

# Together

AUTUMN 2024 #132

magazine

## DESIGN

ADO CHALE:  
EXCLUSIVE  
INTERVIEW

## WHAT'S ON ?

Elliott Erwitt Retrospective  
Harry Potter - Visions  
of Magic exhibition

## MUSIC

Cigarettes After Sex  
Amyl & the Sniffers  
Candlelight concerts:  
Hans Zimmer

## Travel

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AUSTRIA  
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DÎNER DANS LE NOIR  
TAPAS AT HOTEL LOUISE

## Fashion

Twist of Elegance

## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Padel - on the rise in Belgium  
Kale - easy superfood in your diet  
Top tips on Real Estate in Brussels

INTERVIEW

Joaquin  
Phoenix



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## Editor's LETTER

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



Joaquin Phoenix: "I am hard on myself, but it is that attitude that has always led me to push harder and reach higher in attaining what I believe is satisfaction."

## Annnnnnnnnnd we're back!

As autumn rolls in, most of us are getting back to work or settling back into our daily routines. For locals, autumn is a time of renewal after the long summer break. Brussels buzzes with energy as new cultural programs kick off, and there's an eagerness to embrace the season's offerings, whether that's through food, fashion, or the arts. For visitors, there's no better time to discover Brussels at its most authentic, where the cool air invites you to explore every hidden alley, discover the perfect corner café, or watch the sunset over the Grand Place as the sky turns a shade of deep autumnal blue.

In this issue, we celebrate everything that makes autumn in Brussels so special. From the city's finest seasonal cuisine and cultural highlights to hidden gems that come alive in the cooler months, we invite you to discover the soul of Brussels during this vibrant season. Whether you're a longtime resident or a first-time visitor, there's something undeniably magical about autumn here, and we hope this issue inspires you to fall in love with Brussels all over again.

So join us, on a trip to Brussels, Neuchatel, Paris, New York, meet the cover star Joaquin Phoenix as we look at Joker 2: Folie a deux, find a nice place to lunch or discover a new dining experience – at Dîner dans le Noir? We have articles on finance, self-development, politics, some inspiring shopping ideas and a lot more.

Enjoy!

**Michael Beadling**  
Editor-in-Chief







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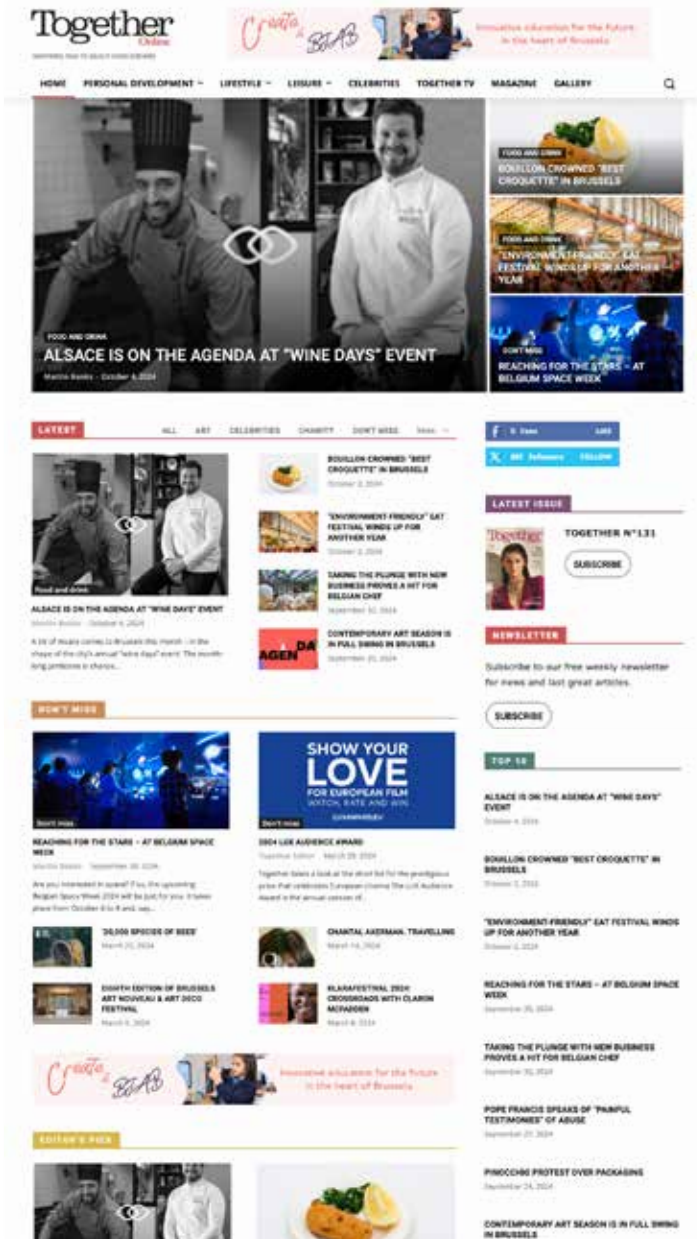


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**Padel:** Looking for something new? Interested in ball sports? Ever played either tennis or squash? If the answer is yes to any of these questions, then padel might be the sport for you.

**Real Estate in Belgium:** Keen to buy or rent property in Brussels for 2024-5? Find out more as we get an exclusive interview with Charles de Pauw from Area Real Estate.

**Travel ideas for Autumn/November:** We selected some great getaways in Switzerland, Austria, New York and Paris. These cities boast some of the best seasonal weather along with fantastic architecture, museums and scenery for your perfect weekend holiday.

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# Starring in Belgium

We suggest three hot tickets



## Kim Gordon: The Collective

In the early 1980s, Kim Gordon co-founded the pioneering Sonic Youth. Since then, she has made an indelible impact in music, art, literature and film. After a career spanning some 40 years, she made her solo debut in 2019 with the phenomenal 'No Home Record'. Gordon makes a big impression with her second solo album. 'The Collective' is a maelstrom of mundane thoughts, funny sidesteps and flashes of pure rage. She combines furious trap beats with swirling industrial guitars, over which she mumbles lyrics. Get your tickets now!» Where? Ancienne Belgique. When? 31/10/24.

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



## Amyl and the Sniffers

No, punk is not dead! Their music is over-the-top, their sweat is dripping, their singer is screaming into the microphone, they've got gorgeous mullet haircuts and their live shows are blowing up in your face. Amyl and The Sniffers have been the most exciting punk rock band of the genre for a few years now. The good news is that, three years after the release of their second album, they're back with two hot new singles and they're coming to Brussels. Get your tickets now! Where? Ancienne Belgique. When? 17/11/24.

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



## Cigarettes After Sex

Cigarettes After Sex is coming to Forest National! Experience the dream pop of this band live and lose yourself in the dreamy melodies, melancholic lyrics and the sensual voice of Greg Gonzalez. Cigarettes After Sex had their big break in 2015 and has since built up a loyal following. Even Barack Obama is a fan! Their dreamy sound and intimate live shows sell out venues worldwide. Go on a journey to the dream world of Cigarettes After Sex. You won't regret it, we promise. Grab your tickets now! Where? Foret National. When? 29/10/24.

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GOING PLACES TOGETHER



# Serve the City: Spreading Kindness Across Brussels

**Together Magazine** looks at the positive impact Serve the City is having on communities across Brussels



In the bustling heart of Brussels, amid its grand architecture and political significance, an extraordinary organization is quietly making a difference in the lives of the city's most vulnerable. Serve the City, a grassroots charity founded in 2005, has grown into a vital force for social good, driven by a simple but profound mission: to serve those in need, fostering kindness and community through volunteer action.

Operating in a city known for being the centre of the European Union, Brussels is a melting pot of cultures, ideas, and wealth. But like many large cities, it also faces significant social challenges. Homelessness, poverty, and isolation affect many people, often hiding in plain sight. Serve the City steps in to address these issues by connecting volunteers with opportunities to make a tangible impact on the lives of the less fortunate.



## MEETING SPACES



The Association Place is the information and gathering venue in the European Quarter for the international and European associations community in Brussels and abroad.



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**A Global Movement with Local Roots**

Though now a global movement active in over 60 cities around the world, Serve the City began in Brussels. It was the brainchild of Carlton Deal, an American who had moved to the city for work. He saw the social issues affecting many people around him and was struck by the gap between those who wanted to help and those who needed it. Deal founded Serve the City as a way to bridge that gap, providing a platform for people to give back to their communities in a meaningful and organized way.

The organization's philosophy is simple: acts of kindness, no matter how small, can transform both the giver and the receiver. Whether it's serving food to the homeless, spending time with the elderly, or organizing clean-up projects, Serve the City encourages volunteers to get involved in hands-on ways, believing that service can create connections that strengthen communities.

What makes Serve the City stand out is its approach to service as a human connection. Volunteers are encouraged not only to «help» but to build relationships with those they serve. This personal touch is central to the charity's vision, as it seeks to break down the barriers of isolation and foster a deeper sense of belonging.

**Addressing a Range of Social Issues**

One of the most compelling aspects of Serve the City in Brussels is the breadth of its outreach. The organization tackles a wide range of social issues, ensuring that volunteers can find a cause they are passionate about. Key areas of focus include homelessness, elderly care, refugees, people with disabilities, and marginalized youth.

For the homeless, Serve the City runs regular food distribution programs where volunteers prepare and serve meals, but the work goes beyond just providing sustenance. Volunteers are encouraged to sit down with those they serve, to listen, chat, and share stories. This human connection is at the heart of Serve the City's ethos, recognizing that a simple conversation can be as nourishing as the meal itself.

In addition to its work with the homeless, the charity also supports refugees who arrive in Brussels, many of whom are navigating difficult transitions into a new country. Serve the City provides refugees with practical support, such as language lessons, job application assistance, and integration programs that help them settle into Belgian society. This work is crucial in a city that hosts many migrants and asylum seekers, offering them a sense of welcome and community.

The organization also runs initiatives aimed at elderly care. In an increasingly digital world, many elderly people face loneliness and isolation, particularly those living in care homes. Serve the City organizes visits, bringing volunteers to spend time with the elderly, often engaging in simple activities such as playing cards, sharing a meal, or just providing companionship. These small acts of kindness make a world of difference to those who might otherwise feel forgotten.

**Volunteering Made Easy**

One of Serve the City's strengths is its accessibility. The organization understands that many people want to volunteer but might feel unsure about where to start or how much time they can commit. To make volunteering as easy as possible, Serve the City offers a variety of options, from one-off



events to regular commitments. This flexibility allows people to contribute in ways that fit their schedule, whether they want to volunteer for a few hours or become more deeply involved in ongoing projects.

The organization also hosts large-scale events that draw hundreds of volunteers. One of the most popular is the «Big Volunteer Week,» held twice a year, where participants are invited to join in a range of activities across the city. From cleaning parks to preparing meals for those in need, the week is an opportunity for Brussels residents to come together and serve their community in a collective effort.

For those looking to make longer-term commitments, Serve the City offers volunteer training and leadership programs. These opportunities allow people to develop new skills, such as project management, fundraising, or even learning how to work with vulnerable populations. Many volunteers have found that their time with Serve the City not only impacts others but also enriches their own lives, offering personal growth and a deeper understanding of social justice.

**Building Bridges in a Divided World**

At its core, Serve the City is about building bridges—between people, between cultures, and between socioeconomic divides. In a city like Brussels, where the gap between the affluent and the marginalized can be stark, this mission is more important than ever. By encouraging human connection and acts of kindness, Serve the City strives to create a more compassionate and cohesive community.

The organization's impact extends beyond the people it serves directly. By bringing together volunteers from diverse backgrounds, it fosters a spirit of solidarity that transcends race, nationality, and class. In doing so, Serve the City reminds us that, no matter where we come from, we all have the capacity to make a positive difference in someone else's life.

**Get Involved**

For those interested in joining the movement, Serve the City Brussels offers plenty of opportunities to get involved. Whether you're looking to volunteer for a day, donate resources, or offer your professional skills, the charity welcomes all forms of contribution. The first step is simply signing up through their website, where you can explore upcoming volunteer opportunities and learn more about their ongoing projects.

In a world that often feels divided and disconnected, Serve the City offers a powerful reminder of the difference that one person's kindness can make. Through small acts of service, volunteers are not just helping others—they're transforming their city, one connection at a time. **📍**





# PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

*Preparation is the key to success,  
plan for your future*

## Health is wealth

*Together Magazine* talks exclusive clubs  
and the best Gym in Brussels



**N**estled in the heart of Brussels, Aspria gyms offer a premier fitness experience that transcends the ordinary. With state-of-the-art facilities, expert trainers, and a serene ambiance, it caters to those seeking both luxury and wellness.

Members enjoy a diverse range of classes, from high-intensity workouts to tranquil yoga sessions, ensuring something for every fitness level. The club also boasts rejuvena-

ting spa services and a vibrant community atmosphere, making it a perfect retreat from the bustling city. Joining Aspria is not just about fitness; it's about embracing a holistic lifestyle that nurtures body and mind in an exclusive setting.

Life is worth living beautifully. To enjoy a harmonious life tomorrow, you must take care of your health and wellbeing today.



## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Fitness

With recent investments, its goal is to continue offering its members a truly unique and premium experience, thanks to state-of-the-art facilities and a constantly renewed range of activities. Everything you need to stay motivated and eager to exercise, Aspria can cater for.

#### A new fitness experience

In the same immersive ambiance philosophy as the studios dedicated to Zen, Energy, Motion classes, or even the cycling sessions in the Cadence studio, the fitness space has just been redesigned to encourage members to establish their workout routine. Elegantly divided into four zones, the different fitness areas immerse you in an industrial and energetic design.

**LIFTING ZONE:** Equipped with free weights and new Technogym equipment, with a vulcanized rubber floor for added comfort and safety.

**STRENGTH ZONE:** A variety of assisted strength training equipment to target specific muscle groups and correct muscle imbalances.

## “ THE DIFFERENT FITNESS AREAS IMMERSE YOU IN AN INDUSTRIAL AND ENERGETIC DESIGN ”

**CARDIO ZONE:** For a fully personalized cardio workout with Technogym's Excite Live Captio, offering an interactive and stimulating experience.

**RECOVERY ZONE:** A dedicated space with Hyperice massage equipment for optimal muscle recovery.



## “ THE CAFÉ WELCOMES MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS ALIKE IN A WARM ATMOSPHERE ”

#### Social wellbeing

Thanks to the Spa and Café facilities, this club becomes «the place to be» to find physical and mental balance.

Opened in September, the Café welcomes members and non-members alike in a warm atmosphere. Whether indoors or on the terrace, this social hub is ideal for connecting or relaxing, meeting friends, discovering new people, or attending a business conference or wellness workshop.

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# The Power of Kale: Why You Should Add This Superfood to Your Everyday Diet

**Suzie Lang** tells *Together Magazine* the benefits of the lush leafy green and its superhuman effect on the body and mind.



your immune system, protect your heart, or simply add more nutrient-rich vegetables to your meals, kale is a versatile and delicious way to upgrade your everyday nutrition.

This leafy vegetable is not only incredibly healthy but also widely available, even in the local shops around Brussels and across Belgium. So, how exactly does kale benefit your health, and how can you easily incorporate it into your daily meals? Let's dive into the benefits of eating kale and where you can find it in Belgium.

## Why Kale is So Good for You

### 1. Nutrient Density: Packed with Vitamins and Minerals

One of the key reasons kale is so beneficial is its exceptional nutrient density. Just one cup of raw kale is low in calories—around 33 calories—but delivers significant amounts of vitamins A, K, C, and B6, as well as minerals such as calcium, potassium, and magnesium. Vitamin A (primarily in the form of beta-carotene) supports eye health, skin, and immune function. Vitamin K is vital for blood

**“JUST ONE CUP OF  
RAW KALE IS LOW IN  
CALORIES—AROUND 33  
CALORIES”**

**K**ale, once known as a humble leafy green, has soared in popularity in recent years, earning its reputation as a true «superfood.» Packed with essential vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber, kale offers a range of health benefits that can enhance your well-being and improve your diet. Whether you're looking to boost

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## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Nutrition

clotting and bone health, and kale provides more than 600% of your recommended daily intake in just one serving. Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant that supports your immune system, skin health, and collagen production, with kale containing more vitamin C per gram than oranges. Calcium and magnesium are crucial for bone health, muscle function, and metabolic processes, making kale a valuable plant-based source of these minerals. This high nutrient-to-calorie ratio means you're consuming more vitamins and minerals per bite, making kale one of the most nutrient-dense foods you can eat.

#### 2. Rich in Antioxidants: Protecting Your Body

Kale is loaded with antioxidants, which help protect your cells from damage caused by oxidative stress and free radicals. Antioxidants in kale, such as quercetin and kaempferol, have been shown to have anti-inflammatory, anti-viral, and heart-protective effects. These antioxidants play a role in reducing inflammation in the body, which can help lower the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and even certain cancers. Adding kale to your diet can contribute to overall longevity and health by supporting your body's natural defences.

#### 3. Supports Heart Health

Kale is a heart-healthy food for several reasons. It contains fiber, potassium, and antioxidants, all of which are essential for cardiovascular health. The fiber in kale helps lower cholesterol by binding to bile acids, allowing your body to excrete them rather than reabsorb them. This can result in lower levels of LDL («bad») cholesterol, reducing your risk of heart disease.

Moreover, kale's high potassium content helps regulate blood pressure, which is key to preventing hypertension and reducing the risk of strokes and heart attacks. Adding

kale to your diet can be a simple way to protect your heart and support long-term cardiovascular health.

#### 4. Great for Digestion and Weight Management

Kale's fiber content supports healthy digestion by promoting regular bowel movements and feeding the beneficial bacteria in your gut. Fiber is also filling, which can help with weight management by making you feel full and satisfied after meals.

Because kale is low in calories and high in water content, it can be a valuable addition to weight loss plans. You can enjoy it in large portions without consuming too many calories, while still getting the nutrients your body needs to stay healthy.

#### 5. Bone Health Booster

With its high levels of vitamin K, calcium, and magnesium, kale is a fantastic vegetable for bone health. Vitamin K plays a crucial role in the body's ability to form osteocalcin, a protein essential for bone strength. Adequate vitamin K intake has been linked to a lower risk of bone fractures and osteoporosis, making kale a natural way to support your bones.

#### How do I incorporate Kale into my Diet?

Adding kale to your everyday meals is easier than you might think. Its versatility allows you to enjoy it raw, cooked, or even blended into smoothies.

**Salads:** Kale makes an excellent base for salads, especially when massaged with olive oil to soften its texture. Toss it with avocado, nuts, seeds, and a lemon-based dressing for a fresh and healthy meal.

**Smoothies:** Blend kale with fruit, yogurt, and a splash of almond milk for a nutrient-packed smoothie. Its flavor pairs well with sweet fruits like bananas, berries, and apples.



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## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Nutrition

**Stir-fries and soups:** Kale can be sautéed with garlic and olive oil as a side dish or added to soups and stews for an extra nutritional boost. Its hearty leaves hold up well in hot dishes.

**Kale chips:** Baked kale chips are a crunchy, healthy alternative to potato chips. Simply toss kale leaves with olive oil and salt, then bake until crispy.

#### **But where do I find Kale in Brussels and across Belgium?**

Kale is increasingly available in local shops, farmers' markets, and supermarkets across Belgium, particularly as its popularity continues to rise.



**Supermarkets:** Major Belgian supermarkets like Delhaize, Carrefour, and Colruyt stock fresh kale, especially during the colder months when it's in season. You can usually find it in the fresh vegetable section, both in whole-leaf form and pre-chopped for convenience.

**Organic stores:** Stores such as BioPlanet and Färm focus on organic produce and often offer a variety of fresh, locally-sourced kale. If you're looking for pesticide-free options, these stores are a great choice.

**Farmers' markets:** Local markets in Brussels, such as Marché du Parvis in Saint-Gilles or Marché des Tanneurs, offer fresh kale from nearby farms. This is a great way to support local agriculture while getting the freshest produce.

**Online delivery:** For those who prefer convenience, online grocery services like Kazidomi or Efarmz deliver fresh kale directly to your door, often sourced from organic and sustainable farms.

#### **Kale, Your Everyday Superfood**

Introducing kale into your everyday diet is a simple, effective way to boost your intake of essential nutrients while supporting heart health, digestion, bone strength, and more. Whether you're enjoying it raw in a salad, blending it into smoothies, or cooking it in your favorite dishes, kale's versatility and health benefits make it a must-have in your kitchen. With fresh kale available in local supermarkets, organic stores, and farmers' markets around Brussels and Belgium, adding this nutrient-dense leafy green to your meals is easier than ever. Embrace the power of kale and start reaping the benefits of this superfood today! 🌱



### **Integrate seamlessly into Belgium with our language courses!**

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# The Rise of Padel in Belgium: A New Sporting Phenomenon

*Together Magazine* looks at the rising popularity of Padel in Belgium.



In recent years, a new sporting sensation has taken Belgium by storm—padel. Once a relatively obscure racquet sport, padel has rapidly grown in popularity, becoming one of the fastest-growing sports in the country. With its accessible gameplay, social appeal, and exciting format, padel is winning the hearts of both casual players and sports enthusiasts alike.

What was once seen as a niche pastime is now a burgeoning national craze, with courts popping up across cities, towns, and even rural areas. This article explores the rise of padel in Belgium, examining the fac-

tors that have contributed to its success, its unique appeal, and the sport's future in the country.

## What is Padel?

Padel is a racquet sport that combines elements of tennis and squash, played in doubles on an enclosed court about one-third the size of a tennis court. The court is surrounded by walls, which players can use to keep the ball in play—adding a strategic dimension to the game. The scoring system is similar to tennis, and matches are typically played to the best of three sets. However, unlike tennis, players use solid, stringless

racquets, and the ball is allowed to bounce off the walls, much like in squash.

One of the reasons padel has become so popular is its accessibility. It is easier to learn and less physically demanding than tennis, making it suitable for players of all ages and skill levels. Even beginners can pick up the game quickly, enjoying rallies after just a few minutes of practice. This simplicity, combined with its fast-paced and dynamic nature, has made padel a hit with both seasoned athletes and casual players looking for a fun, social activity.

## The Origins of Padel

Padel originated in Mexico in the 1960s, invented by Enrique Corcuera, who adapted his tennis court into a smaller, enclosed space. The sport gained popularity in Spain and Argentina, where it quickly became a mainstream pastime. In Spain, in particular, padel has become almost as popular as football, with millions of players and professional leagues.

In Belgium, padel's growth has followed the sport's rise in Spain, driven by Belgian holidaymakers who experienced the game while traveling and brought it back home. As interest grew, so did the demand for courts and clubs, setting the stage for padel to explode in popularity.

