, the freshest of fresh ingredients and that extra touch of magic that is difficult to put your finger on but can usually be attributed to the passion of the owners. Humphrey's has all of this in spades.

There is only one place in Brussels where you can enjoy truly authentic Filipino food and that is Humphrey's. Nestled in the heart of the city and just around the corner from the Cartoon Museum, you will receive a warm welcome from Glen Ramaekers and his team.



Glen and his wife Julie De Block both bring their expertise to your table. Glen grew up in Belgium and completed his culinary training in the Hotelschool Ter Duinen, honing his skills at several Michelin starred restaurants such as The Seagrill (Belgium), Scholteshof (Belgium), La Pyramide (France) and Moulin de Mougins (France). He is equally passionate about wine and spirits as he is about food, making it to the finals of the Best Sommelier of Belgium finals in 2003 and as an ambassador for Don Papa Rum.

Julie shares Glen's love for great food and is responsible for Humphrey's vegetable garden near Mechelen, where she is assisted by her father in making sure that the restaurant can have organic, seasonal vegetables. The vegetables used in the restaurant are largely home grown and 100% natural. There is also a garden terrace where Julie grows edible flowers and herbs that are used in the kitchen to add delicious flavours to Glen's dishes.

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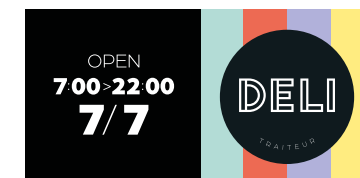
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## Dining

I caught up with Glen to talk about how the restaurant has developed. It hasn't been easy! Humphrey's had barely opened its doors when the terrorist attack of 2016 hit Brussels and business was slow to take off, but they took their show on the road and did a lot of catering at events. Finally, in 2019 they had a great year and were looking forward to concentrating on the restaurant, when Covid broke out.

Glen was hospitalized with Covid and was at death's door. Over this period he lost 16 stone. I'm glad to report that Glen is back to full health. These circumstances make it all the more remarkable that somehow they managed to keep the restaurant going, teaming up with Brussels chef Alex Joseph (formerly of Rouge Tomato, now the Head Chef at The Hoxton) and Dennis Broeckx (L'Épicerie du Cirque in Antwerp) for what they dubbed the '3 Amigos Box' - a box of culinary delights to ease the dreariness of the confinement.

After Covid they had to rethink everything. They cut their covers from 45 to 26 to give more space and worked with Brussels-based Filipino artist Racso Jugarap ([www.racsoj.com](http://www.racsoj.com)) who added a wire sculpture of the Filipino Balete tree, which has a central role in national folklore. They also decided to be totally focused on their fixed menu of authentic Filipino dishes.

Some of the highlights include: Croquettes à la Mama, which touches on the Spanish influence in Filipino food, but which is



## “ FILIPINO CUISINE IS WHOLLY DISTINCTIVE ”

matched with a little mango salsa; sisig, made using either pork or tuna stir fried with chilli, ginger and garlic, limequats or kumquat juice, which are close to the taste of the Philippines's calamansi fruit.

The Bicol express is named after one of the islands, it uses a distinctive nut called the Pili nut which is buttery, smooth and light; this is cooked with the fresh crustacean available. This is followed by what Glen describes as “an inside out” adobo. Adobo is a dish that can be found everywhere in the Philippines, and is chicken marinated in rice vinegar, soy, garlic, lime and ginger. Glen's version adds a little bit of homemade cidre vinegar, and rather than frying he steams the chicken. There are also novel desserts, with Filipino influences.

The menu changes according to the availability of ingredients and you can be assured that the dishes will always be full of tantalizing and intriguing flavours. At a mere €69 it is also outstanding value.

[www.humphreyrestaurant.com](http://www.humphreyrestaurant.com)

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# AUMmmmmmm

**Coralie Tilot** visits a new restaurant lounge bar with a fusion approach and a zen vibe



AUM is inspired by the ancient Sanskrit syllable ॐ or 'Om', a sacred sound and invocation in Hinduism. AUM creates its own aura offering a unique immersive experience.