“PADEL ORIGINATED IN MEXICO IN THE 1960S, INVENTED BY ENRIQUE CORCUERA ”

## Padel's Popularity Boom in Belgium

The rise of padel in Belgium has been nothing short of meteoric. Over the past five years, the number of padel courts in the country has increased dramatically. According to Padel Belgium, the sport's governing body, there are now more than 1,000 courts in the country, compared to just a handful a decade ago. Clubs dedicated solely to padel have emerged, and many traditional tennis clubs have added padel courts to meet growing demand.

One of the main drivers of padel's popularity in Belgium is its social aspect. Unlike many other racquet sports, padel is primarily played in doubles, which makes it a highly sociable activity. The smaller court size and the cooperative nature of the game mean that players are constantly interacting, whether they're strategizing with their partner or sharing a laugh over a missed shot. This makes padel an ideal sport for friends, families, and even colleagues, with





Sport

many companies organizing corporate padel events as team-building activities.

The social dimension of the game has also been enhanced by the creation of numerous padel communities, both online and offline. Social media platforms have played a key role in spreading the word about padel, with groups where players can arrange matches, share tips, and stay informed about upcoming tournaments.

**The Role of Padel Clubs and Facilities**

The rapid growth of padel in Belgium has been supported by the development of dedicated padel clubs and facilities. In cities like Brussels, Antwerp, and Ghent, padel courts have become a common sight in parks and sports centres. Many tennis clubs have embraced padel as a way to attract new members, particularly younger players who may find tennis intimidating or too time-consuming.

The creation of state-of-the-art padel facilities has also played a significant role in the sport's growth. Clubs like Padel 4U2 in Ghent and Royal Padel Club in Brussels offer top-tier courts and amenities, catering to both recreational players and competitive athletes. These facilities often host regular leagues and tournaments, which have helped foster a sense of community and competition among players. The Belgian Padel Tour, a national circuit of padel tournaments, has also been instrumental in promoting the sport at a competitive level.

**The Appeal of Padel in a Post-COVID World**

Another factor contributing to the rise of padel in Belgium is the changing dynamics of sports participation following the COVID-19 pandemic. With many people seeking outdoor, socially distanced activities during the pandemic, padel emerged as an ideal option. Its outdoor format and small group size made it a relatively safe way to stay active

and socialize. As lockdowns ended and restrictions eased, many people who took up the sport during the pandemic have continued playing, contributing to its sustained growth. Moreover, padel's accessibility and quick learning curve make it appealing to a wide demographic. It requires less technical skill and endurance than sports like tennis or squash, making it popular among older players and those who may not have played a racquet sport before. Yet it remains dynamic enough to attract younger players looking for a fast-paced, competitive game.

**Padel's Future in Belgium**

With its popularity showing no signs of slowing, the future of padel in Belgium looks bright. The sport is now fully integrated into the Belgian Tennis Federation, and there is growing interest in developing professional-level competitions. Belgian players are beginning to make their mark internationally, with some competing in the World Padel Tour, the sport's top professional circuit.

Looking ahead, there is potential for padel to become a mainstream sport in Belgium, on par with tennis or football. More courts are being built, and new clubs are opening to meet the increasing demand. There is also a strong focus on youth development, with many clubs offering lessons and programs for children, ensuring that the next generation of players will continue to drive the sport's growth.

**Padel up!**

The rise of padel in Belgium has been driven by its accessibility, social appeal, and the growing availability of courts and facilities. What started as a niche sport has now become a national phenomenon, capturing the imaginations of players across all ages and skill levels. Whether you're a seasoned player or a complete beginner, the world of padel offers an exciting and inclusive way to stay active, socialize, and enjoy the thrill of competition. ●

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# What is high potential activation?

**Sarbani Sen** takes a look at how we hold ourselves back and how we can free ourselves from negative habits



© Savitri Life Academy

‘High potential activation’ is an approach based on the idea that we under-function most of the time because we are in automatic mode. Being in automatic mode is a very common way of leading our lives. We know what time we get up, when to pick up kids from school, etc and most of the time we cut ourselves out from feeling or improving some aspects of our lives. That’s how we end up cluttering

our homes, overeating or eating poorly, not making time to take care of our bodies and waiting till they scream with pain, or disease. By operating on autopilot, we miss out on opportunities for self-reflection and personal growth. This constant state of under functioning can prevent us from truly living our lives to the fullest and achieving our full potential. It is important to break free from this cycle and actively engage in self-care



## “ACTIVATING OUR HIGHEST POTENTIAL IS GETTING BACK TO OUR NATURAL STATE OF EASE”

and self-improvement, allowing ourselves to experience true fulfilment and happiness.

Activating our highest potential is getting back to our natural state of ease, to see the opportunities as they come, to understand the deeper meaning of things, to have more clarity about our lives, our relationships, to take better decisions.

When we think of it, we are walking superheroes with unlimited potential but we don't use the technology we are made of: intuition, intelligence, stamina, serendipity. These are states of higher consciousness. By tapping into these states of higher consciousness, we can unlock our full potential and experience a greater sense of fulfilment in our lives. It is through harnessing our intuition, intelligence, stamina, and serendipity that we can navigate challenges with ease and find true happiness in the present moment.

### How do we reach these states of higher consciousness ?

We activate our highest potential when we get into a state of ease and joy. Ease is our natural default state, when we are fully ourselves, in the flow of life, confident of whatever happens trusting life, events and people around us. This is the state where we can create our biggest dreams. The opposite state is one of fear, judgment, self criticism or biased conclusions from our childhood. Many of us still struggle with emotions and

ideas that were built during early childhood and that prevent us from achieving or living the life we truly desire. Most of us actually block ourselves and get in our own way most of our lives. Until we understand we need to clean out these old patterns, reboot our system and upgrade. By recognising and acknowledging these patterns, we can begin the process of healing and transformation. It is essential to let go of the limiting beliefs and negative self-talk that hold us back, allowing space for new possibilities and growth. Through self-reflection, therapy, or personal development practices, we can gradually release these old patterns and replace them with empowering thoughts and actions. This journey of self-discovery and self-improvement enables us to create the life we truly desire and embrace our fullest potential.

One of the methods for getting us there is kundalini yoga. It reactivates the neural pathway between the hypothalamus and pineal gland. It also helps manage the parasympathetic and sympathetic systems, which are in charge of the sometimes reactive attitude we have in life, through breathing exercises and movement.

Activating our highest potential means reconnecting to all the possibilities that life offers at any given moment; hacking our minds to step into the now.

## “MANY OF US STILL STRUGGLE WITH EMOTIONS AND IDEAS THAT WERE BUILT DURING EARLY CHILDHOOD”

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## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

### Self-help

By tapping into higher consciousness, we can experience a heightened sense of awareness and clarity, allowing us to make conscious choices and live a more fulfilling life. Kundalini Yoga serves as a powerful tool to awaken this potential within us, enabling us to access deeper levels of consciousness and unlock our true selves.

To get there it is important to take some time to look into all the aspects of our lives that need decluttering. By utilizing a range of tools, we can create a harmonious environment that supports our personal growth and self-discovery. Additionally, exploring these different aspects allows us to identify any areas of imbalance or negativity that may be holding us back from reaching our true potential.

You might wish to attempt the six steps to change programme if you feel ready to go

**“ BY UTILIZING A RANGE OF TOOLS, WE CAN CREATE A HARMONIOUS ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS OUR PERSONAL GROWTH AND SELF-DISCOVERY ”**

on this path. This curriculum was thoughtfully chosen to support anyone wishing to begin the cleansing process in a structured manner. People who adhere to the six steps to transformation programme can acquire the skills and direction needed to successfully traverse their personal growth journeys. This programme provides a methodical approach that guarantees a thorough examination of many self-discovery areas, enabling participants to address any underlying difficulties and create constructive changes in their life.

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7033 Cuesmes

#### **Loverval :**

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#### **Froyennes :**

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# AREA real estate: a success story

**David McGowan** met with Charles De Pauw from AREA real estate to discuss his organisation, the real estate market, and what to look out for in 2025



## Can you tell us the story of AREA real estate? What motivated you to create this enterprise?

My family has been pioneers in real estate in Belgium since the 1960s, my grandfather, dad, and uncle developed the northern quarter, a business area in Brussels, such as the WTC towers, the “Manhattan district” if you will at the start of the 70s. I began work as a commercial director specialising in the residential areas. There was a law in the 80s, for every square metres, we had

to construct X number of properties. When family activities stopped for a bit, I decided to launch my proper promotional real estate company, that specialised in high quality residential real estate.

## How has the vision of AREA real estate evolved since the birth of the organisation?

In the beginning we started with luxury houses, then we went into apartments in luxury areas, so Uccle, Woluwe, centre of

town. Today we specialise in apartment blocks of 50 or 60 more. We do mixed projects, small units, anywhere from 50 square metres and above to 150 square metres penthouses.

## What distinguishes AREA real estate from the other real estate agencies in the European market?

To say there’s a difference, there isn’t much. Every promoter has his or her battle horse, our projects are more for high quality, luxury, less for investors but more for people who own or already exploit their apartment.

## How do you see the current real estate market in Europe?

Europe is difficult to say, in Brussels, it stays a stable market. Brussels remains an attractive place. Deals are much slower here now because prices of property have risen due to interest rates and the heightening cost of raw materials.

## What challenges do you see in the real estate market in the 5 years?

What’s important today is to do more eco projects that consume less, so occupants have a minimum of charges. Triple A ratings are key too, but triple A for accessibility too. Our next projects will be focused on accessibility. Our new projects in Woluwe saint lambert are there for example it has a better accessibility to the centre of town than say Uccle.

## So you invest in property, but do you construct it too?

Yes, we have the licence, we develop it, it’s difficult to obtain construction licences, as they receive complaints from local authorities. Permits are difficult to obtain.

## Could you tell us about your next project you’re working on?

We have a new project called W56, it’s a project that has a large emphasis on the Natura 2000 area of the woods, it borders the



Charles De Pauw

“ WHAT’S IMPORTANT TODAY IS TO DO MORE ECO PROJECTS THAT CONSUME LESS, SO OCCUPANTS HAVE A MINIMUM OF CHARGES ”

Woluwe park, it connects the park and other green places. For it’s a remarkable situation, it’s well located. The new construction will have 29 apartments, 1 commercial area and a car park underground. It’s at the place St lambert, boulevard de la Wolu, people can do everything by foot. Today, and around that area, a lot of former office space is being converted into living apartments, the accessibility is perfect.

## How do you see the evolution of technology in the real estate game, and what innovations are AREA real estate exploring?

Theres lots of technology out there, what’s for sure is that we’re looking at technology that diminishes the charges of apartments.





We work with solar panels, the recuperation of lost water through tanks, heat pumps, good insulation. All of this is part of an acoustic study. Our new apartment blocks are across a boulevard with lots of traffic, our goal is to see how we can reduce the level of noise pollution that enters our buildings. The technology is here.

**Where do you see the greatest chances of growth of the European Real estate market?**

Europe is big, I'm more specialised in Brussels and Luxembourg. I think big cities are developing, there is such a high demand in big cities, all big cities are looking at bringing people who live outside, into towns. The mayors are pushing for good quality of life in the centre of town as those who live outside. The closure of the Bois de la Cambre, the closure of the Bois de Boulogne, closure of la rue Rivoli you see it more often in Brussels and Paris. More green cities, less cars, more bikes, more public transport, this is

still growing in Brussels, it brings a few problems for this generation who have to witness these new works in Brussels however to accommodate this change.

**What continues to nurture your passion for real estate?**

Listen I was born in this business, it's a family business, what's sure is to create something is awesome, to tell yourself after some years to see results, to see buildings built and to see people who live together and build families in these places, it's a beautiful feeling. I help people and I know that every Belgian has a brick in his heart to build or want to build his or her dream living space. To help my town grow is such a good feeling.

**When will the Woluwe buildings be completed?**

June 2026. It's a long process, there's many licences, the entire building was destroyed and rebuilt. There's a mix of small and big apartments in this next project.

**What has been the most gratifying project you have seen at AREA real estate?**

My Uncle, father and Grandad, had the luck of building towers, the WTC towers, it was the Manhattan centre. I've never had the chance to build towers, but I have had the chance to renovate and collaborate with Jean Duvelles, in the Ixelles area, it was to renovate a classical building.

**What advice would you give to young people wanting to become real estate agents or set up their own business?**

Patience. The licences are difficult to obtain in Brussels, you need patience. To think about the new technologies and what people need, to anticipate trends, and to inform yourself about the different demands needed by the commune for building projects. Every project I look at I think, "I must be able to live in this". Every apartment is studied as if a person on my team is going to be living there. 📍







Agrée IPI et directrice de son agence dès 25 ans,  
Tessa Clerens a le sens du contact et le professionnalisme  
dans la peau. Rencontre avec la dynamique entrepreneuse.

*Avis Google :*

*Mars 2024 : Marie-Laure P. :*

*« Nous avons fait appel plusieurs fois à Tessa Clerens pour des mises en location, et le service a toujours été très professionnel, très efficace, le tout dans une ambiance sympathique et détendue!*

*Tessa Clerens est vraiment à l'écoute des clients et très disponible, quelles que soient les questions! A recommander! »*

*Février 2024 : Juliette C.*

*« Je recommande vivement cette agence. L'accueil et le service sont parfaits!  
Grâce au dialogue, les conseils et les informations apportés une relation de confiance s'établit et cela vous aide à faire vos choix. C'est appréciable! »*

*Janvier 2024 : Pascal H.*

*« Super pro, excellent suivi des dossiers et taux de réussite pour ma part 100% merci. »*

*Mars 2023 : Arlette K.*

*« Une agent immobilière en OR! Pour l'achat de notre bien, Tessa a été notre agent tout au long de la procédure : recherche, visites, acquisition et plus encore.*

*Nous avons été bluffés par son professionnalisme et par son intégrité. Il y a une différence entre vouloir un bien qui nous fait rêver et un bien de rêve et Tessa nous l'a trouvé. Merci encore! »*

*Avril 2023 :*

*Cathy V. « Cette personne fait ce métier avec amour, honneur et sincérité. Que demander de mieux?  
Je souhaite encore beaucoup de succès à cette agence. »*

*Décembre 2023 :*

*Henri V.N : « Très content, on est vraiment entre de bonnes mains! »*

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# Finish the year strong

**Arnon Barnes** talks about the small wins to daring actions we can take to make our business better

Let's discuss your strategy on how to finish this year strong. While summer vibes might still be lingering in your head it's good to shake things up and get serious about some courageous action and audacious energy to achieve your business goals by the end of 2023. Even better, let's go for exceeding your own expectations.

To revisit your strategy and goals from an empowering perspective, it's good to take a step back and focus on the business journey instead of the set goals. Because sometimes it's not the results themselves that are the driving force of your success. Amazing results are inevitable when committed people do the work and pave the way with their motivation, talents, innovation, and persistence. In other words, let's focus on you and your team.

Here are a few things you should consider on your business journey to get bigger & better results.



**“ SOMETIMES IT’S NOT THE RESULTS THEMSELVES THAT ARE THE DRIVING FORCE OF YOUR SUCCESS ”**

## Points of Innovation

Usually, business owners plan new launches or innovations to be executed far ahead. They often need time, funds, manpower, and partnerships to get new things off the ground. But sometimes, finding small innovations can be easy and fast, even fun. New things tend to bring excitement, so let that work in your favor. Get your team together and come up with 3 relatively small new things that can be implemented in the coming months. For example: add something small but useful to your product so your customers will love it even more. Or change something small in the way you work, add a new element to your promotions, or try making a sale in a fun way. Do something different, it will fire you & your team up.

**“ GET YOUR TEAM TOGETHER AND COME UP WITH 3 RELATIVELY SMALL NEW THINGS THAT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE COMING MONTHS ”**

I often see entrepreneurs stuck in a tunnel vision of big & scary goals while they don't notice the small opportunities that might bring big results. Keeping an open mind to new things ahead refreshes our spirits and brings excitement and motivation. New things keep us connected reminding us there is always something new you can try or create.

## Points of Improvement

Next, let's have a look at the existing business processes and find small improvements that can be easily achieved. It's good to focus on both ends of your business, you and your team, and customers. Think of something that will speed up production, minimize paperwork, or just reorganize records. Maybe something like refreshing the look & feel of your online presence by adding an exciting element, asking your customers for feedback or finally adding automation in your purchasing process.

Something that creates a more pleasurable workflow for your team will always translate into a happier customer. Improvement is usually a process of simplifying things. So, what can you simplify for your customer or within your own processes?

You see, we often tend to stick to our ways, even if they don't work anymore. Answer a simple question: What can I improve today and implement within a week? You will be surprised how your business can grow by you improving on small things.

## Points of encouragement

Let's get personal because encouragement can go a long way. As with previous points, it's good to focus both internally and externally: on yourself and your team, and on your suppliers, customers, and partnerships. Encouragement is often found in recognition and acknowledgement. So let your team know you see them, you see their hard work and their achievements. Ask for their ideas or just have a friendly chat. Send a handwritten Thank-you note to a customer or invite someone who supported you recently to lunch. And don't forget yourself. Make a list of things you have achieved this year so far. Things you've conquered, negotiated, disasters you've prevented, and deals you've made happen. And celebrate yourself and those wins.

You are here, you are doing your thing – you are amazing! Being an entrepreneur is not a walk in the park. It might seem so from a distance, but we know better. You know you can get where you want to be. You might not know how yet – but you know you will be there. You will find the resources, support, and knowledge to get to your dreams.





“ INVEST TIME IN IMPROVING AND SIMPLIFYING PROCESSES, AS YOU WANT YOUR BUSINESS TO WORK SMOOTHER AND MORE EFFICIENTLY ”

**Points of daring action**

Now let's talk action! Every time I'm hosting big events, I see a recurring issue with many entrepreneurs. They know what they need to do – but they don't act on it! Taking action is an indispensable habit for every business owner. Taking daring action is a must for business owners that have big ambitions to grow and succeed. Usually, we tend to procrastinate especially when emotions get in the way. Fear of misfortune, fear of failure, lack of energy, persistent issues within your team, or simply a consistent flow of things gone wrong.

Listen, all that shitstorm is a part of every business journey. Don't get surprised by it – expect it. Every business owner knows - you will constantly be challenged if you want to achieve great things. So just know

the challenges will be there, but they won't necessarily hold you back. You learn to deal with them on the go. You learn to step forward through fear and do it anyway. You know some customers might get upset or won't pay on time, but you will continue to serve anyway. Your team might change over time, but you will always find support to help you achieve your goals. Even if times do get rough... remember to keep taking action and move forward regardless.

Daring action has nothing to do with being blunt and fierce. It has more to do with you being resilient and true to your business goals and your talents. Daring action is challenging yourself to deliver on what you are good at. And if it backfires, well, in that case, you have found a way that is not working for you. Learn the lessons, lick your wounds & go again!

Daring action combines all the points above into a result driven business-growth-cocktail. Here is your strategy to finish this year strong:

Take time to identify new opportunities, as you know, innovation is important fuel for your business journey. Invest time in improving and simplifying processes, as you want your business to work smoother and more efficiently. Pay attention to people within and around your business, as they are the real assets of your success. Seal your business growth by taking consistent and focused action and wake up every morning being proud of being a business owner.

*Interested to learn more about working with me, Arnon Barnes, on your next business venture? Contact us via [info@arnonbarnes.com](mailto:info@arnonbarnes.com) or check out our website [www.arnonbarnes.com/coaching](http://www.arnonbarnes.com/coaching). To stay inspired on all things Entrepreneurship and Leadership subscribe to our Instagram and follow us on Facebook or join our YouTube Channel. 📌*



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# Vente exceptionnelle



**Alfa 4C Spider Edizione Corsa (N°5 de 35)**, 177 KW (241 PS), 2018, 1.500 km, rouge, cuir noir, collectionneur, 105.000 € TVAC

**Alfa Spider 3.2 V6, 235 KW (320 PS)**, 2012, 85.000 km, rouge, cuir noir, 4Q 4 roues motrices, 29.900 € TVAC

**Alfa Spider, 88 KW (120 PS)**, 1993, 120.000 km, noire, cuir noir, 2L, état 2A, collection, 29.900 €

**Aston Vantage N0430 Cabrio, 316 KW (430 PS)**, 2016, 49.000 km, blanche, cuir noir, capote et jantes noires, 79.900 € TVAC

**BMW i8 Hybride, 267 KW (363 PS)**, 2015, 55.000 km, foliée noire (orig anthracite), cuir noir, collectionneur, 74.900 €

**BMW M3 Cabrio E46, 250 KW (340 PS)**, 2002, 125.000 km, blanche + bandes Martini, cuir gris, jantes noires, hardtop, 39.900 €

**BMW Z4 sDrive 35is, 250 KW (340 PS)**, 2012, 80.000 km, blanc nacré, cuir brun, 34.900 € TVAC

**BMW Baur-Hartge Cabrio**, 140 KW (190 PS), 1983, 120.000 km, bleue, cuir bleu, très rare, collectionneur, 39.900 €

**Ferrari 430 Novitec Rosso Race, 520 KW (707 PS)**, 2006, 35.000 km, rouge, sièges sport jaunes, unique, 139.900 € TVAC

**Ferrari 430 Novitec Rosso Race, 544 KW (740 PS)**, 2006, 35.000 km, bleue, cuir beige, unique, 134.900 €

**Ferrari California T, 412 KW (560 PS)**, 2016, 89.000 km, rouge, cuir cognac, 139.900 € TVAC

**Jaguar XJS Cabrio, 213 KW (289 PS)**, 1989, 80.000 km, gris métal, cuir gris, 24.900 € TVAC

**Maserati Biturbo Spider, 165 KW 225 PS**, 1990, 40.000 km, rouge, cuir alc. beige, manuelle, 2.8 L, collectionneur, 35.000 €

**Mercedes, SL 350**, 1972, blanche, tissu bleu, hardtop, 35.000 €

**MGA Cabrio 1958, 55 KW (75 PS)**, 1958, 2.000 km, bleue, cuir cognac, 34.900 €

**Porsche Carrera 3.0 SC Turbo Look, 184 KW (250 PS)**, 1981, 95.000 km, orange, turbo look, manuelle, 55.000 €

**Porsche 928 S4, 235 KW (320 PS)**, 1989, 50.000 km, gris anthracite, cuir noir, 5.4 L, 8 cyl., état 2A, moteur rév., 49.900 € TVAC

**Porsche 964 Cabrio, 184 KW (250 PS)**, 1990, 80.000 km, noire, cuir noir, automatique, 65.000 €

**Porsche 968 Clubsport, 193 KW (263 PS)**, 1994, 100.000 km, foliée noire, cuir noir, préparée pour course, 45.000 €

**Porsche 996 Cabrio, 235 KW (320 PS)**, 2002, 80.000 km, noire, cuir cognac, automatique, hardtop, 49.900 € TVAC

**Porsche 996 Cabrio, 235 KW (320 PS)**, 2003, 40.000 km, gris métal, cuir noir, manuelle, hardtop, 49.900 €

**Porsche 997 4S Cabrio, 261 KW (355 PS)**, 2007, 140.000 km, noir, cuir noir, freins céramique, 64.900 € TVAC

## Voitures d'exception cherchent nouveaux propriétaires



**Manfred Gehlen,**  
Sport Cars Renting  
Luxembourg

C'est ce qu'on peut appeler une success-story. Après des premières expériences dans des bureaux d'avocat et dans le milieu bancaire, Manfred Gehlen a fondé sa propre société « Nouvelles Assurances S.A. », en 1995. Il y a ajouté un volet qui nous intéresse particulièrement : les locations et achats/ventes de voitures de prestige, y compris de collection (ancêtres et youngtimers).