Recently opened, it is located on the outskirts of Brussels, where the restaurant and bar offer the perfect place to dine, have a drink, or even dance. Add a perfectly oriented terrace surrounded by the Forêt de Soignes and you will guess why this new address located in Kraainem has become the place to be.

As you enter, you can sense the perfect atmosphere of a lounge bar restaurant with

its own musical identity. Both the interior design and branding developed by WeWantMore are conceived around the idea of a place to enjoy the here and now. The music can be described as minimal, ethnic, oriental. The lotus pattern parametric ceiling provides a mirrored centerpiece reflecting the atmosphere, colours and dynamic of the evening.

On Fridays and Saturdays influential DJs are invited to spin the decks and the evening culminates in a 'Bonfire' moment - a ritual from Indian culture. There's a zen vibe. You might prefer to enjoy the more informal food sharing menu for the bar lounge. Enjoy a mixture of Maki (smoked salmon, green



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papaya, cucumber, sweet chilli), Pani Puri (red tuna – lovage – lime, Croquettes (tandoori shrimp – black garlic – artichoke caviar) and many other small and extremely tasty dishes.

Resolutely in the spirit of the time, AUM joins the restaurant bars similar to those in London, New York and Singapore. The founder, Maxime Gillet, a Horeca entrepreneur who also owns Sanzaru in Woluwé, and Lucka Wahba, aims to offer a unique experience. Taking full advantage of an expansive ground floor of an office building, the space feels urban and yet it's located in Quatre Bras. The kitchen is open to the diner's view, so you can see the preparatory process.



Seated on a comfortable velvet sofa near the bar, we enjoyed our dinner looking out on the wider restaurant. We were introduced to one of the many unique cocktails, the Jaipur Sour, a Venezuelan rum Pampero Blanco, infused with Indian spices - turmeric and moringa, a plant traditionally used in Indian medicines and mixed with lime.

The meal was a stunning tasting experience. Starters of turbot, salmon, swordfish were served, with unusual toppings such as coral lentils, basil, vandouvan - a spice blend, celery, mint raita, granny apple, garam masala, cauliflower and iodized broth. Tandoori lamb as the main dish (for two) was tender and full of subtle spicy tones. The side dishes of Naan - garlic, cheese or Kashmiri pepper, vegetable tawa and red rice are among the plates you have to try.

Your reviewer wasn't there to experience the more club like atmosphere on Friday and Saturday, but those in the know tell me there was a good vibe resonant with the atmosphere, or indeed the ॐ .

[www.aumbrussels.be](http://www.aumbrussels.be)

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# The whole NINE yards

**Nuala Morgan** introduces a club for women, designed by women and that is open on Fridays for all to enjoy, men and women alike!



When the decor, the library, the wine list and the art collection all come with female signatures, you know you have stepped into somewhere special. The Nine is Brussels' first female-focused members club. Located in the heart of the European quarter, it aims to inspire, empower and uplift women from all backgrounds.

Behind the door of one of Brussels best-kept Art Nouveau townhouses lies The Nine, a members club designed by and for women, launched in September 2021. The 100-year-old building has been modernized in an eclectic style by interior designer Helen van Marcke, housing a clubhouse and garden, co-working and meeting spaces, and a bar and restaurant.

**“A CLUB FOR PEOPLE LIKE ME WHO AREN'T FROM BELGIUM BUT HAVE MADE BELGIUM THEIR HOME”**

The Nine founder, Georgia Brooks, with British-Canadian-Lebanese origins, explains her inspiration came from two sources: “One from my background in women's rights and looking at what I could do to promote gender equality and women's rights in Brussels. This is obviously a whole different world to the non-profit sphere that I came from, especially considering my projects had been

focused on women in the Middle East. A very different need and context!”