**À** 63 ans, Manfred Gehlen jette un œil dans le rétroviseur en ayant le sourire. **Juriste de formation, spécialisé en finances et en fiscalité**, il a fondé sa société en 1995, à 35 ans, avec l'aide d'un associé. « Nouvelles Assurances S.A. » avait comme objectif d'offrir une **approche personnalisée d'optimisation fiscale et financière**. « *Ma clientèle a toujours aimé les belles voitures. Voilà pourquoi j'ai créé « Sport Cars Renting », explique Manfred Gehlen. Depuis près de 30 ans, je pars à la recherche de voitures haut de gamme sur base*

d'un certain nombre de critères dictés par mes clients. En effectuant ces recherches pour de la location-vente, j'ai pu me créer une belle collection, en stockant en moyenne une voiture par an. » La préférence de Manfred Gehlen ? Les cabriolets... Dans sa collection, on retrouve donc, entre autres, une rare Maserati Biturbo Spider, une Alfa Romeo 4C Spider Edizione Corsa (série limitée à 35 exemplaires) ou encore deux Ferrari F430 uniques préparées et personnalisées par Novitec. Toutes ses voitures sont régulièrement révisées et dans un état concours. Mais aujourd'hui, l'acteur de cette success-story souhaite ralentir

un peu le rythme au niveau professionnel : « *Au plus tard fin 2025, je souhaite remettre mon activité. Il y a notamment un immeuble situé à Weiswampach, au nord du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, près de la frontière belgo-luxembourgeoise, qui rapporte environ 70.000 € de loyer par an. Étaussi quelques-unes de mes voitures, bien évidemment...* » Avis aux amateurs, donc ! Car, oui, **la collection de Monsieur Gehlen est tout simplement sublime... ■**

**Contact :**  
Manfred Gehlen  
GSM: +32 (0)475 77 39 72



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## With the indices of many financial markets sky-high, the air gets thin. What to watch out for by year-end and into 2025?

**Dave Deruytter** gives *Together Magazine* a heads up on financial markets for 2025.



It has been a bonanza for many financial markets since the fall-out year 2022. Back then inflation soared driven by the start of the Russian invasion in Ukraine, and there was the subsequent sharp increase in energy prices, particularly of gas in Europe. Still, having almost solved the energy issue in the meantime, even in Europe inflation has come down again to near the 2% range, favoured by the ECB. Subsequently, interest rates in Euro are starting to decline.

A slow-down in the world economy has been forecasted in the news for many quarters now, but it did not yet materialise, at least not in full. Economies around the globe showed resilience, not in the least because of lavish government spending. The latter has led to very high levels of government debt to GDP ratios in many countries. It is questionable whether that is sustainable, and how it can be reduced to normal levels without hurting economic growth.



**“ FROM EARLY JULY TO EARLY AUGUST 2024 THE NASDAQ 100 INDEX LOST OVER 15 PERCENT OF ITS VALUE BEFORE BOUNCING BACK ”**

If there is one big economy struggling for some time already, it seems to be the Chinese one. Trade and geopolitical issues are at the basis of that, on top of a fragile local real estate market. Consumer confidence is low in result.

In Europe it is the German economy that is not on a strong footing. Exports to China are important for Germany, but there is also the local political instability that is ne-

gatively impacting consumer confidence. The US economy has been steaming ahead quite strongly over the past few years. But even there the recent figures point to a slowdown, particularly the labour market is weakening. Interest rates in USD may come down soon too.

The most recent and strong power behind the rise of the financial markets has been all the buzz around AI. The likes of NVIDIA, OpenAI (ChatGPT) and their copycats are driving the frenzy on the tech side. Still, from early July to early August 2024 the NASDAQ 100 index lost over 15 percent of its value before bouncing back. It was a major correction and it may not be the last one. AI definitely has great potential for the business world, but it still needs to show up in the mainstream economy and in the financial results of the “common” companies. Geopolitical instability keeps on lingering on and the US presidential election outcome is uncertain, as are the policies the new US president will want to pursue. In Europe far right political parties are polling strongly and put the EU to the test.

There is a lot of volatility and change in the world, on many fronts, for investors to digest. If you keep on investing according to your investor profile and time horizon, things should be ok though. But you have to accept the consequences of your choices. Money you think you may need in 1 year time or less, is probably better kept on a high yielding savings account. If interest rates come down, mortgages rates should come down too, giving way to opportunities in the real estate market.

AI is probably a stayer in business, but it will not go up in a linear way. What is needed now is widespread adoption of AI in the mainstream businesses leading to cost reductions, new products and increased sales. If AI could already be a useful assis-



Finance



tant to many workers, that would take the pressure off the labour market and thus of wage inflation. The biggest cost of many companies is their labour cost. Commercial real estate is a second big source of cost for companies, but there prices are already softer due to the hybrid way of working leading to less need for office space.

Free trade is also an important factor for global growth in wealth. The tense trade relation between the US and China plus the geopolitical issues on many fronts are not helping global free trade at all. Protectionism, in any form, is an important risk to the efficient use of capital and talent around the world. And when mingled with geopolitics, the US - China stress on Taiwan (China Taipei) for example, that becomes a quite risky cocktail.

Thus, more peace in geopolitics, and trust and rule based global cooperation in trade,

R&D and business development, are to be watched for, on top of AI entering the mainstream business yielding its promise of efficiency and innovation. There are no safe havens. Every choice has its advantages and disadvantages. That is why the portfolio theory states that diversification of investments leads to a higher return and lower risk (in the long run). Some investors play on liquidity (reducing or increasing their risk appetite), others bet on the next big thing in innovation (AI), others believe in real estate as the ultimate investment category, even others believe in the sustainability transformation needed to save the planet (and ourselves). The US Inflation Reduction Act is, at least in part, aimed at the latter, in the EU the Green Deal does pretty much the same. If you don't know what to invest in, you might just as well buy an index tracker or a few of them. **1**

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# Apple's Innovative Leap: The New Earphones That Double as Hearing Aids and the Company's Medical Technology Venture

**Timothy Arnold** looks at Apples latest earbuds sure to shake up the market



In a groundbreaking development, Apple has recently unveiled a new line of earphones that not only deliver high-quality audio but also function as hearing aids. This innovation marks a significant leap for the tech giant into the realm of medical technology, reflecting its growing commitment to enhancing health and wellness through its products. As Apple continues to integrate advanced technology into everyday devices, this latest offering highlights the company's dedication to improving the quality of life for individuals with hearing impairments and its broader venture into the medical technology sector.

## Apple's New Earphones: A Dual-Purpose Marvel

The newly released earphones, often referred to as Apple's «Hearing Aids,» combine the sophistication of high-fidelity sound with the practical benefits of hearing assistance. These earphones are designed to cater to users who require hearing support while simultaneously providing an exceptional audio experience for music, calls, and other media.

## Advanced Hearing Aid Capabilities

The earphones feature advanced hearing aid technology, incorporating a range of

features designed to enhance auditory experiences. They include:

**Adaptive Sound Technology:** This technology automatically adjusts the sound settings based on the user's environment, helping to amplify important sounds while minimizing background noise. Whether in a quiet room or a bustling café, users can enjoy clear and customized sound tailored to their surroundings.

**Directional Microphones:** These microphones focus on sounds coming from specific directions, improving the ability to hear conversations in noisy settings. This feature is particularly useful in social situations where background noise can make understanding speech challenging.

**Customizable Amplification:** Users can fine-tune the amplification settings through an intuitive app interface, allowing for personalized adjustments based on individual hearing needs and preferences.

**Real-Time Audio Processing:** Leveraging Apple's powerful processing capabilities, these earphones provide real-time audio enhancements, ensuring that users receive the most accurate and clear auditory experience possible.

## Seamless Integration with Apple Ecosystem

Apple's new earphones seamlessly integrate with its existing ecosystem, offering a unified experience across devices. Users can easily connect the earphones to their iPhones, iPads, and Macs, allowing for effortless switching between different devices. The earphones also sync with Apple Health, enabling users to monitor their hearing health alongside other wellness metrics.

Additionally, the earphones support features such as Live Listen, which allows

users to use their iPhone as a remote microphone, transmitting sound directly to the earphones. This can be particularly beneficial in settings where users need extra hearing support, such as during lectures or meetings.

## Apple's Expanding Role in Medical Technology

The introduction of these innovative earphones is a testament to Apple's expanding role in the medical technology market. In recent years, the company has made significant strides in integrating health and wellness features into its products, demonstrating a clear commitment to improving users' health outcomes.

## Health-Tracking Innovations

Apple has been at the forefront of integrating health tracking into consumer technology. The Apple Watch, for example, offers a range of health-related features, including heart rate monitoring, ECG (electrocardiogram) capabilities, blood oxygen level tracking, and even fall detection. These features have positioned Apple as a leader in wearable health technology, providing users with valuable insights into their physical well-being.

## Medical Research and Partnerships

Apple has also ventured into medical research through partnerships and collaborations with healthcare institutions. The company has supported numerous studies and clinical trials aimed at leveraging its technology to advance medical research and improve patient care. For instance, Apple has partnered with institutions like Stanford Medicine and the World Health Organization to explore ways in which its devices can contribute to medical research and public health initiatives.

## Accessibility and Inclusivity

Apple's focus on accessibility is another key aspect of its medical technology venture.





“ THE APPLE WATCH, FOR EXAMPLE, OFFERS A RANGE OF HEALTH-RELATED FEATURES, INCLUDING HEART RATE MONITORING, ECG CAPABILITIES, BLOOD OXYGEN LEVEL TRACKING, AND EVEN FALL DETECTION ”

The company has consistently prioritized features that enhance usability for individuals with disabilities, from VoiceOver (a screen reader for the visually impaired) to customizable hearing aid settings. The new earphones continue this tradition, offering advanced hearing aid functionality that promotes inclusivity and accessibility.

**Future Implications and Industry Impact**

Apple's foray into combining high-quality earphones with hearing aid technology not only showcases its innovative approach but also sets a new benchmark for the industry. By integrating medical features into consumer electronics, Apple is paving the way for other tech companies to explore similar avenues, potentially transforming how hearing support and other health-related needs are addressed.

The impact of these earphones extends beyond their immediate functionality. They represent a shift towards more integrated, user-centric health solutions, blending advanced technology with practical applications to meet the diverse needs of consumers. As technology continues to advance, the lines between everyday devices and medical equipment are likely to blur further, offering new opportunities for enhancing health and well-being.

Apple's new earphones that double as hearing aids mark a significant advancement in both consumer electronics and medical technology. With their advanced hearing aid capabilities, seamless integration with Apple's ecosystem, and the company's broader commitment to health and wellness, these earphones are set to make a meaningful impact on users' lives. As Apple continues to push the boundaries of what technology can achieve, its venture into medical technology is poised to redefine the future of health and accessibility. ①



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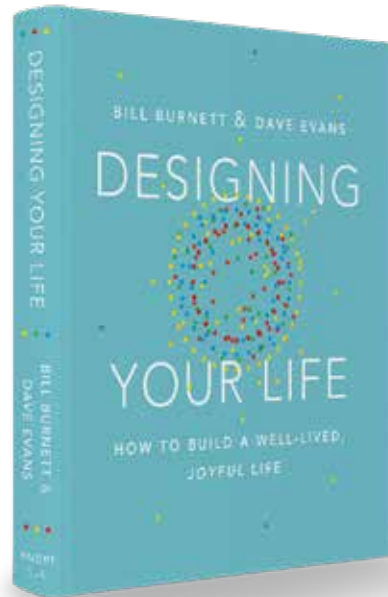
**Claire O'Sullivan** on two books that inspire

'Drawing on their experience as founders of the Stanford Life Design Lab, Bill Burnett and Dave Evans are experts in weaving together design-thinking principles with the pursuit of personal happiness. In their best-selling book, *Designing Your Life: How to Build a Well-Lived, Joyful Life*, they challenge the conventional notion that success precedes happiness and propose that contentment stems from designing a life tailored to your unique needs and desires.

The book's central idea is that dissatisfaction can be viewed as a design problem. When discontentment enters our work or personal lives, it's a signal that something doesn't align with our values or interests.

Through reframing, Burnett and Evans encourage readers to approach challenges from new angles, opening up pathways to solutions. A particularly valuable lesson is guidance on how to distinguish between actionable and unsolvable problems, helping readers focus their efforts on what they can change.

To this end, the book also aims at practical solutions. Many of the chapters conclude with thought-provoking questions and exercises that prompt deep reflection to help you develop a strategy to change your life for the better. It doesn't just provide theoretical concepts; it equips readers with tools such as mind mapping and the 'good time journal.' These techniques are introduced progressively, with later chapters demonstrating how to combine them for maximum impact. The authors make it clear that to



gain the most benefit from the book, readers must be open to doing the work. To help you, there are free downloadable worksheets on the book's website that complement the exercises and aid in self-discovery.

'*Designing Your Life*' is useful for anyone seeking a more meaningful life. It doesn't promise a one-size-fits-all solution, but walks you through some reflective techniques to help you design a life suited to your aspirations. The book offers a transformative approach to the quest for a well-lived life. Whether you're at a career crossroads or searching for something different in your life, this book can help you unearth the insights you need for greater personal fulfilment.

[www.designingyour.life](http://www.designingyour.life)

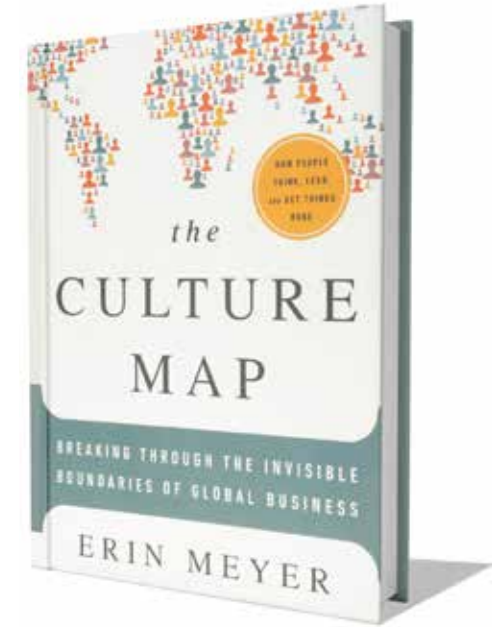
## 'The Culture Map' by Erin Meyer

This book is a must-read for anyone living or working in an international environment, 'The Culture Map' will help you reassess some of your assumptions about how colleagues and managers are communicating with you. It can inspire you to improve your self-awareness of your own communication style so that you can work more effectively with teams composed of people from different backgrounds and reduce misunderstandings.

According to Meyer, while we may like to consider ourselves as unique individuals, our exposure to different cultures through our upbringing and experience may also play a subconscious role in shaping how we view our interactions with others. Understanding this can help us become more skilled at cross-cultural communication and may be key to improving our professional performance.

Meyer's book considers various dimensions of culture using a framework of eight different behavioural scales, and provides insights as to how two cultures' relative place on these scales can influence how they are perceived by one another. For example, whether it's more common for decisions to be made via a top-down (manager decides) or bottom-up (decision by consensus) process; or whether direct or nuanced language is more appropriate when communicating via email; or the extent to which trust is primarily built based on relationships or is solely based on work results.

Meyer is clear that using this approach is not an excuse to stop paying attention to individual personalities. The goal is not to promote cultural stereotypes or clichés, but rather to empower people to better understand other cultural business norms when working in international teams or organisations.



What's more, organisations often operate according to a combination of their own specific communication and behavioural expectations. Many even build this into their organizational design and explicitly communicate this to employees through internal guides. The norms of a law firm can differ significantly from the etiquette in a non-profit, for example.

Whatever scenario you're faced with, this book provides a useful framework for thinking about culture that can help you to more flexibly adapt to different professional environments, so you can collaborate effectively and achieve your goals. The narrative style makes for easy reading, combining clear examples of different types of miscommunication with straightforward analysis of the underlying causes and practical suggestions to achieve better outcomes when working in multicultural teams.

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# The Winter Ahead: Why Ukraine Needs International Support

**Kirsty Birkman** gives an overview of the war in Ukraine, the autumn and winter months to come and why they maximum support from the west



## The Current Situation in Ukraine

Since Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Ukraine has been grappling with severe consequences. The war has devastated infrastructure, displaced millions of people, and strained the country's economy. Despite significant international aid and military assistance, the conflict has caused immense humanitarian suffering and has put Ukraine's resilience to the test.

The arrival of winter poses additional threats. The frigid temperatures, combined with ongoing hostilities, could exacerbate the already dire situation. Damaged infrastructure, including power grids and heating systems, increases the risk of widespread energy shortages and humanitarian crises. As Ukraine prepares for these challenges, President Zelensky's call for international support is more urgent than ever.

## The Need for Winter Assistance

As winter sets in, the immediate needs of Ukraine are multifaceted. One of the most pressing needs is the repair and fortification of Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Ongoing attacks have severely damaged power plants, transformers, and other critical components of the energy grid. The harsh winter conditions could lead to power outages and disrupt heating systems, which are essential for surviving the cold months. International support is crucial for providing emergency repairs, replacement parts, and technical expertise to restore and maintain energy supplies.

As winter approaches, Ukraine faces a formidable challenge: ensuring its resilience in the face of ongoing conflict and economic strain. With the conflict in Ukraine persisting and the harsh winter conditions on the horizon, President Volodymyr Zelensky's administration urgently needs international support to navigate the coming months effectively. This period could prove pivotal not only for Ukraine's immediate survival but also for its long-term stability and sovereignty.

Humanitarian aid must be accelerated. The war has displaced millions of Ukrainians, many of whom are living in temporary shelters or with host families. The winter months will demand additional resources to provide warmth, shelter, and adequate nutrition. International organizations and governments can play a significant role in supplying emergency heating equipment, winter clothing, and food aid. Ensuring that vulnerable populations, including the elderly and children, have access to essential services and supplies is vital for preventing further humanitarian crises.

Medical Supplies and Health Services must reach the frontlines. The conflict has placed immense strain on Ukraine's healthcare system. Hospitals and clinics have been overwhelmed by the number of casualties, and the ongoing war has disrupted the supply of essential medical supplies. Winter conditions could exacerbate health issues, including respiratory illnesses and hypothermia. International assistance in the form of medical supplies, equipment, and support for healthcare facilities is crucial for addressing these growing health concerns.

Economic and financial support must continue. The war has severely impacted Ukraine's economy, with significant disruptions to trade and industry. The winter months could bring additional economic hardships, making it essential for Ukraine to receive financial support to stabilize its economy. International financial aid, loans, and economic support packages can help bolster Ukraine's economy, support critical public services, and sustain military efforts against ongoing aggression.

## The Importance of Continued International Support

The international community's response to Ukraine's needs during the winter is critical for several reasons:

**“ PROVIDING TIMELY AND EFFECTIVE SUPPORT CAN ALLEVIATE SUFFERING AND PREVENT FURTHER LOSS OF LIFE ”**

**Humanitarian Impact:** Providing timely and effective support can alleviate suffering and prevent further loss of life. Ensuring that Ukrainians have access to basic necessities and health services is a moral imperative that aligns with global humanitarian values.

**Strategic Stability:** Supporting Ukraine in its struggle against aggression helps maintain regional stability and upholds international norms regarding sovereignty and territorial integrity. A strong, stable Ukraine serves as a bulwark against further destabilization in Eastern Europe.

**Long-Term Commitment:** The winter months will be a test of Ukraine's resilience, but the support provided now will have long-term implications. Sustained international assistance can help Ukraine recover from the immediate effects of the conflict and rebuild for a more secure future.

As President Volodymyr Zelensky and his administration prepare for the challenging winter ahead, the role of the international community is more crucial than ever. The need for support in repairing infrastructure, providing humanitarian aid, ensuring medical care, and stabilizing the economy is urgent. By stepping up now, the global community can help Ukraine navigate this critical period, alleviate suffering, and reinforce its ability to withstand ongoing challenges. As winter approaches, the solidarity and support of the international community will be a vital factor in determining Ukraine's ability to endure and emerge resilient from this period of crisis.



# LIFESTYLE

*Getting back into the thick of it*

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## Continuing the Legacy: Ado Chale

**Michael Beadling** met Pierre and Ilona Chale to discuss Ado Chales work and upcoming expo at the Solvay Stables in Brussels

The sky is grey and overcast, and I'm worried it's going to rain as I dismount my bicycle looking for the famous Ado Chale studio around Avenue Louise. The weather could not be more Belgian unless it rained.

Coming up to a studio I see a pensive man wearing stained trousers smoking a rolled-up cigarette and sipping a morning coffee outside, I admittedly almost mistake him for a builder. He is no builder however, this is sculptor and designer Pierre Chale, son of Ado Chale, the legendary Belgian designer, who left an indelible mark on the world of furniture and domestic objects with his unique ability to blend art and nature.

We greet and enter the back of the studio as Pierre gives me a quick tour before we begin our interview, and I'm immediately struck and in awe of the size and beauty of some of the visibly timeless art works on display. Huge 400 kilo sized tables made of bronze





## Luxury

adorn the walls along with other objects made of precious minerals. Ado Chales iconic use of precious stones, metals, and organic materials resulted in works that are as functional as they are sculptural, evoking the raw beauty of the natural world through textures, patterns, and forms.

Today, Chale's children have taken up the mantle, continuing the family legacy while navigating the challenges and opportunities of modern design. In a recent interview, they opened up about growing up with their father, how they honour his vision, and their aspirations for the future.