“The second avenue ties into the first and that was creating a space in Brussels for people like me, people who aren't from Belgium but have made Belgium home. It's not always easy to make new friends and connections that go deeper than networking, having been a member of private members' clubs in London, I personally missed that feeling and thought others must too. And they do!”

The Nine, named after the nine muses of the ancient world, “is a community that believes in being our own muse, and a source of change and inspiration,” says Brooks.

Its 400 members are split equally between Belgian and international profiles, mainly female professionals in the 30-45 age bracket. A variety of membership rates are available, with special rates for young professionals (under 35) and those working for NGOs. Nine offers an exclusive clubhouse and garden, co-working spaces and meeting rooms, an in-house bar and restaurant, a feminist library, and a weekly programme of meet-ups and events.

The bar and restaurant are open from April to non-members (including men!) on Fridays (12 - 10pm). For lunch, head chef Joao Silva offers a modern menu that champions seasonal and sustainable ingredients and promotes zero waste. In the evening, the restaurant offers both an à la carte menu and sharing plates from the bar menu. Keeping to its ethos of putting women at the centre, all wines on offer are from female-led wineries, selected by Belgium's only female Master of Wine, Fiona Morrison. And yes, going the whole nine yards, the delicious cocktails are all named after famous women. A first? “That's The Nine”, proclaims Georgia, “a world of firsts!”



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## WOM - World of Mind Museum

Looking for a fun and informative outing?  
This new museum offers both



Photos © Tempora

A new museum has opened its doors. WOM - World Of Mind, is a totally immersive and interactive exhibition. WOM plunges the visitor into a sensory world, putting one's brain to the test and challenging the visitor's perceptions. Optical, tactile and auditory illusions make you lose your sense of what is real and what is not.

The exhibition is marked with informative science corners developed by Professor Steven Laureys, world-renowned neurologist and winner of the prestigious Belgian Francqui Prize in 2017. But don't recoil, the museum is firstly and foremostly about having fun.

The approach is a very hands-on interactive experience where you are encouraged to play, experiment, reflect and understand the cognitive mechanisms at work – the very ones that lead to differences of opinion, or perception.

With group visits, specially trained facilitators will be present to go further with additional explanations on themes related to the exhibition (the brain, light waves and sounds and smells).

There is a more serious message, one that is important in a world full of disinformation, misinformation, unconscious biases and





subjective opinions; we are human! We have mental mechanisms that help us make sense of the world, but they're flawed - if broadly useful - explaining why we are still hanging around as a species in 2023. Nevertheless, we should challenge ourselves from time to time.

The exhibition was developed by Tempora, the Belgian company that has established itself as a leader in putting the visitor at the heart of what it does. Tempora has been behind many projects in Belgium and beyond, from the House of European History to the Museum of the Second World War in Gdansk. Tempora's approach is based on a number of values: respect for places and

“ YOU ARE ENCOURAGED  
TO PLAY, EXPERIMENT,  
REFLECT AND  
UNDERSTAND THE  
COGNITIVE MECHANISMS  
AT WORK ”



their history; the enhancement of collections; the search for a balance between fun, aesthetics and rigorous respect for scientific knowledge; access to a wider public and the concern and desire to offer a shared cultural vision, such as the, 'Islam, also our history!' touring exhibition that ran from 2013 - 2018 and presented the strong presence of Muslim influence in Europe over many centuries; relevant to this edition's light chess theme, we learnt that Muslims introduced the game of chess to Europe in the 10th century.

WOM is located at the Tour & Taxi site.

[www.worldofmind.be](http://www.worldofmind.be) ①

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What's on

# Johan Van Mullem: For Love's S(n)ake!



Photo © Constance le Hardy

Belgian artist Johan Van Mullem was commissioned by the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium to add to their contemporary collection. Originally from Bruges and now Brussels based, Johan Van Mullem offers a unique collection that is really a 'before and after' of his work before, then during the Covid pandemic.