**How long have you been at this studio for?**

"I grew up in this studio, it's been in my family since the 1980s" said Pierre. "My father, now 96, still lives above us, he is surrounded by his family here. I have taken on my fathers work and today I design, build and restore new and previously sold artworks, whilst my sister Ilona takes more care of the public relations side of the business" he added. Pierre points to the endless racks of carefully arranged buckets containing random stones and minerals on the side of the wall that look like something from a geology

department or an archaeological dig site, "Nothing has changed here much since I took over 6 years ago" said Pierre. At this point, his sister Ilona joined us, and we sat in the main living room as I began to ask more questions over coffee.

Before I began, I was struck by a curious looking item on the wall in front of me. I asked them both, what is this and what is it made of? "It's an artwork of mine made of bone," replies Pierre. "My background is in sculpture and design and my favourite material to work with is bone, it is a lot more difficult to work with than stone" he added. I had to ask slightly worried, "what kind of bone?" afraid that it may be human. He smiled "we get that question a lot, I can assure you it's not human" chuckles Pierre.

**Your father, Ado Chale, is known for his deep connection to the natural world in his designs. How did growing up around his work shape your own understanding of design and nature?**

"Design not really, I just see detail, contours, he taught us to observe what is close. He never saw himself as a designer, this was never part of his vocabulary and wasn't a proper term in the 1960s, he was an artisan

**“ TODAY, CHALE’S CHILDREN HAVE TAKEN UP THE MANTLE, CONTINUING THE FAMILY LEGACY WHILE NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES OF MODERN DESIGN. ”**





## Luxury

of material, whatever he found, to create objects from nature" said Pierre. "He started from nothing and developed his art from nothing and just from his imagination. Myself and my brother grew up at different times of his life, but his vision of what he wanted to create never changed" said Ilona.

**In continuing Ado Chale's legacy, how do you balance honouring his original vision with bringing your own creative voices into the designs?**

"I try to respect his creations as much as possible, however I'm an interpreter of his work, we have a slight difference in approach, everyone has a different look on things" said Pierre. When creating works, especially with stone, the more you do it, the more you realise every stone has a different feel, cut, how the material reacts to where you want to take it, stone by stone. It's an arduous process making a table from beginning to end, it can take months" he added.

**Do you still create tailor models for prospective clients?**

"Yes, we do tailored orders. I try to interpret their vision" said Pierre. No Ado Chale table is ever the same and if we at the studio receive a table that needs renovating that was sold years ago, then we carefully renovate it in the same manner as it was built" he added.

**How do you think your father's work has influenced the broader design community in Belgium and internationally, and what responsibility do you feel in maintaining that influence?**

"What Ado Chale brought to the design world was the liberty of forms, he started with round or rectangular tables, and then he started to do all his designs by hand. Mixing various art forms such as contemporary with classical with regards to tables and other objects is one of his greatest marks" said Pierre. "I would also add the mosaic aspect of it" added Ilona. "He didn't invent it,



but he created a new way to do liberal forms in mosaic, very recognisable, the teardrop, the tripod stand, that you can see in modern design. With regard to tables, he opened up a door for the liberty of expression when it comes to design" she added.

**What challenges have you faced in continuing Ado Chale's work, particularly in a modern world that is increasingly focused on sustainability and ethical sourcing of materials?**

"Ado Chale tables are 'life proof', when the atomic bomb goes off they will still be here" chuckled Pierre. "These are the tables that will last for life. We stay true to the materials used in previous Ado Chale tables and look to source as responsibly as possible" said Ilona.

**Are there specific pieces or collections created by your father that resonate with you personally? How have these influenced your direction in continuing his body of work?**

"There are stones that are nicer than others, when I was little, I resonated strongly with a stone called "tiger eye", I still love it, each person has a different stone they prefer. "Malachite, a type of green stone, is a lo-



vely stone to work with too, I see that a lot in his pieces. Some stones have a better aura than others." Pierre stated. "Hematite is one of my favourites," said Ilona. "It's a black stone that vibes well, contains a lot of iron, sometimes looks a deep red. I've always loved the deepness of the colours. I love the tables made from peppercorns too, they are special, the peppercorns are all hand selected. These ideas are genius. It's the poetry of Ado Chale's work that touches me the most." said Ilona.

**What is the most important lesson your father taught you about working with precious stones, metals, and organic ma-**

**terials, and how has that influenced your approach to crafting new pieces?**

"One word. The 'dream' and the notion of work, he was plunged into his work but to him it was never really work because he enjoyed every second of it. Another key word that comes to mind is wonder and imagination" said Ilona. "Each stone is a world of its own in a mosaic, one's gaze is fixated on these stones" said Pierre. "One of the hallmarks of Ado Chale's designs is his use of rare and precious materials, particularly stones and metals. These materials are notoriously difficult to work with, but they are also what gives Chale's work its distinctive, luxurious feel" added Pierre.



Luxury



Ado Chale

**“ AS PIERRE AND ILONA CHALE CONTINUE TO BUILD ON HIS REMARKABLE LEGACY, THEY DO SO WITH A DEEP RESPECT FOR THE MAN WHO TAUGHT THEM NOT ONLY ABOUT DESIGN BUT ABOUT LIFE. ”**

**Do you collaborate as a family on the creative process, or does each of you bring a different perspective to maintaining and evolving the Ado Chale brand?**  
 “It’s not a brand, each piece is a unique work of art. Every table is different, no Ado

Chale table is the same” said Pierre. Myself and Pierre are always of the same idea and wavelength, we respect as much as possible our fathers original designs, but most importantly, its respect for each other” said Ilona. “There is an interpretation, but fundamentally we take decisions as a family. We have the same eye on things, and we usually have similar ideas” said Pierre.

#### **What’s the future Ado Chale**

“Our father is still here, we’re accompanying him through life. We can’t really comment on that question, where we go. The tables we do now, we do now, the future is now, and that’s it haha” said Pierre.

#### **How many exhibitions or retrospectives do you do?**

“Few. The last one was in 2017 at the BOZAR. We had a different array of tables and other sculpted objects from the studio. You can find everything in this book” said Ilona.

#### **A Lasting Legacy**

As Pierre and Ilona Chale continue to build on his remarkable legacy, they do so with a deep respect for the man who taught them not only about design but about life. «Our father’s work is more than just furniture or objects,» they concluded. «It’s a philosophy, a way of seeing the world. We feel privileged to be able to carry that forward» Ilona stated. In an era where design trends come and go, the enduring influence of Ado Chale’s work — and the family that continues it — serves as a reminder that the most profound design is rooted in something timeless: a deep, abiding connection to the natural world.

The coming exposition at the Stables of the Hotel Solvay Brussels (Rue Lens 36, 1050) from the 18th of October to the 26th of November will showcase an array of Ado Chales remarkable tables and objects to the Belgian public and the international community. 📍



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Bracelets & Earrings « Pulse » yellow gold & Diamonds Dinh van*

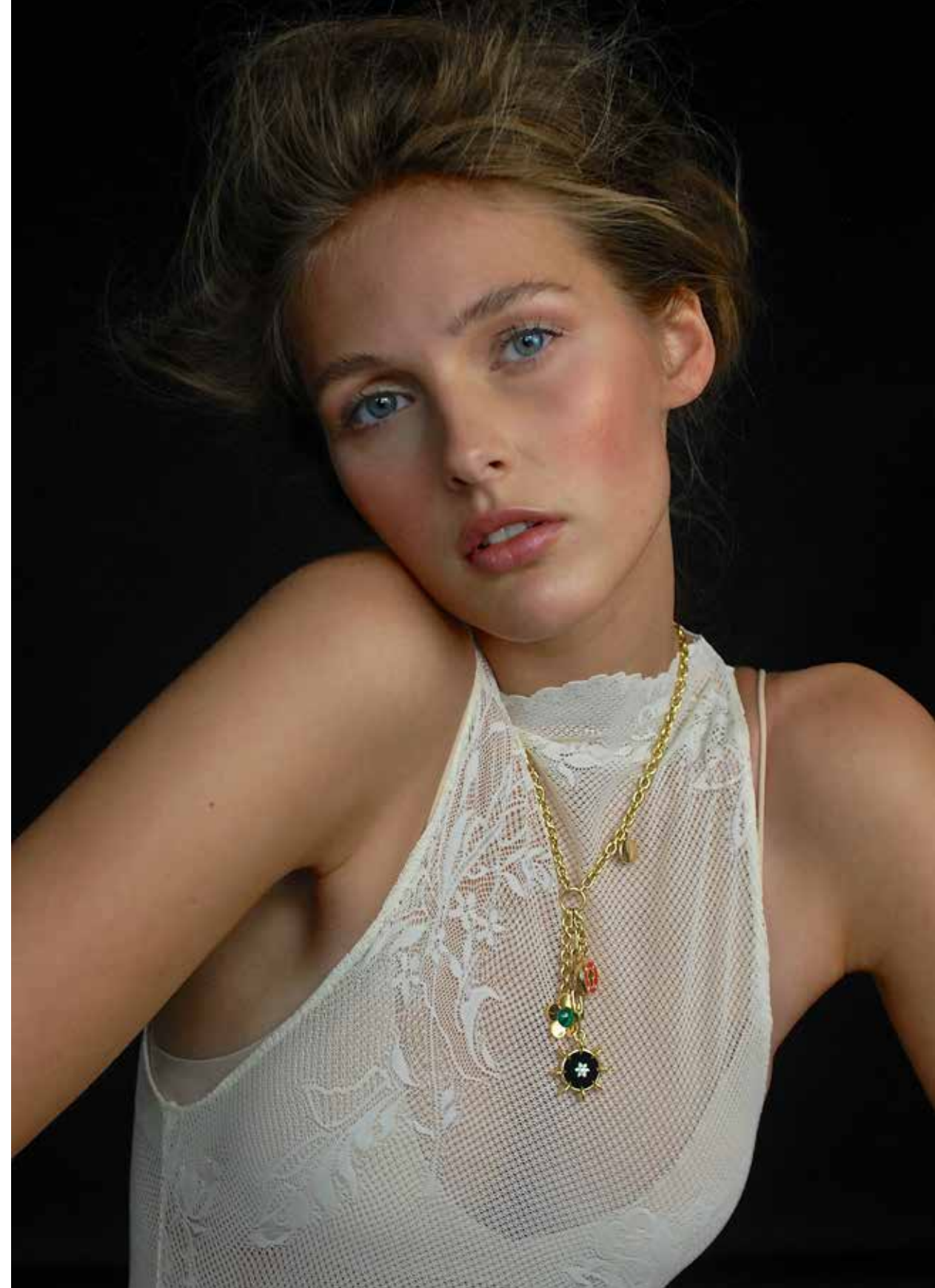


Total Look **Zara** Shoes **Sézane**  
Bracelet & Earrings «Pulse» Ring «Le cube diamond» yellow gold & Diamonds **Dinh van**





Top **Nathan** Hairband **Zara** Bracelet «Maillon» yellow gold & Ring «Le cube diamond» yellow gold & Diamond **Dinh van**



Right page: Body **Zara** Necklace « Happy Sound » gold / ceramic/ diamonds **Van Esser**  
Boris used **Clarins** beauty Products: Complexion: Eclair Beauty Balm/ Skin illusion 107  
Eyes: 4 Colors Eyeshadow 04 Brown Sugar Gradation / Wonder Volume XXL Mascara  
Blush: 05 Cheeky boum Lips: Joli Rouge Laquer 757L

Guidance 46: **Amouage** Extrait de parfum @ Senteurs d'ailleurs  
Mystic Bliss: **Goldfield & Banks** Eau de parfum @ Beauty by Kroonen BXL  
Flora Gorgeous Orchid: **Gucci** Eau de parfum  
J'adore l'or: **Dior** Essence de parfum  
Le Parfum: **Jean Paul Gaultier** Eau de parfum intense  
Million Gold: **Rabanne** Eau de parfum intense

**Juliette has a gun**: Ex Vetiver Eau de parfum  
@ Beauty House BXL  
Black Meisterstück: **Montblanc** Eau de parfum  
Perfect: **Marc Jacobs** Elixir Eau de parfum  
Sauvage: **Dior** Eau forte alcohol free  
Hyper cuir: **Courrèges** Eau de parfum  
Man in black: **Bulgari** Parfum  
Handbag: **Dior**





# Nourish & Hydrate: The ultimate Beauty Ritual

Nicholas Sirot introduces his new selection of hydrating and anti-aging products, blending advanced technology with natural ingredients for youthful, radiant skin. These formulas deeply nourish, smooth out signs of aging, and enhance luminosity. His haircare line strengthens and repairs while protecting against daily damage. Crafted for all skin and hair types, these products offer a luxurious and effective beauty routine.



**Annayake** Hydra Booster Lip Balm. Price: €24. Radiance anti-aging cream dark spot. Price: €107.  
 @april-beauty.be **NC Cosmétique** Sérums Éclat. Price: €25. Hydraglow. Price: €40. @nccosmetique.com  
**Filorga** Revitalize firming polyrevitalizing cream. Price: €95,90. Revitalize serum anti-aging. Price: €89,90.  
**Manucurist** Active shine highlights & repairs. Price: €16. **Kylie cosmetics** Face Moisturizer  
 by Kylie Jenner. Price: €31,99. **Medik8** Total moisture daily facial cream am/pm. Price: €58,95.  
**Celestetic** Active peel resurfacing peeling €54,90. Active repair anti-aging cream with retinol.  
 Price: €74,90. **Mac cosmetics** Hyper real cream to foam cleanser. Price: €21.



Dress **Armani** Hairband **Zara**  
 Ring « Seventies » yellow gold Earring  
 « Pulse » yellow gold & Diamonds **Dinh van**  
 Beauty **Clarins**:  
 Complexion: **Eclair Beauty** Balm/ Skin illusion 107  
 Eyes: 4 Colors Eyeshadow 04 Brown Sugar Gradation  
 Wonder Volume XXL Mascara  
 Blush: 05 Cheeky boum  
 Lips: Joli Rouge Laquer 757L



Nuxe Pre-shampoo nourishing mask. Price: €31,90.  
 STMNT Serum. Price: €19,95. Grooming spray. Price: €23,95.  
 Sisley The intense nutrition hair care mask. Price: €112,50.  
 NC Cosmétique Barber oil. Price: €30. @nccosmetique.com



Nu Skin Volumizing shampoo. Price: €27,57. Smoothing conditioner. Price: €27,57.  
 Fibre Clinix Schwarzkopf Shampoo for dry & brittle hair. Price: €26. Conditioner. Price: €29,95.  
 Sisley Hair rituel revitalizing nourishing shampoo. Price: €75,50.  
 STMNT Shampoo. Price: €19,95.



# Iconic rétro touches and contemporary cuts

by Nicholas Sirot

Explore our curated selection of men's and women's fashion trends for Winter 2024/2025. This season spotlights bold silhouettes, with oversized cuts, textured fabrics, and refined details. Neutral tones blend seamlessly with vibrant accents, while geometric and retro prints add a dash of originality. A must-have guide to staying stylish and ahead of the curve this winter.

## Men



**Festina Chronos.**  
Price: €179.

**Arket Men Pull over.**  
Price: €139.



**Bobbies Men Boots.**  
Price: €235.



**Eden Park Wool Hat.**  
Price: €70.



**Eden Park Shirt.**  
Price: €165.

**Eden Park Trousers.**  
Price: €149.



**Delsey Back-pack.**  
Price: €175.



**NC Cosmétique Barber oil.** Price: €30.



**Eden Park Boots.**  
Price: €205.



**Eden Park Coat.**  
Price: €750.

Women



**American Vintage**  
Women Coat.  
Price: €450.



**Arket Women**  
Wool shawl.  
Price: €79.



**Sézane Vest.**  
Price: €340.



**Sézane Vest.**  
Price: €145.



**Dinh van «Seventies» Necklace.**  
Price on request.



**Amouage**  
Guidance 46.  
Extrait de parfum.  
100 ml. Price: €490.  
@senteursdailleurs.com



**Mieke Dierckx Mini Briefcase.**  
Woven Copper. Price: €430.



**Bobbies Women**  
Boots.  
Price: €255.



**Arket Women Trousers.**  
Price: €129.



**Sézane Long skirt.**  
Price: €130.



**Sézane Shirt.**  
Price: €100.



# Brussels and figurative art: Yves Gobart

**Michael Beadling** met with local artist Yves Gobart to talk more about the Etterbeek Artist Trail, what inspires him, figurative art and life in Brussels



For two days a year in Brussels, the city of Etterbeek, in partnership with the local commune and artists, celebrate the annual Etterbeek Artist Trail (Parcours d'Artistes d'Etterbeek). From October 4th to 6th 2024, local artists open their workshops to the public, allowing all to explore vibrant local art scenes and galleries. One can enjoy unique exhibitions, workshops and live per-

formances, celebrating creativity and community in the dynamic neighbourhood. Together Magazine interviewed Yves Gobart, a participating artist, to discuss his work.

**Yves can you tell me a bit about yourself, your background and what drove you to become an artist and your art and its style?**



"I'm not going to give you my CV, but when you realise as a kid that you spend a lot of time drawing pictures in the margins of your text books, the question is quickly answered," said Yves. "I stumbled upon some great professors who pushed me in the right direction, I started at l'Ecole des Arts Appliqués Olivier de Serres, France, a public school, where I gained my formative training on various types of art, how to study, compose and really look at images. I started with architecture, quickly understood it wasn't my thing however. I then applied for a competition to enter this prestigious art school, les Beaux-Arts de Paris, and I won! I've been an artist ever since and my specialty today is drawing and painting" added Yves.

**What was your first major influence in art?**

"One of the first artists that left a big impression on me was Jean Marc Reiser. He would do satirical sketches in magazines for the likes of Charlie Hebdo, the old school Charlie Hebdo different to what it is now" said

Yves. His works were very simple, 3 or 4 line drawings so messy they looked borderline abstract, but they explained complex topics clearly and were hilarious. My first contact with his images was through magazines or newspapers, there were no such things as museums or books on art where I lived growing up in Buzançais, Indre, France" added Yves.

**Can you tell me a bit more about the themes in your work, subjects such as shelters, ghosts, donkeys, landscapes and accidents, what does it all mean for you?**

"A friend once called me "incomplete by nature and hybrid by accident". Incomplete by nature is a term for any artist, the creation, from your own means, the ego from the Greeks, that were all meant to be running after this to create balance within our own minds" said Yves.

"Hybrid by accident refers to the way I collect pieces of images from one place and stick them onto another and create a diffe-



**“ IN BRUSSELS YOU HAVE THE CRADLE OF FLEMISH RENAISSANCE ART WITHIN AND JUST ROUND THE CORNER, BRUGGE, GHENT, THESE ARE ALL PAINTER TOWNS ”**

rent hidden meaning. Yves then pointed to one of his works on the wall, the subject is a make shift tent in the woods used by prostitutes to entertain clients titled ‘Little Home Sweet Home.’ “The tent structure in the middle of the forest for example, those are a direct critique of the difficulty of society that manifests itself in front of us, but also the beauty of the objects, the strangeness of the objects, you have the mixture of man made plastic in a forest setting, it shouldn’t exist naturally, its perplexing and that’s only humanity that’s been able to do that” said Yves.

“This falls into a greater theme called the drape. The subject of the drape is very important in these paintings, the flow of the drape is a science within itself. Paint is a pigment mixed with liquid and gives the illusion of something that is a cloth, the mass, the light, the volume. The same detail can be seen within my paintings on plastic tents in the woods. When my colleague says ‘hybrid by accident’ I think he may also be referring to my habit of placing donkey heads on human bodies, like a chimera effect” stated Yves.

**Can you tell me a bit more about the donkeys? Why this animal?**

“Why donkeys? Well donkeys are from the countryside, I am from Berry / France, a very agricultural village, you see them often, so it resonates with me. Donkeys are very calm, gentle creatures. It was probably one of the first animals I ever sketched in nature. I can do human faces and portraits too but I’m more interested in creating chimeras. Chimeras distort the vision one has on the image, look at the picture here (Yves points to the portrait of the two chimeras paddling a canoe in the forest titled ‘Le Théâtre des Opérations’) you don’t know if its dangerous, accommodating, pleasant. But you know they’re paddling, that’s all you know. So what I’m actually doing is not attracting attention, but discussing intention. Intention,

not attention” says Yves. “Back to your original question on donkeys however, they’re docile and lovely animals, and I’m sure they will inherit the earth or at least still be here once humanity has gone” chuckled Yves.

**You have been in Brussels for 6-7 years now, how has the city, art scene, or its cultural atmosphere influenced your work over the years?**

“I love Brussels compared to other European cities like Paris or Berlin, in Brussels you have the cradle of Flemish renaissance art just round the corner (Flemish masters), Brugge, Ghent, Holland, these are ‘painter towns’ said Yves. “People here understand and know paintings, when I lived in Paris it wasn’t the same thing. In Belgium you easily find gorgeous wall paintings you just need to open your eyes. When I was an art student at the beau arts in the 1990s, there was no hype around my craft as a painter, ‘figurative art’ so to speak was dead it was all about contemporary art, I had to fight to make a living and do what I’m doing with figurative painting today” said Yves.

**Do you prefer working in Brussels or Paris?**

“Brussels for all the reasons I’d previously explained being a painter’s town, and the beer is cheaper here. I go to Paris now just as a tourist” said Yves.

**Congratulations on the previous encore & encore expo in Schaerbeek, can you tell me a bit more about it and how did it go during the event?**

“The expo went well. Its proof of the demand and popularity for figurative art in Brussels. The curator and director of the artistic programme of the house of art in Schaerbeek, Anne-Cécile Maréchal, had this idea in mind for a while to assemble a group of artists around the theme of rituals, so I joined” said Yves. “The expo centred around the theme of repetition in art and life, my ritual as a figurative painter is to use tubes of paint,

hence my collection on tubes of paint” (Yves points to the 12 or so miniature paintings of highly detailed tubes of paint that were part of his previous expo). “There were some big names in that expo, like Roman Opalka. He used to write numbers everyday from one to infinity, the man ritualised every aspect of his work and life until his death” said Yves. “I was proud to be a part of this expo, to be associated with such names but also the quality of the art and material on show, it was fascinating, I’m very grateful to the commune of Schaerbeek and Cecile. It opened up some horizons and gave me an ego boost” said Yves.

**In terms of sales, what is your biggest market? Is it Belgium?**

“Belgium mainly, Brussels, Antwerp, a bit everywhere. As an artist, unless your international, you focus on where you’re based. I strongly focus on where I’m based. Belgium has a great art scene” said Yves.