Each of us dealt with the pandemic and resulting confinements in our own way. We see a very clear transition in Van Mullem's work.

## Art for art's sake

The first - and pre-pandemic - part of the exhibition, is a monochrome and complicated exploration of the self. An inward looking stream of consciousness that would keep any psychoanalyst busy for some time. Van Mullem said he tried to free himself from his brain's algorithms and let his thoughts run free. "Effectively, before covid I would ask why me, why me... I was very preoccupied with myself. It's necessary to be conscious of ourselves, but we have to be conscious of our humanity and that we live with other human beings."

Even though Van Mullem had tried to release himself from any constraints, he still required an overall balance. He said that this may stem from his original training as an architect and a need for equilibrium. Van Mullem says that like in music, when things are right they express themselves.

The fine drawing, more figurative style and overall balance in the pre-pandemic works brings an overarching order.

There are also a series of busts in the room that externalize the inner thoughts of the subjects. The artist is clearly present in all these works; he is at the centre of his psychological world.

## 'We're not in Kansas anymore'

While some felt limited by the pandemic, Van Mullem appears to have been liberated.

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### EN ATTENDANT BOJANGLES

d'après Olivier Bourdeaut



Avec : Charlie Dupont,  
Tania Garbarski et Jérémie Petrus  
Mise en scène : Victoire Berger-Perrin

### LE CANARD À L'ORANGE

de William Douglas Home



Avec : Tania Garbarski,  
Michel Kacenelenbogen, Laure Godisiabo,  
Marina Pangos et (en alternance)  
Charlie Dupont ou Frédéric Nyssen  
Mise en scène : Nicolas Briançon

### ART

de Yasmina Reza



Avec : Bernard Cogniaux,  
Pierre Dherte et Alain Leempoel  
Mise en scène : Alain Leempoel

à partir du 22.08.23

à partir du 12.09.23

à partir du 15.11.23

\*Offre sous conditions : Abonnement 3 spectacles au prix de 59€ (au lieu de 69€). Valable pour une des cinq premières représentations de chaque spectacle : «En attendant Bojangles», «Le canard à l'orange» et «Art». Sous réserve des places disponibles.



02 724 24 44 - [theatrepublic.be](http://theatrepublic.be)



What's on

Walking from the artist's pre-pandemic world and into the glorious technicolor of the second room, one feels like a huge psychological weight has been lifted. It's a celebration of nature: beautiful, lush and vibrant. It's a garden of Eden, before the poisonous snake turned up and ruined it all. We're told that, forced to slow down by the pandemic, the artist rediscovered his inner garden, a new horizon that inspired him to create universes more oriented towards the exterior.

The exhibition is curated by art historian Sophie Hasaerts. Hasaerts said that she




Johan VAN MULLEM, *Coast I & Coast II* - Photo © Henri Weyrich

wanted to celebrate Belgian artists and that in the past there had been a tendency for Belgium to turn towards other countries, in particular the United States when commissioning work. It seems obvious and fitting that a national collection should celebrate Belgian artists while not compromising on artistic merit.

The three rooms are in the heart of the old, rather than the contemporary collection of the museum, and it fits remarkably well. The symbolism in the artist's work is similar to those older works full of hidden meaning. It is a reminder that art is always in a state of transmission, transformation and evolution.

As the World Health Organisation declares Covid over as a global health emergency, maybe we can also offer thanks to the non-venomous snake entwined in the rod of Asclepius, the deity associated with healing and medicine. Snakes have generally been given a bad rap, but some of them are healing.

31 March to 23 July, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium (RMFAB) 



Johan VAN MULLEM, *Bucolic II* - Photo © Henri Weyrich

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# Expedition Egypt

Two centuries of archaeological discoveries in the land of the Pharaohs

**B**russels was once considered to be the world capital of Egyptology. The fascinating exhibition in the Art and History Museum in Park Cinquantenaire is divided into eight chronological sections.