**When is your next expo?**

“Next week, its open days for the studio in Etterbeek where I paint, there’s the Etterbeek Artists Trial, anyone can come in and check out my work and have a drink or just chill with other artists who are taking part” said Yves. “Otherwise, I’m trying to prepare a new series for the end of the year” he added. I asked, “more chimeras?!” Yes, more chimeras Yves responded.

For more information on Yves Gobart work: <https://www.yvesgobart.com/>

For more information on the Parcours d’artistes d’Etterbeek 2024: <https://etterbeek.brussels/fr/actualites/culture/2024-09-16/parcours-dartistes-2024> ●



# Joker: Folie à Deux, hit or miss?

## LIFE OF LEISURE

*The winds of autumn bring  
new adventures and hope*

*Together Magazine* takes a look at the hype around the blockbuster coming to a screen near you this October

Joaquin Phoenix is a wonderful web of contradictions. Arriving to our interview, we find him sporting a messy beard and longish hair; and yet in every word, every syllable, there is a ruggedly handsomeness.

He wears faded jeans and a dark jacket, yet could easily pass for someone who has stepped directly off the Louis Vuitton runway. Even the fact that the Puerto Rico-born actor sits perfectly in midlife – 50 in October – his persona, posturing and general cloaked demeanour mean he's as youthful as he was a decade or two ago when appearing in such movies as *Ladder 49*, or *Walk the Line*, for which he earned an Oscar nomination.

Beyond that, he also received nomination nods from the Academy for his performance in *Gladiator*,







“ARTHUR AND HARLEY ARE TWO PEOPLE WHO FIND SOLACE IN THEIR BROKENNESS, BUT INSTEAD OF HEALING EACH OTHER, THEY SPIRAL FURTHER DOWN TOGETHER”



in 2001; and again in 2013 for *The Master*. Finally, in 2020, *Joker* saw him take the ultimate prize, and the expectation behind a follow-up has been so intense that many, already, are pointing at *Joker: Folie à Deux* as having the potential for further honours.

**How did you feel about returning to the character of Arthur Fleck in *Joker: Folie à Deux*?**

Coming back to Arthur Fleck was like revisiting an old friend who you know too well. There's this undeniable connection I feel with him, not because he's a villain, but because there's something so raw, so human about his descent into madness.

When Todd [Phillips, the film's director] and I first talked about the sequel, we both agreed it had to be something truly unique, something that wasn't just a continuation but a transformation. Arthur's journey is far from over, and *Folie à Deux* allowed us to explore an entirely new facet of his psyche.

**What were your thoughts on incorporating musical elements into this sequel?**

Initially, I wasn't sure how music would fit into this world. Arthur's world is so grounded in grit and reality that the idea of breaking into song seemed almost absurd.

Yet that's what intrigued me. Todd pitched it not just as a musical, but as a psychological journey where the music isn't just a performance; it's a manifestation of Arthur's inner turmoil. It's chaotic, disjointed, and beautiful in its madness, much like Arthur himself. Lady Gaga's involvement added a layer of complexity, and her approach to Harley Quinn through this lens was something I knew would be special.

**How do you view the relationship between Arthur Fleck and Harley Quinn in this film?**

Their relationship is central to the idea of 'folie à deux', this shared madness. Arthur

and Harley are two people who find solace in their brokenness, but instead of healing each other, they spiral further down together. It's a twisted love story where their bond is both toxic and oddly comforting. Gaga brought an incredible depth to Harley, and our scenes together felt like we were constantly teetering on the edge of something either beautiful or horrifying.

**What challenges did you face while filming this sequel?**

Physically and emotionally, it was more demanding than the first film. Arthur is in a different place now, and the energy I had to bring to the character was different, more erratic. There were scenes where I felt like I was losing myself in Arthur's madness, especially during the musical sequences. Todd's direction pushed me to places I hadn't gone before. Every day felt like a new challenge, but that's what makes this project so exhilarating.

**Can you describe the atmosphere on set, especially with the new cast additions like Lady Gaga?**

The atmosphere was intense but also incredibly creative. Gaga brought a new energy to the set, one that was both playful and intense. There was this mutual respect and understanding that we were doing something that hadn't been done before. We all knew we were pushing boundaries—not just of the genre, but of our own performances. It was a collaborative process where everyone was contributing ideas, and Todd was the maestro conducting this orchestra of madness.

**What do you hope audiences will take away from *Joker: Folie à Deux*?**

I hope they leave the theatre questioning what they've just witnessed. This film isn't about providing answers; it's about asking difficult questions. It's about confronting the parts of ourselves that we'd rather keep hidden. Arthur's story is not just his; it's a



**“ I THINK WE CAN  
SOMETIMES CREDIT  
RELIGION TOO MUCH,  
OR CREDIT BASIC  
HUMANITY TOO  
LITTLE ”**

reflection of society, of how we treat those who are different, and of what happens when we ignore the warning signs. If people walk away feeling unsettled, then we've done our job.

These quotes give insight into Phoenix's experience and thoughts on reprising his role as Arthur Fleck in a sequel that pushes boundaries by blending psychological drama with musical elements.

**You're described as a deep-thinking, philosophical actor. Would you agree with that description?**

It's all relative. Am I a deep-thinker compared to other people? Perhaps. But to me I am just me – it's natural to feel this way and to think the way I do; and it would feel unnatural if I was to feel any different.

**Has this ability to consider the world around you, at length, influenced your faith?**

Well my faith comes from a place where I am connected to the world. It comes from the exchanges with fellow people, it comes from breathing in fresh air, from art, from rationing and reasoning. You might say they are the building blocks of most religions, but for me it is a private exchange that reflects and respects the world around me.

**Do you struggle to come to terms with life and its realities?**

Yes, I think so. Certainly more than others do, although perhaps not as much as I used to. I am difficult to please and am certainly not someone you would describe as easy-going. I am hard on myself, but it is that attitude that has always led me to push harder and reach higher in attaining what I believe is satisfaction.

**With that in mind then, does acting become easier with age or maybe more difficult, because you know more about life? By the same token, does life become easier with age?**

I don't know if it's that you know more about life. I think you are affected by pressing all your time into the thing and I think that that starts wearing you, on some people, and for me it does. I have always said that I always wanted to be a child actor, but as a result I missed a time when you are totally naïve to all the extra stuff that goes into making a movie.

And so in some ways you are battling against that, battling against people being fucking sick of you, battling against you being sick of yourself, and in some ways I think it can get more difficult, but my appreciation for making movies I think has increased, as has my appreciation for life.

**You came from a religious family, right?**

Yes my parents were Jewish. They used religion's values as a backdrop for living normal lives. They weren't entrenched in the whole thing, but the morals and principles were present throughout.

**How important were those to you?**

They were important in the sense that our upbringing was done on the right path, but I think we can sometimes credit religion too much, or credit basic humanity too little.



I like the idea of faith working as a guide, but faith is a byproduct of the soul, and we should be proud of ourselves for making good decisions, rather than attributing those directly to the church. By the same token, we don't label – or we shouldn't label – bad actions on bad preaching. Some people are just inherently good, or inherently bad.

**Is modern religion still relevant then?**

Of course. I think the portrayal of the Bible is so important these days. Firstly, we are living in an evidence culture, where the directive is to seek affirmation of everything that exists around us. That is the trend right now.

A part of me feels that as time goes on we will tire of always trying to put hard proof behind ideas. As human beings, our passion for detachment, for fantasy, for faith, will always come back round. It is the way we have been for thousands of years, and it isn't something Twitter will stop, despite the efforts of some people on there.

So the Bible will reestablish itself as a tool – and by that I mean not just as a guide for those who want to live to a prescribed doctrine and take comfort from that, but as a reminder of what I am sure we will look back over as happier times where trust, belief and the magic of life is represented by a book that dates back to when we had very little else in our lives.

It's essential we hold on to anything that offers a simpler, more forgiving version of our existences – a less chaotic version of, well, chaos.

**But in terms of self-forgiveness, you are still your own worst critic?**

Of course. Always. It's impossible for me to ever see the work the way anyone else does; it's absolutely impossible. My career is nothing but memories and I am never, ever going to be satisfied, I am only going to see things that I could improve on. 🗨️

# Exclusive interview with Belgian filmmaker Fabrice Du Welz

*Together Magazine* sat down in Lido at the Venice Film Festival for an exclusive interview with Belgian filmmaker Fabrice Du Welz who presented his film *Maldoror* out of competition



Anthony Bajon in 'Maldoror' © Sofie Gheysens

The film is inspired by the judicial scandal surrounding Belgian serial killer and child molester Marc Dutroux. It stars Anthony Bajon as a young policeman who becomes obsessed with a case involving a notorious child abuser.

## What changed according to you in Belgium, in Charleroi, between the 90's and the present?

The perception is still sensitive and delicate, because it's very emotional for Bel-

gian people, especially from that region. Of course, the youngest don't know exactly how the story is articulated. I was 20 at the time, it was just like a TV series at the time, every night, every day we had some news: it was unbelievable to hear about all that. I think the perception is different but it's still very emotional in the Belgian soul, it's like it's being "eaten a piece of their soul". That's why in making the film I tried the most honest approach, to avoid sensationalism, to provoke something in the Belgian viewers

- mostly them because they are connected to that story - through the crude and provocative approach, to stimulate a catharsis.

## What is the perception of this underworld that was behind the case?

I don't know, I'm a filmmaker. I spend time reading and documenting myself to try the right approach. What I wanted to make clear about those guys is the lack of moral values: kidnapping a kid is the same as stealing a bottle of water. Something happened in the higher society that I don't know but, in the movie, I wanted to stay in the Paul Chartier character most of the time: it's always about what he sees, that's an element to articulate the story.

## Which difficulties did you encounter in a movie like this one?

In my country, there is a general embarrassment about that story. People know that there is something beyond the imprisonment of that criminal, I'm not a conspiracy theorist. If you have a brain that functions properly, if you read the documentation, you will know that there is at least a network. In Belgium, there is a feeling of incompleteness, a shame about that story being seen by the rest of the world. To embrace this subject is a great responsibility and I at least tried to provoke a catharsis in my country, that's why the ending is a bit different from the real story. People can recognize themselves by thinking about what justice could be, or at least a reflection of it.

## About the sources of what happened and how Belgium reacted. There is a part about a Sicilian guy that says "In my country, they kill...(?)" When you put that segment into the movie, did you think it could have been much more aggressive?

I tried to make a good film. When I was 20 years old I heard many people say that kind of thing, I remember my father saying that thing, at the dining table, watching the news. It always shocked me, because I am

not a defender of the death penalty, I'm totally against it - as a human being should be -. The theme in that movie is "justice", when justice fails what can you do? That's the whole film, what is the essence of evil? Is it the urge of some lunatic or misinformation, a dysfunctional justice system? When you have no other choices and the justice that we built as a society fails, what can you do? I only ask the question.

## As it happens in the end to the policeman, the solution seems to be going against the rules, to find justice. Is this what the character is thinking?

I was interested in that question. That's why we built that context at the beginning of the film, a context in which there is a strong community, with some values and empathy. The protagonist had a distorted idea of justice, he thought that if he was on the right side he was going to be okay. But even after becoming a cop he realized that everything is corrupt and then you face all the difficulties that come with the corruption, obsession comes as a consequence. What can you do? I don't know, I don't have the answers, just questions.

## You met one of the cops working at that time. How was it?

We approached the movie as a documentary, we were very informed and meticulous about the story. We stuck to the reality of things; I didn't want to make something cinematic. I wanted the raw, authentic aspect. I met a lot of different people, many of those were in the movie, they helped us to learn about the different aspects of their gestures, their behaviour, and the way they talked. There were so many clans, and many different communities and all of them cohabitated with each other: the approach was very intriguing. I wanted to be very documented. ①



# Interview with Oscar winning Director Oliver Stone

**Federico Grandesso** sat down on the Croisette in Cannes with Oscar winner Director Oliver Stone to discuss the documentary *Lula*, co-directed with Robert S. Wilson.

The two directors explore the rise, fall and triumphant return to power of an out-of-the-ordinary politician after 19 months in prison. What happened to Brazilian President Lula who had to fight a legal battle, seems to be a more sophisticated evolution of an age-old tactic of creating a scandal to eliminate another political opponent. Was that basically what it is?

Well, you have to trace history to find that out because it takes so many different forms. It seems like a new way of fighting, getting rid of a candidate. It looks like the scandals with the media, the power of the media, and in Brazil, the power of the prosecuting attorneys. It's a likely event. Once you get support from the media, the media is very free to judge. You look at America now, they judge, it's easy to get a mandate against Trump, and you

have a lot of support. Then the issue is that facts are hard to come by, but the goal is to divide the working class like they've done in America, and they've done a pretty good job of it since Vietnam in my lifetime. Frankly, it's an old trick, if you think back to the days of Pinkerton, the corporations were getting bigger and bigger, and they hired Pinker-

tons who were working-class people, and they divided, paid them better, and they got scabs, too, to come in, break the union. It's been going on a long time, that's how you run, and you get power.

**You have been working on Lula for a long time. Were you waiting for something?**

I met him in 2009 when I did my documentary *South of the Border*, we tried to make the doc in 2019. While he was still in prison, we were going to try to interview him, and then the month that we were planning to do it, he got released. After that, he was out of prison, and he was travelling around with his fiancé trying to get some semblance of a normal life back. At this precise moment, the pandemic started therefore we lost a year. We then tried to interview him again in January of 2021 in Cuba, and he got CO-

VID. So later, that year, December of 2021, is when we finally interviewed him, Glenn and the rest of the people in the film.

**I'm curious to know if at any point you've thought of talking to someone at the Brazilian opposition.**

I would have loved to talk to Bolsonaro, I've

heard what he said. He called them all these names: Liar and Traitor. They have a presence in the film, and I think even a Bolsonaro supporter could see the film I feel like it was, especially at the ending, the emotion between the two sides, it feels like we were at least fair to the humanity of both positions.

**Did you ask Lula to meet Bolsonaro?**

No. We took the point of view that we were going to get to know Lula. It's quite a story. It's an amazing experience. If you think about modern politics, who do you know who's been a labourer union or came from those classes? Who? Nobody that I can think of, even in the African continent. They tend to be soldiers, or they tend to come up through a system of some kind. Who do we know who worked as a labourer, remembers where they came from and still hearkens back to that era and tries to bring people up behind them? Lula then is probably one of the sanest people in the world. I think he should have a bigger place on the world stage. But I don't think the United States is in favour of him. I don't think they want him around. They'd love to see him go. No question, in my opinion, he's too important as an example of what's possible.

**From the South of the border, you are coming back to talking about the South American leader. How do you feel close to those leaders from South America? Are you interested in them?**

I can say that, but I'm not an expert on South America, but I do end up going because I agree with the aspirations, and I see how the United States smothered those, helped to smother, so many of those aspirations. The United States's relationship with these countries, whether it's Russia, South America, or Egypt, is very peculiar. The United States cannot misbehave, and it does misbehave. It does assume that it has the right to intervene in any foreign affair. Now we're on the border of Russia, there's no end, no li-

mit to this. It's a very dangerous time. That's also the importance of President Lula, he fought for peace on the world stage, trying to broker a peace arrangement, it was very courageous, nobody else is doing that. Do you remember? Schroeder and Chirac came out against the American invasion of Iraq, and they were ignored.

**Do you think that the re-election of Trump is inevitable?**

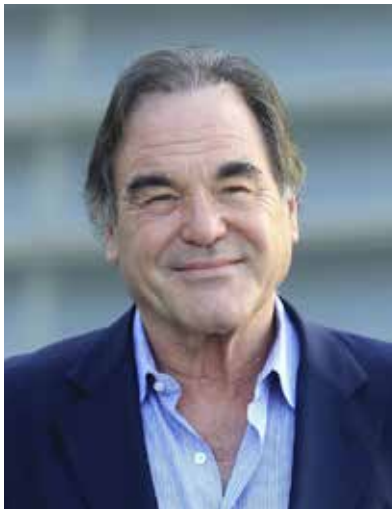
I don't know what's going to happen, frankly. It keeps it interesting, I mean, it's common in our democracy that these are our two political choices and that any alternative is strangled in the cradle. I'm for Kennedy. I think he was the only one who was always been right, he was at least telling the truth. About things he knew. He was not always right, but I think most of the time he's been right. He's a man of peace. John Kennedy was the last President who used to talk about peace. I haven't heard pretty much in the last eight presidencies about keeping the peace of the world thinking about the other guy and what they're thinking or getting along. Coexistence was a great word.

**The film says quite literally that Lula was not a socialist but a pragmatist. Can you explain that?**

They were comparing him to Bernie Sanders in that. It was like Bernie Sanders versus Donald Trump, although I think Lula is more of a pragmatist than Bernie Sanders, which is accurate. As a Bernie Sanders supporter, I see the strength and admire Lula more.

**Have you ever received a no for an interview or had a negative experience some an important leader?**

I received a no from Turkish President Erdogan then I think the worst interview I ever had was with the Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen. 🗣️



Oliver Stone

# Watches & Absinthe: Switzerland

**Michael Beadling** went to Neuchâtel to taste absinthe and ask: does character start on your wrist?



**Deep Dive into Swiss Watchmaking**  
I was 598km away from Brussels this summer, in the beautiful canton of Neuchâtel, Switzerland. We are at 1000m in elevation and the air is crisp as we begin our tour of the city, a mecca for watch enthusiasts since the dawn of the 17th century and a pillar of Swiss culture. Neuchâtel is often overlooked in favour of more popular destinations like Geneva, but

for those in the know, it's the heart and soul of Swiss watchmaking. Our group visited a prestigious watchmaking workshop in La Chaux-de-Fonds. This town thrives on its horological heritage. The streets here are lined with buildings that seem to echo the precision and patience that goes into creating a timepiece, with windows in places that allow maximum light for watch artists to create their time pieces. Watchmaking

isn't just a profession in Neuchâtel; it's an art form, passed down through generations, with a commitment to quality and tradition that you can feel in the air.

Inside the workshop Le Garde Temps, we were greeted by skilled artisans bent over their workbenches, each one carefully assembling the intricate parts of a mechanical watch. Seeing the inner workings of a Swiss watch up close was mesmerizing. Hundreds of tiny components, each one meticulously crafted and assembled by hand, work together in perfect harmony to keep time with breathtaking precision.

What struck me most was the sheer patience involved. These artisans spent hours, sometimes days, perfecting a single element of a watch. It made me realize that Swiss watches aren't just luxury items; they're the result of generations of dedication to perfection. We were even given the chance to try our hand at assembling a watch movement—a process that was both thrilling and humbling. I quickly learned that handling the minuscule components with precision and care was no easy feat (I managed to lose many pieces). It gave me a whole new level of respect for the craft and justified the 6-year process it usually takes to become a "master of time" or watchmaker.

Following the tour, we were taken to the International Museum of Time (Musée International d'Horlogerie) in La Chaux-de-Fonds, a mesmerizing tribute to the art and history of timekeeping. Housing an extensive collection of over 4,500 timepieces, from ancient sundials to modern luxury watches, the museum offers a captivating journey through the evolution of horology. Interactive exhibits and beautifully curated displays highlight the meticulous craftsmanship and innovation behind watchmaking. The museum's blend of history, technology, and artistry makes it a must-visit for



**“ IT MADE ME REALIZE THAT SWISS WATCHES AREN'T JUST LUXURY ITEMS; THEY'RE THE RESULT OF GENERATIONS OF DEDICATION TO PERFECTION ”**

both horology enthusiasts and casual visitors. It's a true gem that showcases Switzerland's deep connection to the world of precision and time.

Our final hours that day were spent at the Zenith watch factory. A tour was given of the factory along with an in-depth look at Charles Vermot, the founder of Zenith and the famous el primero movement. The El Primero movement, developed by Charles Vermot in 1969, was the world's first high-frequency



Travel

quency automatic chronograph, capable of measuring time to 1/10th of a second. Ver-  
mot preserved its plans during the quartz  
crisis, ensuring its survival. Today, it remains  
a landmark in precision watchmaking and  
innovation.

**Absinthe in the Land of the Green Fairy**

Our third and fourth day was all about ab-  
sinthe, and I was eager to learn more about  
this infamous drink. We were taken to Val-  
de-Travers, the birthplace of absinthe, where  
distilleries now proudly craft the spirit that  
was once considered contraband. Our won-  
derful Swiss guide, Mr Steve Weisshaupt,  
met us at a small, family-owned distillery,  
where the air was thick with the aromas of  
anise and fennel, two key ingredients in ab-  
sinthe. It was a cozy, almost magical place,  
surrounded by lush green hills, the perfect  
setting for a drink with such an evocative  
history.

As we toured the distillery, our guide shared  
the fascinating backstory of absinthe's rise,  
fall, and resurrection. Banned for nearly a

century, the production of absinthe was  
driven underground for decades. It wasn't  
until 2005 that absinthe production was  
legalized in Switzerland again. I had never  
tasted authentic absinthe before this trip, so  
when it came time for a tasting, I wasn't sure  
what to expect. As I watched the bartender  
slowly drip cold water over a sugar cube,  
turning the bright green liquid into a clou-  
dy opalescent drink, I was captivated by the  
ritual.

The first sip was strong, with a bold li-  
quorice-like flavor that softened as it lin-  
gered. Absinthe is an acquired taste, but  
its complexity makes it more than just a  
drink—it's an experience. We learned about  
the traditional method of enjoying absinthe,  
often referred to as «louching,» where water  
dilutes the spirit, releasing its full spectrum  
of flavors. By the end of our tasting session,  
I found myself with a new appreciation for  
this once-forbidden elixir. And what better  
place to experience absinthe than in the val-  
ley where it was born?



“ ABSINTHE IS  
AN ACQUIRED  
TASTE, BUT ITS  
COMPLEXITY  
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MORE THAN  
JUST A DRINK—  
IT'S AN  
EXPERIENCE ”



**An Evening in Neuchâtel: Where Tradi-  
tion Meets Modernity**

That evening, we arrived in the town of  
Neuchâtel, where we had a chance to wind  
down and reflect on the day's experiences.  
Neuchâtel, with its medieval streets and  
stunning lakeside views, offers the perfect  
blend of history and modern comfort. Its  
important to mention that the Neuchâtel  
Tourist Card, of which we were all using, of-  
fers visitors free access to a range of attrac-  
tions and public transport within the canton.  
Available to anyone staying for at least one  
night in participating accommodations, the  
card includes museums, boat trips, and  
mountain trains, making it an excellent way  
to explore the region affordably. We strolled  
along the shores of Lake Neuchâtel, where  
the sunset painted the sky in shades of pink  
and gold, before heading to a cozy brasserie  
for dinner.

The local cuisine here is as rich and diverse  
as the region's history. We indulged in clas-



sic Swiss dishes like fondue and rösti, ac-  
companied by local wines (Neuchâtel Non  
Filtré, divine). But, of course, absinthe made  
another appearance, this time in the form of  
an absinthe-infused dessert. It was a sur-  
prisingly delightful twist on the traditional  
crème brûlée, with the herbaceous flavour  
of the absinthe complementing the sweet  
custard perfectly. As the evening drew to a  
close, I realized how much this region had  
enchanted me. Neuchâtel isn't just about  
watches or absinthe—it's about a way of life  
that values craftsmanship, tradition, and the  
slow, deliberate process of creation.

**Enchanted, fairly tale city**

As I left Neuchâtel, I found myself reflecting  
on how this region embodies the essence of  
Switzerland in a way that no glossy tourist  
brochure could ever capture. It's a place of  
quiet excellence, where age-old traditions  
are still alive, and where the green hills  
and clock towers are symbols of a timeless  
commitment to quality. Whether it's the bold  
taste of absinthe or the meticulous craft-  
ing of a Swiss watch, Neuchâtel is a place  
where time, in all its forms, is savoured. The  
trip had opened my eyes not only to the  
region's cultural treasures but also to the  
philosophy that underpins them. And as I  
watched the landscape of Neuchâtel fade  
into the distance, I felt a deep appreciation  
for the craftsmanship, patience, and pride  
that make this corner of Switzerland truly  
special. 🇨🇭

# Left Bank Luxury

**Mark Browne** visited the famous “left bank” area of Paris for *Together Magazine*



With the clamour, disruption and crowds of the Paris Olympic Games now fading into the rearview mirror, but the many urban renovations undertaken for the event still fresh, this may be the perfect time to revisit the “city of light”, Paris. And where better to re-immense oneself in the glory of this world celebrated city than the Left Bank, or «Rive Gauche». Encompassing several districts, including the Latin Quarter and upmarket Saint-Germain-des-Prés this is a vibrant and historically rich area stretching along the southern

side of the Seine River that has long been associated with artists, intellectuals and a Bohemian style of culture. Many view it as embodying the quintessential Parisian experience.

The area has always been influenced by the presence of historic institutions like the Sorbonne University, founded in the 13th century, which has ensured a lively local student population as well as fresh influxes of new arrivals and ideas annually. In fact the area is known for its historic architecture and

landmarks spanning the centuries. These include the mausoleum of Le Panthéon, the museums of Les Invalides (as well as the tomb of Napoleon Bonaparte), the 17th century Luxembourg Gardens and the Musée d’Orsay, now a gallery known for its world class collection of impressionist masterpieces.

Indeed, the Left Bank is perhaps best known for its artistic side. Associated with numerous historic luminaries of both literature and the visual arts, it remains home to numerous theatres and cinemas, showcasing both classic French films and contemporary works as well as the famous (and many lesser known) art galleries.

It also has played host to the social lives of these artists and intellectuals through the years and its streets remain filled with the cafes, bars and restaurants where many of these figures held court in past decades. With most still substantially preserved intact, a visit can constitute a living history



“ THE LEFT BANK IS PERHAPS BEST KNOWN FOR ITS ARTISTIC SIDE”

lesson. It is all too easy to imagine a literary giant of yesteryear appearing for a drink at your side !

Walking the winding cobbled streets of the area and browsing its many boutiques while sightseeing or selecting a suitable spot for refreshment is certainly a pleasure, but a riverboat taxi along the Seine is an experience not to be missed and affords unrivalled views of both banks of the city.

## Where to Stay

A stay in the iconic landmark hotel, the Hotel Lutetia is the ultimate way to indulge yourself on the accommodation front in the left bank area. Located in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, the Hotel Lutetia dates back over a century and is the only luxury Palace level hotel on the Left Bank. The hotel building itself is an architectural masterpiece and a temple to the Art Deco style. It was a pioneering exponent of this style when first constructed in the early nineteenth century and went on to inspire buildings around the world in the following decades. Its history is nicely captured in photography journals available in the hotel itself.

But time has not stood still here – in recent years the hotel has been fully modernised and reinvigorated in a €200 million renovation project. This has ensured that its furnishings reflect the height of French elegance and style while reflecting its historical legacy.





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**“ LUXURY SUITES AT THE HOTEL LUTETIA OFFER EXCEPTIONAL VIEWS OVER PARIS AS WELL AS THE LEVEL OF COMFORT ONLY TO BE FOUND IN A PALACE ”**

Hotel rooms, and especially its luxury Suites, offer exceptional views over Paris as well as the level of comfort only to be found in a palace hotel.

The Hotel has its own wellness centre-Akasha. This was even awarded the accolade of 'Frances' Best Hotel Spa 2023' at the World Spa Awards that year. Quite a feat for a city centre location and clearly a perfect spot to relax after a day of shopping and sightseeing !

The hotel also offers a range of dining and bar options in suitable Parisian style. Two of the most iconic are Le Saint-Germain – a central salon perfect for lunch or afternoon tea crowned by a ceiling comprised of a brightly coloured glass canopy by Fabrice Hyber, and the Bar Aristide. This internal area has the ambience of private club-cum-cigar lounge with dark leather furnishings and is the perfect venue for the weekly jazz evenings hosted there. The perfect way to ignite a Left Bank bohemian feel ! 🎷



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# Williamsburg- Hipster heaven in New York

**Mark Browne** visited the fashionable area of Williamsburg in New York



The city of New York, renowned as a global city and international melting pot, constantly evolves as new commercial and cultural influences come to bear. With the increased gentrification of once edgy neighbourhoods in Manhattan such as the Meat Packing District and Hells Kitchen, younger residents and the artistic community have sought out new enclaves and transformed formerly relatively sleepy

areas of the city into vibrant neighbourhoods.

One of those to have really blossomed in recent years is Williamsburg. Located in the borough of Brooklyn and across the East River from Manhattan, what was once a quiet industrial and residential area has metamorphosed into a trendy hotspot with a distinctly hipster feel, characterised by its



“ WILLIAMSBURG CAN ALSO OFFER A BREAK FROM THE METROPOLITAN ATMOSPHERE OF NEW YORK- BUT WITH GREAT VIEWS BACK ACROSS THE RIVER AT THE SKYSCRAPERS OF MANHATTAN ! ”

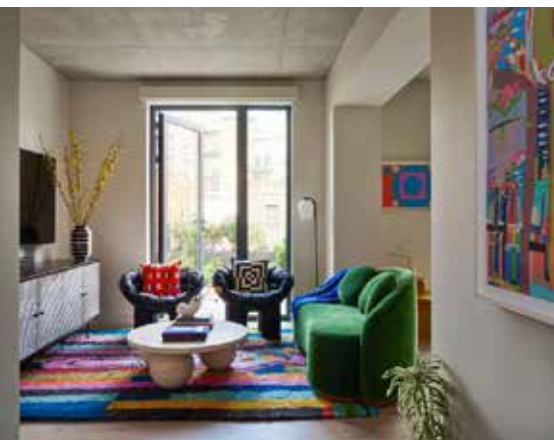
thriving artistic community, busy streets and eclectic collection of coffee houses, restaurants and bars frequented by a youthful and diverse community.

Residents of the neighbourhood in past decades were traditionally typically immigrant communities from Eastern Europe and it retains reminders of its history in the form of historic brownstone houses and churches. Today however many of these serve as galleries, studios or performance spaces adding to the sense of local bohemian charm. Not that there is even any requirement to visit a gallery to see some art locally as the area is renowned for its street art. Many buildings are decorated with extensive and elaborate colourful murals. However, for those with an interest in the area's history and broader cultural influences the Williamsburg Art and Historical centre on Broadway or the City Reliquary Museum on Metropolitan Avenue are two good points of reference to visit.

A primary attraction of the neighbourhood for visitors is its hipster scene. Shop in its great collection of clothing boutiques offering both original and vintage items. Dine in its vast array of culinary locations from gourmet restaurants to food trucks or browse the local artisanal shops and markets for unusual ingredients. Hang out in its trendy bars and coffee shops. Enjoy the live music, performances and shows in its clubs. Williamsburg is certainly a fantastic area for people watching the heterogeneous crowd all also enjoying those same myriad options !

However, its not just another part of the urban jungle. With its riverside location and green spaces like verdant McClaren Park, Williamsburg can also offer a break from the metropolitan atmosphere of New York- but with great views back across the river at the skyscrapers of Manhattan ! Williamsburg offers something for everyone.





**Staying in Willamsburg**

Willamsburg is readily accessible from Manhattan by cab across the Williamsburg bridge or its just a few stops on the sub-way, with three separate lines running through the neighbourhood and one (the L) going straight across to lower Manhattan. Walking or cycling across the Williamsburg bridge is also a popular route and a tourist attraction in its own right ! All of this makes it convenient for a visit but for those who wish to linger to enjoy the local ambience - and nightlife ! -staying locally is the best option. The Penny Hotel situated right in the heart of Williamsburg is a great choice for such a visit. Housed in a modern building with great natural light from its large windows, the hotel has an artistic vibe in keeping with the surrounding area and is richly decorated with original works throughout. It features bedrooms that are surprisingly spacious for New York and are fully equipped to give a comfortable studio apartment fee. Little touches throughout give it an originality and homeliness, adding to this ambience.

However, one of the best features of the hotel is its fashionable rooftop bar and restaurant - elNico. Featuring a modern Mexican themed menu, the high end cuisine is accompanied by fantastic views over Williamsburg and across to the Manhattan skyline beyond. A perfect spot for a date night, whether just enjoying sunset happy hour cocktails such as the signature agave-based blends, or the full dinner experience against the glimmering lights of the city. However, its also a great space to relax over brunch while savouring the daytime view with tasty nibbles high above the bustle of the streets below. Definitely a spot to check out both for hotel guests and those visiting the neighbourhood ! 📍



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# The Diamond of the Alps !

**Mark Browne** explored a diamond of a ski resort in Austria - through a unique crystal lens!



With news of early snow falls in the Alps already, Together Magazine looks at one of the highest Austrian resorts which will soon open. The quest for the greater snow surety afforded by the highest slopes has driven the increased development of once remote hamlets high in the Alps. This has certainly been the case with Gurgl in Ötztal, western Austria. Known as the "Diamond of the Alps", the neighbouring villages of Obergurgl and Hochgurgl which together make up the Gurgl ski area, have been expanded substantially in recent years to cater to the demand for premium level resorts and take advantage of the surround-

ing snowy slopes. These range in altitude from 1,800 metres to over 3,000 metres and this lofty altitude ensures that the resort is among the first to open each season – typically in mid November – and also that it can continue to operate all the way until mid-April.

## Where to Stay

Hotel development has primarily been at the premium level in Gurgl so that there are now over 25 four or five star hotels in the resort, many of which have the fantastic added bonus of being ski-in ski-out venues. A perfect example of this is the impressive

Crystal VAYA Unique Hotel. The VAYA Group has grown in recent years to become the largest Austrian Alpine hotel group, owning and operating almost 30 properties. Accordingly, they certainly know the Austrian market and how to accentuate its premium qualities, all of which are evident in this particular hotel.

The hotel is located at 2,000 metres at the start of the village of Obergurgl. The primary feeder ski lift from Obergurgl, the Festkoglbahn, is directly adjacent to the hotel's ski depot, which itself is accessible from the base of both blue and red pistes for pure ski in-ski out convenience.

The hotel offers a selection of room styles and sizes but all have been finished in first quality Alpine style and most have balconies enjoying commanding views across the surrounding slopes. Its large spa area extends to over 2,000 metres and boasts internal and external pools as well as a range of sauna and steam rooms (with separate textile and nontextile areas available). It also offers ESPA signature treatments onsite. The perfect antidote after a hard day on the slopes ! The hotel's restaurant offers similarly high quality options with a range of authentic local culinary delicacies being served nightly.





**More About Gurgl**

The local ski area includes 112 km of slopes and massive investment in infrastructure in recent years means these are now accessible by 25 lifts, ensuring great access and no waiting time in queues. Night skiing is also available weekly. A variety of terrain is available suitable for all levels of skiing ability, including beginners. However the presence of more challenging pistes and gradients enabled the resort to host the premiere of the AUDI FIS Ski World Cup mens slalom at the start of this season. It has also become a popular training area for competition level skiers from across Europe. Nor does the fun stop there - visitors also have the option of purchasing the Ötztal Super Skipass which also enables access to the other resorts in the Ötztal region (six in total, including Sölden), with a combined ski area of over 330 km with 90 mountain lifts - among the largest areas in Europe !

The development occurring in recent years in this area has been done with an eye to quality and style. Many of the new buildings have been constructed with traditional alpine design elements, often combined with

**“ THE VIEWS OF THE SURROUNDING TERRAIN ARE OUTSTANDING AND TAKE IN THE SWEEPING VALLEY AS WELL AS OVER 20 PEAKS ABOVE 3,000 METRES IN THE SURROUNDING MOUNTAINS ”**

**“ THE LOCAL SKI AREA INCLUDES 112 KM OF SLOPES ”**

a contemporary twist such as extensive use of glass to enable guests to savour the views.

While the resort does have some slopeside bars for typically lively Austrian apres-ski indulgence after a hard day on the slopes, it is significantly less boisterous than the nearby resort of Sölden, making it a preferred choice of families and couples. It attracts a mixed international clientele primarily from across the EU and the UK.

**Other Attractions**

The views of the surrounding terrain are outstanding and take in the sweeping valley as well as over 20 peaks above 3,000 metres in the surrounding mountains. Non-skiing visitors are catered to with pedestrian lift passes allowing them to access these vistas, as well as the various mountain restaurants, viewing points and bars.

A key non winter-sports attraction located in Hochgurgl is the Motorcycle Experience World. This impressive museum features over 400 motorbikes reflecting their full history and development, all housed in an imposing structure boasting a fine slopeside restaurant. Neighbouring Sölden also hosts the inspiring 007 Elements interactive exhibition reflecting the ski related segments featured in James Bond movies. Perfect options if a diversion from active sporting activity is preferred! Complimentary access is however afforded with some ski pass options. In summary, with snow assured, great slopes and quality accommodation, Gurgl is definitely a new horizon worth exploring !

Mark Browne was a guest of the Vaya Group.

①

# Discover Wallonia, a region full of promise

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



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# A Chic Hideaway in the Heart of Brussels



Photo © Sca Art Photography

## Charleroi, the quirky and unusual

Charleroi, a post-industrial city, fascinates those who love urban and/or underground activities. The surrounding area is formed of plateaus, open landscapes punctuated by small woody valleys and listed architectural heritage.

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

## Boucle noire

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

connected to each other by passages, 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. To find out more, simply scan the QR code to open up the artists' Instagram pages, YouTube videos and press articles! The maps are available at the Maison du Tourisme du Pays de Charleroi.

*Maison du Tourisme du Pays de Charleroi*  
Place Charles II, 20 - 6000 Charleroi  
[www.cm-tourisme.be](http://www.cm-tourisme.be)

**Michael Beadling** went to the Sablon area around Brussels to find a chic little hideaway with some gorgeous cocktails

If you're wandering through the vibrant streets of Brussels and looking for a cozy, stylish spot to unwind, Vertigo is the bar that should be on your radar. Nestled in the heart of the city, Vertigo is more than just a place to grab a drink—it's an experience, one that has quietly cultivated a loyal following among locals and travellers alike. From the minute you walk through the door, you're enveloped by a warm, laid-back atmosphere that feels worlds away from the hustle and bustle outside. Vertigo is part speakeasy, part modern café, and it strikes a perfect balance between the two, making it one of Brussels' most talked-about yet discreet hangouts.

## Aesthetic Appeal

The first thing that strikes you about Vertigo is its stylish, retro-chic interior. Exposed brick walls, warm lighting, and vintage furniture give the bar a sense of timeless charm, while modern design elements keep the vibe current and fresh. The décor is cozy without feeling cluttered, elegant yet unpretentious. With its sleek wooden bar, quirky art pieces,



and low-lit ambience, Vertigo feels like the ideal setting for everything from intimate conversations to festive gatherings.

One of the key highlights of Vertigo's design is its versatile layout. The seating arrangement offers a mix of intimate nooks and more open, communal spaces, catering to both large groups and couples seeking a quieter spot. Whether you want to sit by the window and watch the world go by or tuck into a more secluded corner, Vertigo gives you the option. This fluidity in design makes it a favourite among patrons who appreciate a laid-back but thoughtfully curated environment.

## Drinks to Savor

Of course, any great bar experience hinges on the drinks, and Vertigo does not disap-





### Ambiance and Crowd

Vertigo's atmosphere evolves seamlessly throughout the day and night. In the early evening, it's a quieter, more intimate setting—perfect for after-work drinks or a relaxed date night. As the night wears on, the energy picks up, with a lively but still laid-back crowd of locals, expats, and visitors. The background music is always on point: chill and unobtrusive during quieter hours, with a more upbeat, eclectic mix as the bar fills up.

Unlike some of the more tourist-heavy bars in Brussels, Vertigo manages to maintain a distinctively local charm. It's a place where regulars come back time and again, and newcomers are made to feel just as welcome. The crowd is a mix of young professionals, creatives, and discerning drinkers who appreciate good company and good conversation, which gives the bar a distinctly cosmopolitan yet unpretentious feel.

### Service and Atmosphere

What sets Vertigo apart from other bars in Brussels is its excellent service. The staff is attentive but never intrusive, and they strike a perfect balance between professional and personable. You won't find any pretentiousness here; the service is warm, efficient, and designed to make you feel like you're at home—if your home had an exceptional cocktail bar and a top-notch playlist, that is. Vertigo is the kind of bar that draws you in with its unassuming charm and keeps you coming back with its thoughtful, sophisticated vibe. It's a hidden gem in the truest sense—a spot where the drinks are expertly crafted, the atmosphere is always inviting, and the service is consistently warm. Whether you're a local looking for your next favorite bar or a visitor seeking an authentic Brussels experience, Vertigo is worth a visit. It embodies everything you'd want from a great bar: personality, quality, and a laid-back cool that's hard to resist. 🍹

point. The cocktail menu is imaginative and perfectly balanced, offering a mix of classics and house specials. The bartenders here take their craft seriously, but they do so with a relaxed, easy-going demeanour that puts you at ease. Whether you're in the mood for a timeless Negroni, a sophisticated martini, or something more inventive like their signature Vertigo cocktail (which blends gin with a mix of aromatic herbs and a surprising citrus twist), there's something for everyone. For those who prefer wine or beer, Vertigo's selection is well-curated, with a focus on local Belgian brews and international wines that span from crisp whites to robust reds. Beer aficionados will appreciate the attention to detail with which Belgian beers are served, while wine lovers will enjoy the bar's well-rounded list that features both European classics and hidden gems.

The staff's passion for mixology shines through in their careful attention to presentation and flavour profiles. Don't be shy about asking for a recommendation; the bartenders are knowledgeable and genuinely enthusiastic about helping you discover something new. Whether you're a cocktail connoisseur or just looking for a simple, well-poured drink, Vertigo's menu promises quality in every glass.

## A Night at the BOZAR Rooftop Bar: Brussels' Best-Kept Summer Secret

**Martin Nagi** went to check out what the rooftop bar at BOZAR had to offer for *Together Magazine*

Brussels is known for its cultural richness, stunning architecture, and vibrant social scene, but it's also home to some of the city's most hidden gems—one of which is the BOZAR Rooftop Bar. Located on top of the Palais des Beaux-Arts, or BOZAR as locals fondly call it, this rooftop venue offers more than just a place to enjoy a drink. It's an experience that combines panoramic city views, a trendy vibe, and a connection to one of the city's most iconic cultural institutions. After hearing so much about it, I decided to spend an evening there, and it didn't disappoint.

### First Impressions

As I arrived at BOZAR, the sense of history and art that surrounds the building is unmistakable. The Palais des Beaux-Arts is a cultural hub in Brussels, housing exhibitions, performances, and films that draw art lovers from all over. But I was headed straight for the rooftop, which has become a summer hotspot for both locals and tourists.

After a short elevator ride, I stepped out onto the rooftop and was immediately taken in by



the stunning view. From this vantage point, you can see Brussels' skyline in all its glory—from the steeple of the Grand Place to the gleaming EU buildings in the distance. The terrace itself is sleek and minimalist, with a modern aesthetic that complements the classic grandeur of the building below. Stylish lounge seating and high tables are scattered around the space, creating a relaxed but chic atmosphere that invites you to linger long after the sun has set.

Wine & Drink

**The Atmosphere**

What makes the BOZAR Rooftop Bar truly special is its unique blend of art and leisure. You're not just grabbing a drink—you're part of a cultural conversation that happens in one of Brussels' most revered art institutions. On the evening I visited, the crowd was a mix of trendy locals, after-work professionals, and international visitors soaking up the summer ambiance. The energy was lively but laid-back, the kind of place where you can enjoy a good conversation while sipping on a cocktail, all while feeling like you're part of something a little more special than your average bar night.

Adding to the charm was the live DJ spinning a blend of chill electronic beats, setting the perfect mood for a sunset drink. It's clear that BOZAR isn't just offering a rooftop space—they're curating an experience that blends music, art, and socializing in a way that feels organic and relaxed.

**The Drinks: Elevated and Refreshing**

A rooftop bar wouldn't be complete without a well-crafted drink menu, and BOZAR delivers. The cocktail menu features a mix of classics and innovative creations, all made with top-shelf ingredients and a creative flair. I started with their signature cocktail, a refreshing blend of gin, citrus, and a hint of elderflower that was both light and perfectly suited to the warm summer evening.

One of the things I appreciated most about the drinks menu was its focus on local ingredients and brands. The bar prides itself on offering Belgian craft beers, along with a selection of wines and spirits that emphasize local producers. It's a small but thoughtful touch that adds to the overall experience, making you feel even more connected to the city.

For those who prefer non-alcoholic options, BOZAR has an equally impressive selection

of mocktails, and they certainly don't skimp on flavor. I tried the cucumber-lime cooler, a crisp, invigorating drink that was just as satisfying as the boozier options.

**The Food: Light Bites, Big Flavors**

While the drinks are the star of the show, the BOZAR Rooftop Bar also offers a menu of small bites that perfectly complement the relaxed, social atmosphere. The food menu focuses on simple, high-quality ingredients, with a selection of cheese and charcuterie boards, as well as small plates that are perfect for sharing.

I ordered a tapas platter, which arrived beautifully presented with an assortment of marinated olives, cured meats, and artisanal cheeses. The portions were generous, and the quality was top-notch. The pairing of these light bites with a well-mixed cocktail or a crisp Belgian beer makes for a perfect evening, especially if you're looking for something more casual than a full sit-down dinner.