Starting with just ten objects, the collection began to flourish in the nineteenth century when diplomats and industrialists became interested in Egypt. Leopold II, who made two state visits, added greatly to the collections, as did other important private collectors like Gustave Hagemans and Emile de Meester de Ravenstein. You also had figures like Baron Empain who founded the Heliopolis Oasis Company, which acquired land outside Cairo to build a new city, and who was also an enthusiastic Egyptologist. Commerce and curiosity – along with a massive influx of objects in 1891 when a huge trove was discovered by the French 'Egyptian Antiquities Service' in Deir el-Bahari – led to an important international exhibition in 1897 in Cinquantenaire that was only accessible to wealthy tourists.



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What's on

**Jean Capart**

Then in 1900, at the tender age of 23, the driven, obstinate and shrewd figure of Jean Capart transformed the collection. He secured financial support to collect large consignments from the English archaeologists of the Egypt Exploration Fund. In one room of the exhibition we can see the original boxes used to transport the artifacts. The collection now contains objects from all of the most prestigious sites in Egypt.

Today, Belgium isn't in the business of acquiring new pieces, not least because Egypt now insists on safeguarding its archaeological heritage. However, the curators have more than enough to work on as the collection has still not been fully studied and is a work in progress.

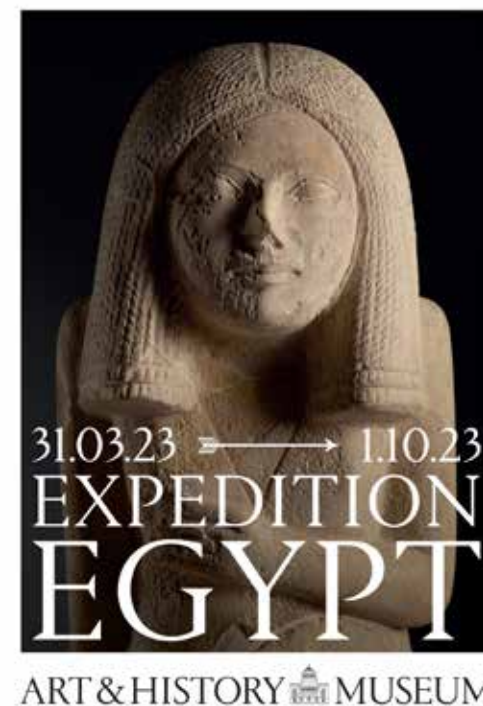
Expedition Egypt is also punctuated by artistic reflections by Sara Salla, born in Cairo (1991). Sallam draws on childhood memories and proposes a new, poetic approach to the heritage of ancient Egypt.

The exhibition is fascinating for the objects it contains and takes the visitor into a world of adventure and discovery.

There are family trails, for aspiring Egyptologists, included in the exhibition ticket, and there are also Sunday talks organized by the Fondation Egyptologique Reine Elisabeth.

Until 31 October 2023

[www.artandhistory.museum](http://www.artandhistory.museum) ⓘ





# The Proms: A very British music festival



**D**o you want to enjoy a quintessentially British experience, but didn't receive an invitation to the coronation of Charles III? Why not join the thousands of visitors who will attend The Proms in the Royal Albert Hall this summer.

This year's season will run 14 July – 9 September 2023 and host 72 events. The programme for Proms 2023 has just been published and features a huge breadth of programming, from Berlioz to Bollywood, large scale symphonic and choral work, intimate chamber concerts and exciting Proms debuts. The programme includes new commissions, including premieres by Ukrainian

Bohdana Frolyak and the master of the king's music, Judith Weir.

David Pickard, Director, BBC Proms says: "There is no other classical music festival in the world to match the range and breadth of the BBC Proms. It is the place where so many discover orchestral music for the first time – whether through a cornerstone of the classical repertoire, ground-breaking new work or collaborations with some of today's most exciting artists."