**Why You Should Visit**

The BOZAR Rooftop Bar offers something for everyone, whether you're an art enthusiast looking to continue the BOZAR experience after an exhibition, or just someone who wants to enjoy a drink with one of the best views in the city. Its mix of modern elegance and cultural charm makes it stand out from other rooftop bars in Brussels.

What sets it apart isn't just the stunning skyline views or the expertly crafted drinks; it's the way the rooftop has been seamlessly integrated into the larger cultural fabric of BOZAR. You feel connected to the art, the history, and the city in a way that few other venues can offer. ●



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Dining

## A Taste of Barcelona at The Louise Hotel Brussels - MGallery

**Michael Beadling** was treated to a Spanish gastronomic fiesta as he tasted the new tapas menu designed by Chef Elena and Denisse from the Sofitel Barcelona

This summer, the Louise Hotel- MGallery in Brussels, a sophisticated and stylish spot nestled in the upscale Louise district, is offering something truly special. The hotel has collaborated with the Sofitel Barcelona to bring an authentic taste of Spain to Brussels in the form of an exciting new tapas menu, curated by talented chef Denisse from the renowned Sofitel in Barcelona. As someone who appreciates both great food and vibrant experiences, I couldn't pass up the opportunity to attend the launch event, complete with a live band, mixologist-crafted drinks by Nicola Fenu, and, of course, a chance to dive into these Spanish-inspired delicacies.



The event wasn't just about the food—it was about experiencing a little slice of Spain right here in Brussels. Alongside the unveiling of the tapas menu, the evening marked the launch of the hotel's Autumn activities, making it a lively kick-off for the season.

### Discovering the Tapas

The highlight of the evening, of course, was the chance to explore the new tapas menu. As someone who has travelled to Spain several times, I can confidently say that tapas are much more than just small plates; they're a celebration of flavours, textures, and the joy of sharing food with others. I



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Dining



and dusted with smoky paprika. It's one of those dishes that's deceptively simple but requires great skill to perfect, and it didn't disappoint. The octopus was incredibly tender, and the flavours were balanced beautifully, creating a dish that was both rich and light.

**The Perfect Pairing: Drinks and Music**

Speaking of drinks, the hotel's mixologist, Nicola Fenu was on hand, crafting cocktails that elevated the entire evening. Inspired by both Spanish and Belgian flavours, the cocktails ranged from refreshing, citrusy spritzes to more robust, spirit-forward drinks. I opted for a gin and tonic made with Spanish gin, a generous garnish of herbs, and a splash of Mediterranean tonic water. It was the perfect companion to the tapas, light and zesty with just the right amount of bitterness.

was eager to see how this new collaboration would blend Spanish culinary traditions with a local Brussels twist.

The first round of tapas arrived and immediately transported me to the bustling streets of Barcelona. There was a beautiful array of dishes, each one showcasing the simplicity and boldness of Spanish cuisine. I started with the classic Pan con Tomate, a staple in Spain, and it was everything I hoped for—crispy bread rubbed with garlic and topped with fresh, ripe tomatoes and a drizzle of high-quality olive oil. Sometimes, the simplest dishes are the hardest to get right, but this one nailed it.

Next came the Jamon croquettes, another essential on any tapas menu. These perfectly crisp were served with a spicy, smoky sauce that packed a punch without overpowering the dish. It was clear that the chef from Sofitel Barcelona had infused these traditional recipes with a refined, modern touch while staying true to their roots.

One of the most memorable tapas of the evening was the Pulpo a la Gallega—tender octopus served over a bed of soft potatoes

What really set the evening apart, though, was the atmosphere. The live band created a vibrant backdrop, playing a mix of jazz and upbeat pop, which added an extra layer of enjoyment. The music floated through the open-air terrace, enhancing the laid-back summer vibe. As the night went on, it was easy to get lost in the sounds, the clinking of glasses, and the laughter of fellow diners enjoying the evening's delights.

**The place to be**

The hotel has curated a series of events, from themed nights to live music performances, designed to turn their already popular terrace into an Autumn hotspot. The tapas menu, paired with a rotating selection of live entertainment and craft cocktails, is just the beginning. The hotel has managed to create an environment where you can escape the hustle of the city and unwind in style. Whether you're stopping by for a light bite or settling in for an entire evening of drinks, music, and tapas, the Louise Hotel feels like the place to be this summer. 🍷



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The Hotel & Aparthotel Casteau Resort Mons Soignies is 15 kilometers from the animal park Paira Daiza, the golf courses du Hainaut & "Mont Garni", the "Hippodrome de Wallonie" and 50 kilometers from attractions in Brussels, Belgium. Each well-appointed room (59 rooms and 32 apart-hotels) comes equipped with

satellite television, free WIFI, safe, fridge and bathroom with shower or bath.

Guests enjoy a daily full breakfast and a multilingual staff (English, French, German, Dutch and Italian). This hotel also features a fitness room, a sauna and a jacuzzi, and 3 large meeting rooms for conference and family events (up to 250 persons). A friendly staff is ready to ensure a comfortable and memorable stay.



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Dining

# Dîner dans le Noir: Sensorial extravaganza

**Michael Beadling** dives into the unknown at the new dining in the dark experience at the luxurious Stanhope Hotel Brussels by Thon Hotels



## Arriving at the Venue

As I entered the lobby of the Stanhope, I was greeted by the sight of its lavish décor — crystal chandeliers, velvet armchairs, and polished marble floors. The staff welcomed me with characteristic warmth. I made my way straight to the Stanhope library bar where I ordered a whiskey, neat, and marvelled at the beautiful blend of opulence and hospitality.

Before the dinner, I was briefed on what to expect and was asked of any allergies I may have to certain foods. Phones, watches, and anything that could emit light were strictly prohibited, and they would all be safely stored before the meal. The purpose was to immerse diners fully in the experience, without any distractions. I felt a nervous excitement brewing as I handed over my be-

When I first heard about the concept of dining in complete darkness, my curiosity was instantly piqued. Imagine stripping away the most basic senses we rely on to appreciate food — sight. Would the experience heighten my other senses, or would it be unsettling? When I found out that the Stanhope Hotel Brussels, nestled in the Euro Quarter, offered a «Dining in the Dark» experience, I knew I had to try it.

The Stanhope Hotel itself is the epitome of luxury. It's a place where old-world elegance meets modern refinement, set against the backdrop of Brussels' political and cultural heart.



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Dining

longings, understanding that I was about to surrender my comfort zone.

**Entering the Darkness**

A server guided me, my plus one and the other guests into the dining area. We were in small groups, and each group had a personal guide, someone who had mastered navigating the pitch black (a unique skill requiring weeks of training). As we passed through heavy velvet curtains, I was immediately plunged into a world devoid of light. I couldn't even see my hand in front of my face. Every sound, every whisper, seemed amplified in the absence of sight as I was unable to visually process spatial distance.

The guide instructed us on how to find our seats and place our hands on the table in front of us. I gingerly felt around for my utensils and water glass, my brain already working overtime to compensate for my lost sense of vision. Sitting there in complete darkness, I felt a heightened awareness of the other diners — the shuffling, soft laughter, and occasional clinking of cutlery were suddenly more intimate, as though we were all sharing a secret.

**The Sensory Adventure Begins**

Once settled, the first course was served, and I hadn't a clue what it was. The hotel did not reveal the menu in advance, adding to the suspense. I used my hands to gently explore the plate, trying to identify textures and shapes before attempting to taste anything. My first bite was a revelation. The flavours seemed sharper, more pronounced. Without visual cues, I was relying entirely on taste, smell, and texture.

The starter turned out to be a delicate combination of seafood and citrus, though I only pieced this together through smell and the tangy, refreshing flavours. Each bite felt like a small victory, as if I were discovering a secret through touch and taste. Without the

distraction of presentation, I found myself savouring the food in a way I never had before.

**A Different Kind of Dining Experience**

As the courses progressed, the food continued to surprise and delight. The main course was rich and hearty, with flavours that were earthy and warm — I guessed some kind of braised meat with root vegetables, but I couldn't be sure. Every bite was an exercise in mindfulness, forcing me to slow down and focus entirely on the moment. I tried to imagine what the plate looked like, but after a while, I realised that it didn't matter. My perception of the food was completely independent of its appearance.

The dining experience became more than just about the food. It was a conversation with my senses. Without the usual distractions, I became hyper-aware of the texture of the food — the way it felt on my tongue, how it melted, crunched, or lingered in my mouth. I also noticed that my hearing had become more acute. I could hear the soft rustle of the server's clothes as they moved around, the distant hum of voices from another table, and even the sound of my own breath in the darkness.

“ THE DINING EXPERIENCE BECAME MORE THAN JUST ABOUT THE FOOD. IT WAS A CONVERSATION WITH MY SENSES ”

# EXPERIENCE THE ENCHANTING STANHOPE HOTEL

Step into the world of elegance and tranquillity at the Stanhope Hotel Brussels by Thon Hotels, perfectly positioned between the European Quarter and the Royal Palace. This iconic destination invites you to discover its breathtaking terrace, offering an unparalleled setting for alfresco dining and memorable summer events.

**THE TERRACE OF THE BRIGHTON RESTAURANT**

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From July 21st to August 25th, the Brighton and its terrace will be open only on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings for dinner, offering the perfect setting for sophisticated summer nights.

**A LUXURIOUS RETREAT IN BRUSSELS**

The Stanhope Hotel Brussels, with its 125 elegantly designed rooms, offers a blend of comfort and functionality accented by luxurious golden details. Located in the European Quarter, the hotel is surrounded by a vibrant array of attractions. Explore nearby museums, stunning Art Nouveau architecture, and green oases perfect for relaxation. This prime location makes the Stanhope Hotel Brussels an ideal base for both business and leisure travellers.

Whether you're indulging in exquisite cuisine or enjoying the serene ambiance, your experience will be nothing short of magical. Book your table on our hidden terrace at [brightonrestaurant.be](http://brightonrestaurant.be).





## Dining

**Conversation Without Distraction**

In the dark, conversations took on a new dimension as well. I found myself speaking to my plus one and the other guests in a more thoughtful, deliberate way. We couldn't rely on facial expressions or body language, so we used our words more carefully. The usual small talk quickly gave way to deeper, more meaningful exchanges. I was speaking to strangers, but it felt strangely intimate. Perhaps it was the shared experience of vulnerability — after all, without sight, we were all on an equal footing.

**Dessert and the Final Course**

By the time dessert arrived, I had settled into the rhythm of the experience. The dessert was a blend of creamy and crunchy textures, with flavours that were sweet but not overwhelming. I later learned it was a deconstructed fruit tart, though my own interpretation had been something entirely different. That, I realised, was part of the fun — the guessing game, the way each course challenged my preconceptions about food.

**Emerging from the Darkness**

When the meal was over, we were gently guided back out into the light. The sudden brightness was almost overwhelming, and I blinked, readjusting to the world of sight. Myself and guests were then led to a small presentation room by waiters, as they showcased the meals we had just eaten in a big mystery reveal type finale that was worthy of an episode of *scooby doo* or Agatha Christie novel "Ah-ha! It was beef fillet! I knew it was you all along!". I felt a sense of accomplishment, not only because I had navigated the meal successfully, but because the experience had given me a deeper appreciation for food — not as something to be consumed, but as something to be experienced with all the senses. With a price tag of 158 euros for two people (79 for one), wine pairing included with water, it's an absolute bargain. Stanhope Hotel Brussels also has a special deal whereby you can get 15


**“ IN THE DARK,  
CONVERSATIONS TOOK  
ON A NEW DIMENSION  
AS WELL. I FOUND MY-  
SELF SPEAKING TO MY  
PLUS ONE AND OTHER  
GUESTS IN A MORE  
THOUGHTFUL, DELIBE-  
RATE WAY ”**

percent off if you decide to stay the night at one of their luxurious rooms with breakfast included starting at around 160 euros. Thon, owners of the Stanhope, have done an excellent job.

**Agatha Christie meets Netflix's "love is blind"**

The Dans le noir dinner experience is a breath of fresh air, a dining adventure that's as much about self-discovery as it is about food. A must recommend to couples or singles looking for a meaningful conversation with oneself or to others without distractions in an elegant and mysterious backdrop. The experience can also be personalised to cater to corporate events like team buildings or Christmas dinners. This writer asks, what experience could be more meaningful right now, in a world where people are increasingly questioning the power of imagery and its ability to mask reality, the things we eat, the people we meet, the conversations we have and the choices we make.

Bookings for Stanhope at : [stanhope.be](http://stanhope.be)

Dans le noir reservations at : [brussels.danslenoir.com/reserver-bruxelles.html](http://brussels.danslenoir.com/reserver-bruxelles.html) 

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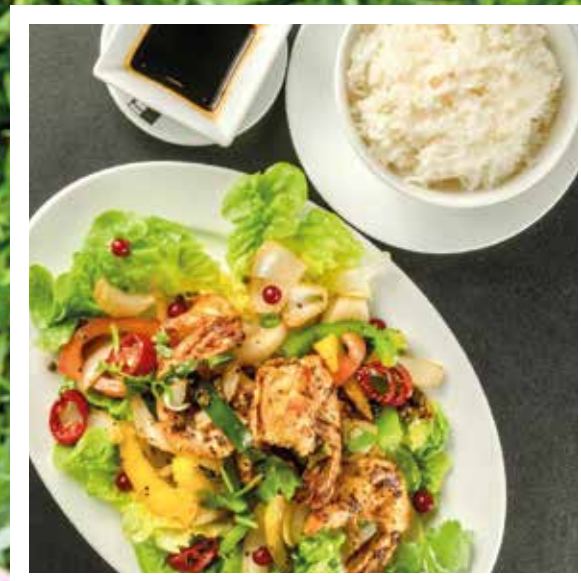
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# Van der Valk Nivelles-Sud: A Business Haven in the Heart of Belgium



Situated just south of Brussels, Van der Valk Hotel Nivelles-Sud offers a perfect balance between accessibility to the capital's business districts and a serene setting away from the city's chaos. Only a twenty-minute train ride from Brussels Gare du Midi, it provides business travelers with a tranquil escape that remains well-connected to major hubs.

## A Prime Location for Business

Van der Valk Nivelles-Sud is ideally positioned for those looking to avoid the congestion of Brussels. Its proximity to key business areas such as Brussels South Charleroi

Airport and Walloon Brabant ensures easy access. Moreover, the hotel's strategic location near highways guarantees seamless travel to Brussels and beyond, making it a top choice for both local and international business ventures.

## Accommodations Tailored for Comfort

Upon arrival, guests are welcomed into a sophisticated atmosphere, with 155 luxurious rooms ranging from elegant standard rooms to spacious suites. Refurbished in 2019, each room features modern amenities, plush furnishings, and tasteful décor, offering a restful retreat after a busy day.

## Business-Centric Facilities

The hotel's dedication to meeting the needs of business travelers is evident in its 15 cutting-edge meeting rooms, equipped with the latest technology for events of all sizes. High-speed Wi-Fi, ergonomic workspaces, and a suite of business services ensure guests remain connected and productive throughout their stay.

## Culinary Excellence

Dining at Van der Valk Nivelles-Sud is an experience in itself. The hotel's restaurant serves a variety of dishes, blending traditional Belgian flavors with international cuisine, all prepared using the finest local ingredients. Guests can enjoy a relaxed meal at the bar, where handcrafted cocktails and premium spirits add to the sophisticated ambiance.

## Wellness and Relaxation

Kineo's wellness center provides guests with ample opportunities to unwind. Whether indulging in a massage, using the fitness facilities, or exploring the nearby green spaces for a brisk walk, relaxation is always within reach.

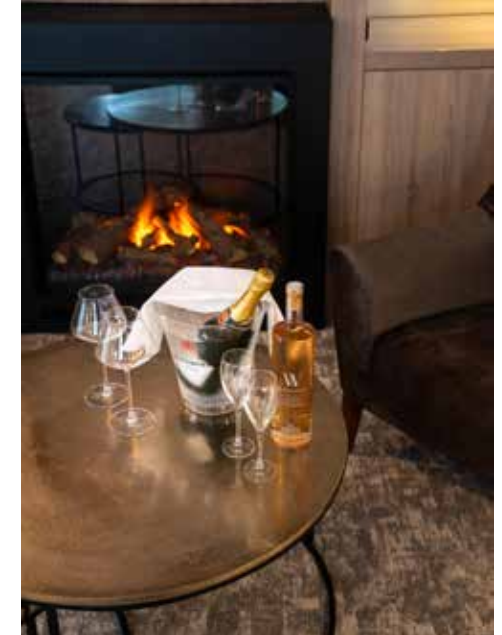
## Exceptional Service and Personalized Attention

Van der Valk Nivelles-Sud is distinguished by its commitment to outstanding service. From check-in to departure, the staff goes the extra mile to cater to every need, ensuring that every stay is comfortable and memorable.

## Exploring Belgium's Cultural Riches

While perfect for business, the hotel's location also offers easy access to Belgium's cultural treasures. From the UNESCO-listed Canal du Centre to the majestic Villers Abbey, and vibrant cities like Brussels, Bruges, and Antwerp, there's no shortage of nearby attractions for memorable excursions. [📍](#)

Discover our autumn deals



What's on

# The Timeless Legacy of Hans/ Jean & Sophie Taeuber-Arp

*Together magazine* suggests heading to the BOZAR this Autumn for inspirational art in Hans/Jean Arp & Sophie Taeuber-Ar



This autumn, the BOZAR Center for Fine Arts in Brussels hosts a remarkable exhibition that celebrates two of the 20th century's most influential avant-garde artists: Hans/Jean Arp and Sophie Taeuber-Arp. Running from September 20, 2024, to January 19, 2025, this exhibition promises to provide a rich and immersive journey through the creative worlds of these artists whose radical innovations shaped the trajectory of modern art. By showcasing their individual works and collaborative projects, BOZAR offers an insightful look into the lives and contributions of this power couple who were instrumental in movements like Dada, Surrealism, and Constructivism.

## A Dynamic Duo of the Avant-Garde

Hans/Jean Arp (1886–1966), a French-German sculptor, painter, and poet, was one of the key figures of the European avant-garde. He co-founded the Dada movement in Zurich during World War I, a radical response to the war's chaos, which rejected the traditional values of art. His work is known for its organic forms, abstract shapes, and surrealist humor, often reflecting the fluidity between nature and the human body. His abstract sculptures, reliefs, and collages sought to express the subconscious and break free from rigid artistic norms.

Sophie Taeuber-Arp (1889–1943) was an equally pioneering figure in modern art. Trained as a textile designer and dancer, she expanded her influence across painting, sculpture, performance, and interior design. Taeuber-Arp's works are characterized by their geometric precision, rhythmic abstraction, and a fascination with color and form. Her work bridged the worlds of applied and fine arts, often blending functionalism with a deep sense of beauty, something that made her unique in a male-dominated art world.

Though both Hans/Jean and Sophie made their marks individually, their collaborations are what set them apart. Together, they were not only partners in life but also in creative innovation, challenging each other's ideas and pushing the boundaries of artistic expression. Their joint ventures ranged from architectural projects to experimental artworks that fused painting, sculpture, and design into one coherent vision.

## The Exhibition: Exploring Individual Genius and Joint Contributions

BOZAR's exhibition highlights both their individual achievements and their collaborative efforts. By presenting works in various media—including sculpture, painting, textile design, and even architecture—the exhibition reveals the depth of their interdisciplinary approach. For many visitors, this will be the first time they experience such a comprehensive collection of the Arps' work, as the exhibition brings together pieces from prestigious museums and private collections worldwide.

“HER GEOMETRIC PAINTINGS AND TEXTILE WORKS, ROOTED IN ABSTRACTION AND SYMMETRY, ARE BOTH MODERN AND TIMELESS, WITH ECHOES OF CONSTRUCTIVISM AND DE STIJL ”



A significant portion of the exhibition is dedicated to Sophie Taeuber-Arp's lesser-known contributions, reaffirming her status as one of the most important abstract artists of the 20th century. She was one of the few women to gain recognition in the avant-garde, but her multidisciplinary approach has long been overshadowed by more traditional male narratives in art history. BOZAR's curators, in this instance, have been intentional in redressing that imbalance, giving her the prominent focus she deserves.

Her geometric paintings and textile works, rooted in abstraction and symmetry, are both modern and timeless, with echoes of Constructivism and De Stijl. This exhibition showcases pieces like *Composition Dada* (1920) and her delicate beadwork, which serve as an excellent reminder of her innovation in both fine and applied arts. The



## What's on

show will also delve into her stage work, including set designs for Dada performances, where she merged movement, color, and form in groundbreaking ways.

Hans/Jean Arp's contributions are just as significant, with the exhibition displaying some of his most iconic works like *Ptolemy* (1953) and *Sculpture to be Lost in the Forest* (1932), illustrating his organic, biomorphic style that blurred the lines between sculpture and nature. His pieces evoke fluidity and playfulness, challenging the conventional notions of artistic composition, materials, and expression. Arp's poetry, which shares the same playful and abstract spirit as his visual work, is also on display, allowing visitors to experience the full range of his creative output.

**A Love Story of Creative Collaboration**

The exhibition not only highlights their individual artistic achievements but also delves into their romantic and intellectual partnership. Hans/Jean and Sophie Taeuber-Arp met in 1915 in Zurich, and their mutual admiration for each other's work fostered a deep creative partnership. Together, they experimented with abstract forms, non-representational art, and new methods of artistic expression. They collaborated on architectural and design projects, most notably the interior design for the *Aubette* in Strasbourg (1926–1928), an avant-garde masterpiece that combined color, form, and space in a revolutionary manner.

This exhibition invites viewers to consider the significance of this collaborative dynamic, showcasing how their dialogue—both personal and artistic—reshaped the avant-garde. They questioned traditional hierarchies between the fine and applied arts, as well as the boundaries between artistic disciplines, resulting in a unique and forward-thinking body of work that continues to influence contemporary artists today.

**Relevance in the 21st Century**

The works of Hans/Jean Arp and Sophie Taeuber-Arp remain deeply relevant in today's artistic and cultural landscape. Their defiance of boundaries, both in life and in art, resonates with contemporary movements that value fluidity, interdisciplinarity, and inclusivity. In an age where artists are increasingly moving across media and disciplines, the Arps' visionary work offers a valuable historical precedent for the interconnectedness of art, design, and life.

BOZAR's exhibition provides a unique opportunity to experience their legacy firsthand, offering a fresh perspective on two individuals who were ahead of their time. The exhibition is not merely a retrospective but a celebration of the innovative spirit that still defines modern and contemporary art. With its thoughtful curation and extensive collection of works, it invites visitors to reflect on how these pioneering artists continue to inspire new generations.