The Proms, or promenade concerts, were first organized by Henry Wood and Robert Newman in the Queen's Hall on 10 August



1895. The Proms, held from mid-July to the start of September, continues to be the longest running series of orchestral concerts in the world. Held in the large red-brick Royal Albert Hall amphitheater, named after Queen Victoria's Prince Consort, it can welcome over five thousand people.

Wood and Newman had a vision of a series of concerts that anyone could attend, regardless of how much money they earned, introducing the idea of "promming." Promming is a traditional and an essential part of what makes the Proms so unique. Promming tickets allow you to book on the day for world-class performances for just £8 (inc. fees).

For each Prom, 1000 standing places, in the Arena and Gallery, are reserved for prommers, as well as some seated places. All standing promming tickets are unreserved, meaning that you can choose where you stand when you arrive. If you book seats, these will be allocated to you when you book.

The festival culminates with the flag-waving 'Last Night of the Proms' which is led by Marin Alsop conducting the BBC Symphony Orchestra, in a mixture of traditional and newly commissioned works. She will be joined by cellist Sheku Kanneh-Mason and soprano Lise Davidsen. It's a sort of British version of the New Year's Day concert in Vienna, and like that concert there are core pieces that are played every year from Arne, Elgar, Parry, and Wood's 'Fantasia on British Sea Songs.'

Tickets go on sale at 9am on Saturday 13 May. Season tickets for the whole season – including the famous Last Night of the Proms – cost the equivalent of £3.73 per concert.

[www.royalalberthall.com](http://www.royalalberthall.com) ⓘ



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Cinema News

## The best of the big screen

**James Drew** looks at four movies due out in the weeks to come. Those of us who grew up watching Indiana Jones films won't be able to resist the Dial of Destiny, there is a new offering from Wes Anderson, a biopic on music promoter Neil Bogart and an action-packed thriller.



### Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny

Ford, Spielberg and Lucas say this is definitely the last Indy adventure, and is also the first one to be neither filmed by Spielberg nor written by George Lucas, with the pair serving as executive producers instead. As well as Harrison Ford, the film also sees the return of John Rhys-Davies as Salah, Indy's old friend who helped him find the Ark of the Covenant and the Holy Grail. It's 1969, the space race is in full swing, and Indy is uneasy about the fact that the US government has hired former Nazis to help beat the Soviets to the moon. The mighty Mads Miklesen stars as Jürgen Voller, one such miscreant, who wants to use the moon landing programme for his own ends. Quite what the 'Dial of Destiny' is, who can say, but how can anyone resist the return of Indy?

*Running time: 142 minutes.*



### Kandahar

Tom Harris (Gerard Butler) is a CIA secret agent working in the Middle East. A leak of information reveals his identity. Stuck in hostile territory, Harris and his translator must navigate their way out of the desert to Kandahar, Afghanistan while evading the elite special forces chasing them. Ric Roman Waugh (*Angel has Fallen* (2019)) directs.

*Running time: 103 minutes.*





### Spinning Gold

Spinning Gold is a US biographical drama film written and directed by Timothy Scott Bogart, based on the life of his father, Casablanca Records founder Neil Bogart, who was responsible for discovering and promoting many big musical acts, including Donna Summer, KISS, Village People, Gladys Knight and the Pips, and the Isley Brothers.

*Running time: 137 minutes.*

### Asteroid City

A Wes Anderson film with the highly stylized signature that people tend to love or hate. The film is a sci-fi romantic comedy drama, with world-changing events spectacularly disrupting the itinerary of a Junior Stargazer/Space Cadet convention in an American desert town in 1955. Anderson has pulled in some very big names: Tom Hanks, Jeffrey Wright, Tilda Swinton, Bryan Cranston, Edward Norton and Adrien Brody, to name but a few.

*Running time: 139 minutes.*

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