Whether you're an art aficionado, a student of modernism, or simply curious about the avant-garde, this exhibition at BOZAR is an unmissable event that promises to enrich your understanding of art history and the creative potential of collaboration.

BOZAR (20 Sept 2024 – 19 Jan 2025) 📍

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# BREAKING NEWS

## Elliott Erwitt Retrospective

Michael Beadling went to take a closer look at the photographic works of Elliott Erwitt: A Celebration of Wit, Humanity, and Timeless Photography in Brussels



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Brussels will host an extraordinary retrospective of the legendary photographer Elliott Erwitt at the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium. This long-awaited exhibition offers a comprehensive look at Erwitt's iconic body of work, spanning more than seven decades. Known for his keen sense of humor, poignant observations, and ability to capture fleeting moments of humanity, Erwitt's photography transcends time, place, and culture.

The Brussels exhibition will showcase over 200 of Erwitt's most famous black-and-white images, along with rarely seen works that demonstrate the depth and diversity of his career. For both seasoned admirers and

newcomers to Erwitt's work, this exhibition promises an intimate journey through the lens of a photographer who has shaped the way we see the world.

#### A Life Behind the Lens

Born in Paris in 1928 to Russian émigré parents, Elliott Erwitt moved to the United States as a child, where he eventually found his way into photography. His career took off in the late 1940s, and by the 1950s, he had joined the prestigious Magnum Photos, a cooperative agency founded by some of the 20th century's most influential photographers, including Henri Cartier-Bresson and Robert Capa. Erwitt quickly became known for his ability to capture candid, of-



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ten humorous moments in everyday life, a style that set him apart in the world of photojournalism.

Though Erwitte has worked as a commercial photographer, director, and documentarian, it's his personal photography—full of irony, tenderness, and wit—that has solidified his status as one of the greats. His images of dogs, presidents, celebrities, and ordinary people offer a unique window into the human condition, often blending the absurd with the deeply moving.

#### The Exhibition: Iconic Moments and Hidden Gems

The Elliott Erwitte retrospective in Brussels will provide a sweeping overview of his prolific career. Divided into thematic sections, the exhibition will explore his most famous works while delving into lesser-known projects. The chronological and thematic layout allows visitors to see the evolution of Erwitte's style, from his early works documenting post-war America to his more personal and introspective later projects.

One of the highlights of the exhibition is Erwitte's series on dogs, an enduring subject throughout his career. Known for his

lighthearted yet profoundly empathetic portraits of dogs, Erwitte's canine photographs are a delightful study in personality and emotion. Images like *Dog with Rubber Bone* (New York, 1974) and *Paris, France, 1989* (the small dog peering from beneath a large man's coat) are emblematic of his ability to find humor in the everyday. The exhibition will present this collection in its full glory, reminding visitors that Erwitte's love for dogs is as much about capturing the human spirit as it is about the animals themselves.

Another section focuses on Erwitte's exploration of political and historical figures, offering a more serious tone. His 1963 photograph of Jacqueline Kennedy at her husband's funeral is one of the most iconic images in American history, capturing the profound grief of a widow and a nation. Similarly, his photographs of Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev's famous «Kitchen Debate» in Moscow, also from 1963, show his knack for being in the right place at the right time, as well as his gift for capturing the underlying tension in a seemingly mundane moment.

Of course, Erwitte's celebrity portraits also feature prominently in the exhibition. His images of Marilyn Monroe, Che Guevara, and Fidel Castro stand as iconic portraits of 20th-century figures, blending glamour and naturalism in a way only Erwitte could achieve. His 1956 portrait of Marilyn Monroe on the set of *The Seven Year Itch* reveals her radiance and vulnerability, a moment of calm amid the chaos of her fame.

However, the exhibition doesn't stop at Erwitte's greatest hits. It also offers a glimpse into some of his more experimental work, including his self-portraits and personal projects, which are lesser-known but just as impactful. His irreverent self-portraits, often featuring a playful twist or humorous touch, highlight the photographer's wry wit and ability to see the world with a critical, yet affectionate, eye.

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“ ERWITT’S WORK HAS ALWAYS BEEN DISTINGUISHED BY ITS HUMOR AND HUMANITY. HE HAS A REMARKABLE ABILITY TO FIND HUMOR IN LIFE’S LITTLE ABSURDITIES ”



#### **Humor, Humanity, and Timelessness**

Erwitt's work has always been distinguished by its humor and humanity. He has a remarkable ability to find humor in life's little absurdities, transforming mundane moments into something extraordinary. His photographs, though often playful, are never frivolous. They show us how to laugh at ourselves and the world around us, but also to reflect on the deeper truths hidden in everyday life.

What makes Erwitt's photography so timeless is its accessibility. Whether you are a photography enthusiast or someone simply drawn to the beauty and emotion of a well-composed image, Erwitt's work speaks to everyone. His photographs of people from all walks of life—whether they're political leaders, celebrities, or anonymous passersby—invite us to see the common thread of humanity that unites us all.

The Brussels exhibition is particularly special as it not only showcases Erwitt's iconic works but also brings to light photographs that have rarely been exhibited before. This

retrospective will give visitors a unique opportunity to explore the breadth of his career and appreciate the consistency with which Erwitt approached his craft. Through his lens, we are reminded that art, and life, are about the moments in between—the fleeting glances, the small gestures, the unexpected juxtapositions.

#### **A Must-See for Photography Lovers**

As one of the most influential photographers of the 20th century, Elliott Erwitt's retrospective is an essential stop for anyone with a passion for photography or an interest in visual storytelling. This exhibition offers an opportunity to experience Erwitt's wit, compassion, and sharp eye for detail up close, celebrating a career that has spanned decades and touched millions of lives.

Running until January 5, 2025, at the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, the exhibition is a must-see for those in Brussels and beyond. It is a rare chance to engage with the work of a photographer who has shaped the way we see the world, one frame at a time. 📍

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# Harry Potter: Visions of Magic

Together magazine suggests an enchanting experience at Tour & Taxis in Brussels



This summer, the magic of Harry Potter is set to cast its spell over Brussels as the highly anticipated Harry Potter: Visions of Magic exhibition arrives at the Tour & Taxis venue. Running from July 26, 2024, to October 31, 2024, this immersive experience offers fans of all ages a unique opportunity to step into the Wizarding World and explore its most iconic moments, characters, and settings. Whether you're a die-hard fan of the series or simply curious about the magical universe that has captivated millions, this exhibition promises an unforgettable journey through the heart of J.K. Rowling's beloved creation.

## The Perfect Setting: Tour & Taxis

Tour & Taxis, a historic venue in Brussels

known for hosting large-scale exhibitions, provides the ideal backdrop for the Visions of Magic experience. With its vast industrial architecture and rich cultural history, the space lends itself to the grandeur and wonder of the Harry Potter universe. The exhibition transforms the venue into a series of magical landscapes, creating an immersive atmosphere where visitors can feel as though they've stepped right into the pages of the books or scenes from the films.

From the moment you enter, the experience is designed to engage all the senses, with detailed sets, interactive displays, and state-of-the-art technology combining to create an environment where magic feels real. The Tour & Taxis location not only brings a sense

of authenticity to the exhibition but also provides ample space for the many large-scale installations and interactive elements that make Visions of Magic so special.

## A Journey Through the Wizarding World

As visitors walk through the exhibition, they are taken on a journey through some of the most memorable locations and moments from the Harry Potter series. The journey begins with an iconic entrance at Platform 9  $\frac{3}{4}$ , where fans can pose for pictures as they «run» through the brick wall to board the Hogwarts Express. Once inside, visitors are guided through meticulously recreated sets and environments, each one representing a different aspect of the Wizarding World.

One of the major highlights is the Hogwarts section, where visitors can explore classrooms like Potions, Defense Against the Dark Arts, and Transfiguration. Each room is filled with authentic props and interactive displays, allowing fans to engage with the magical curriculum. For instance, in the Potions Classroom, you can «brew» your own potion using augmented reality technology, while in Defense Against the Dark Arts, you can practice casting spells and dueling with wands.

The Forbidden Forest, another immersive part of the exhibition, invites visitors to explore the dark and mysterious woodland where creatures like Hippogriffs, Acromantulas, and centaurs lurk. With its lifelike sets, animatronics, and sound effects, the forest offers a thrilling experience that will transport visitors into the depths of Harry Potter's magical world.

## Magic, Art, and Design

Beyond the interactive fun, Harry Potter: Visions of Magic also offers an in-depth look at the artistic vision behind the films and books. Visitors will be treated to a display of original concept art, set designs, and behind-the-scenes material that reveal how



“ BEYOND THE INTERACTIVE FUN, HARRY POTTER: VISIONS OF MAGIC ALSO OFFERS AN IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE ARTISTIC VISION BEHIND THE FILMS AND BOOKS ”

the Wizarding World was brought to life on screen. These artistic elements provide a fascinating glimpse into the craftsmanship and creativity that went into creating the magical environments and characters that fans know and love.

One section of the exhibition focuses on the creation of magical creatures, showcasing models, sketches, and digital renderings of everything from house-elves like Dobby to the majestic Hippogriff, Buckbeak. Visitors can explore how these creatures were conceived, designed, and brought to life using a combination of practical effects and cutting-edge CGI.



visitors can hop on a broomstick and take part in a thrilling Quidditch match. Using VR headsets and motion-sensor technology, players will get the chance to chase the Golden Snitch, block Bludgers, and feel what it's like to soar above the Hogwarts Quidditch pitch.

Children, in particular, will enjoy the magical scavenger hunt that runs throughout the exhibition, where they can search for hidden objects and clues tied to famous spells and artifacts from the series. These interactive elements make the exhibition a truly family-friendly experience, offering something for fans of all ages to enjoy.

#### A Must-See Event for Harry Potter Fans

Harry Potter: Visions of Magic at Tour & Taxis is more than just an exhibition; it's an immersive adventure into the heart of the Wizarding World. With its combination of interactive experiences, artistic displays, and authentic recreations of iconic settings, the exhibition provides a deep and engaging look at what makes the Harry Potter series so enduringly magical.

Running from July 26, 2024, to October 31, 2024, this limited-time event is a must-see for fans across Belgium and beyond. Whether you grew up reading the books, watching the films, or are introducing the series to a new generation, Visions of Magic offers a unique and unforgettable way to experience the world of Harry Potter.

As tickets are expected to sell quickly, fans are encouraged to book in advance to secure their spot in this enchanting journey. Whether you're attending for the interactive magic, the artistic craftsmanship, or simply to relive the magic of the books and films, Harry Potter: Visions of Magic is sure to leave you spellbound. 🪄

For fashion enthusiasts, the exhibition also displays a selection of costumes worn by the cast in the Harry Potter films. From Harry's Gryffindor robes to Professor McGonagall's iconic witch's hat, the costumes offer insight into the careful attention to detail that went into creating each character's look. Alongside these costumes are descriptions of the design process, offering a behind-the-scenes look at the work of the talented costume designers who helped shape the visual identity of the films.

#### Interactive Magic for All Ages

What truly sets Harry Potter: Visions of Magic apart from other exhibitions is its emphasis on interactive, hands-on experiences. Visitors aren't just passive observers; they become active participants in the magical world. The exhibition features numerous interactive elements, allowing fans to cast spells, solve magical puzzles, and even engage in wand duels.

One of the most exciting features is the virtual reality Quidditch experience, where

## Alexandre Farto (aka Vhils): MULTITUDE Solo Exhibition

*Together Magazine* invites visitors to delve into the profound, textured world of Vhils, where destruction leads to creation, and every layer peeled away uncovers a new story



From June 28, 2024, to January 5, 2025, the MIMA Museum of Arts in Brussels will host MULTITUDE, a solo exhibition by the renowned Portuguese artist Alexandre Farto, better known as Vhils. Known for his unique and powerful artistic style, Vhils has gained international recognition for creating arresting portraits using a technique of etching and sculpting into walls, often incorporating urban decay and industrial materials into his works.

This exhibition promises to be a deeply evocative exploration of identity, urban space, and the collective human experience, capturing the attention of art enthusiasts and casual visitors alike.

#### The Artist Behind the Exhibition

Alexandre Farto, born in 1987 in Lisbon, emerged as one of the most influential artists of the contemporary urban art scene. Initially beginning his career as a street artist, Vhils developed his distinctive tech-



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nique of «destruction» to create portraits that reflect the essence of city life. Rather than adding layers, as many graffiti artists do, he removes material—chipping away at walls, carving into plaster, and even using explosives to reveal the deeper narrative hidden within a city's surface. His process challenges traditional perceptions of street art by using the very fabric of urban environments to shape his pieces.

Vhils' art, though often rooted in destruction, speaks of creation. His work examines the interactions between human beings and the environments they inhabit, revealing the tensions between individuals and society, past and present, and permanence and transience. With a career that spans continents, his murals and installations have appeared across cities in Europe, the Americas, Asia, and beyond, bringing global acclaim.

**MULTITUDE: A New Perspective**

MULTITUDE, Vhils' solo exhibition at the MIMA Museum, will explore the layers of human existence and the complexity of identity in an increasingly urbanized world. The title itself hints at the recurring theme of multiplicity that runs through his work—the multitude of lives, faces, and stories that cities contain within their walls. Vhils, as an artist, continuously questions what remains beneath the surface of urban facades, revealing the individual and collective history hidden underneath modern life's superficial layers.

**The Artistic Technique: Destruction as Creation**

Central to Vhils' method is his approach to urban surfaces as canvases. In a city, walls represent both a barrier and a reflection of history, society, and culture. Vhils redefines this dynamic by stripping away layers of materials—plaster, concrete, brick, and even advertisements—to uncover faces that symbolize the people who are often overlooked

**“MULTITUDE, VHILS' SOLO EXHIBITION AT THE MIMA MUSEUM, WILL EXPLORE THE LAYERS OF HUMAN EXISTENCE AND THE COMPLEXITY OF IDENTITY IN AN INCREASINGLY URBANIZED WORLD”**

in the hustle of urban life. In MULTITUDE, visitors will witness his painstaking craft up close, from the textured walls of his etched portraits to his newer works that experiment with multimedia formats, such as video and sculpture.

Etching into Urban Walls: Vhils' trademark technique involves removing layers of buildings' surfaces to reveal an image underneath. This approach metaphorically underscores the idea that our identities, like cities themselves, are constructed of many layers—social, historical, and personal.

Explosive Art: Some of his large-scale portraits are created using controlled explosions, symbolizing how urbanization and industrialization often disrupt individual lives. These explosive murals reflect both the destruction and creation inherent in city life, showing the fragility and resilience of human existence.

Multimedia and Immersive Installations: Vhils' work has evolved beyond traditional graffiti or street art, moving toward immersive installations that combine video, sound,

and sculpture. In MULTITUDE, these elements will likely be used to further enhance the theme of collective identity, giving the exhibition a modern, dynamic feel.

**The Themes: Urban Identity, Memory, and Change**

At the heart of MULTITUDE is the concept of urban identity—how cities, with all their complexity and chaos, shape and reflect human lives. Vhils' work speaks to the invisible connections between people and their environments, highlighting how cities are built not just from concrete and steel, but from the memories, struggles, and stories of their inhabitants.

One of Vhils' key concerns is the erasure of memory in modern urbanization. His work often points to the way development and progress erase traces of the past—destroying not just old buildings but the memories they hold. In Brussels, a city with a rich history of urban change and architectural reinvention, MULTITUDE will resonate deeply. Visitors will recognize the themes of identity, impermanence, and transformation that are so central to the experience of living in a modern metropolis.

The portraits in the exhibition, whether carved into walls or displayed through mixed media, speak to a universal human experience. The faces Vhils reveals are not just individuals; they are symbols of collective existence. They evoke a multitude of lives lived in the shadows of urban landscapes, each face a testament to the stories that often go untold amidst the relentless progress of modern cities.

**Why Visit MULTITUDE?**

MULTITUDE offers a rare opportunity to experience Vhils' work in an intimate setting, allowing visitors to engage directly with the themes that have made him a globally recognized artist. The exhibition at the MIMA Museum will be a deeply immersive experience



that invites viewers to think critically about the role of urban spaces in shaping identity and memory.

For Brussels, a city rich in history and transformation, Vhils' exploration of the connections between people and their surroundings will feel especially poignant. His work not only celebrates the resilience of individuals but also challenges us to consider what is lost—and gained—in the name of progress.

As the MIMA Museum opens its doors to MULTITUDE, the exhibition stands as a reflection of the complexities of urban life and identity, revealing the hidden layers of history, memory, and human connection. For anyone with an interest in contemporary art, urbanism, or simply the stories that cities hold within their walls, this exhibition is not to be missed. 📍

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# A Night of Enchantment: The Candlelight Concert Series Celebrates Hans Zimmer

*Together magazine* recommends a candle-themed night to remember!



In the heart of Brussels, a captivating concert experience is taking the city by storm. The Candlelight Concert Series, known for its enchanting ambiance and extraordinary musical performances, is shining a spotlight on the legendary film composer Hans Zimmer. This unique event invites audiences to step into a world where candlelight flickers, music soars, and emotions run deep.

### The Magic of Candlelight Concerts

The Candlelight Concerts have become a beloved phenomenon in cities around the globe, combining the intimacy of chamber music with the grandeur of orchestral arrangements. Set in stunning venues that often feature historic architecture, these concerts create a warm, inviting atmosphere where the soft glow of candlelight envelops the audience.

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In Brussels, the series has taken on a life of its own, attracting locals and visitors alike who seek a memorable night out. The concerts are designed to highlight a range of musical genres, but the tribute to Hans Zimmer stands out, celebrating the iconic scores that have defined modern cinema.

**Hans Zimmer: The Maestro of Film Music**

Hans Zimmer, a German-born composer, has redefined film music with his innovative approach and unmatched ability to evoke emotion. With a career spanning over three decades, Zimmer has crafted some of the most memorable scores in cinematic history, from the sweeping melodies of *The Lion King* to the adrenaline-fueled rhythms of *Inception*. His work blends traditional orchestration with modern electronic elements, creating a sound that resonates with audiences worldwide.

Zimmer's collaboration with filmmakers such as Christopher Nolan and Ridley Scott has produced iconic soundtracks that enhance the narrative and emotional depth of the films they accompany. His compositions are not just background music; they are integral to the storytelling process, drawing viewers into the worlds he helps create.

**An Immersive Experience**

Attending a Candlelight Concert dedicated to Hans Zimmer is a multi-sensory experience. As the audience enters the venue, they are greeted by the soft flicker of candles, casting a warm glow that sets the stage for an evening of musical exploration. The atmosphere is intimate, allowing for a deeper connection between the performers and the audience.

The concerts typically feature a string quartet or ensemble, meticulously arranged to showcase Zimmer's works in a new light. Each performance includes a carefully selected repertoire that highlights the emotional arcs of Zimmer's most famous scores.

From the heartwarming themes of *The Lion King* to the haunting melodies of *Interstellar*, the arrangements breathe new life into the beloved music, allowing attendees to experience it in a fresh and evocative way.

As the musicians take the stage, the room falls silent, and the audience is transported. The combination of live performance and candlelight creates a unique atmosphere where every note resonates deeply. Listeners are invited to not just hear the music but to feel it, as the strings soar and weave through the narratives of love, adventure, and introspection that Zimmer's compositions encapsulate.

**The Venue: A Historical Backdrop**

The choice of venue plays a crucial role in the overall experience of the Candlelight Concerts. In Brussels, concerts are often held in beautiful historic sites, such as churches or grand halls, where the architecture adds to the enchantment. The soaring ceilings, intricate details, and natural acoustics create an immersive environment that enhances the performance.

One such venue is the stunning Église de la Madeleine, known for its beautiful neo-classical architecture and impressive acoustics. As attendees settle into their seats, the anticipation builds, and the historic backdrop amplifies the emotional weight of the music. The flickering candles reflect off the ornate details of the space, creating a visual feast that complements the auditory experience.

“ THE ATMOSPHERE IS INTIMATE, ALLOWING FOR A DEEPER CONNECTION BETWEEN THE PERFORMERS AND THE AUDIENCE ”

**A Sense of Community**

One of the most remarkable aspects of the Candlelight Concerts is the sense of community that develops among attendees. In a world where concerts often feel like impersonal gatherings, the intimacy of the Candlelight series fosters connections between audience members. Shared moments of awe, laughter, and reflection fill the room, creating a bond that transcends the performance itself.

As people gather, they come together to celebrate not only the music of Hans Zimmer but also the shared human experience. Whether it's a couple on a date night, a group of friends celebrating a special occasion, or solo attendees seeking solace in the music, everyone is united in their appreciation for the art being presented.

**The Power of Film Music**

The appeal of Zimmer's music extends beyond his film scores; it taps into universal emotions that resonate with audiences of all ages. The themes of love, loss, courage, and adventure are woven throughout his compositions, making them relatable and deeply affecting. The Candlelight Concerts bring these themes to life, inviting listeners to reflect on their own journeys as they experience the music.

Each piece performed at the concert carries its own story, allowing the audience to connect personally with the material. For many, the music evokes memories of beloved films, while for others, it serves as a soundtrack to their own life experiences. The Candlelight Concert becomes a space for both collective enjoyment and personal reflection, as audiences engage with the music on multiple levels.

**A Growing Phenomenon**

The Candlelight Concert series has seen a surge in popularity, and the tribute to Hans Zimmer is one of the highlights. The de-

mand for these concerts is a testament to the timeless appeal of Zimmer's work and the unique format of the performances.

In Brussels, the series has become a cultural staple, with sold-out shows and enthusiastic audiences. The ability to experience world-class music in an intimate setting has made the Candlelight Concerts a sought-after event for both locals and tourists. As more people discover the magic of this series, the excitement only continues to grow.

**A Night to Remember**

As the final notes of the concert resonate through the venue, the audience is left in a state of reflection and awe. The Candlelight Concert dedicated to Hans Zimmer is not just a musical performance; it's a transformative experience that lingers long after the candles are extinguished.

For those who attend, it's an opportunity to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life, to immerse themselves in the beauty of music, and to connect with fellow attendees in a shared celebration of art. Whether you're a lifelong fan of Hans Zimmer or a newcomer to his work, the Candlelight Concert promises an unforgettable evening that will stay in your heart and mind for years to come.

In a city rich with history and culture, the Candlelight Concerts serve as a reminder of the power of music to unite, inspire, and evoke the deepest of emotions. The tribute to Hans Zimmer is a shining example of how art can illuminate even the darkest of nights, creating a space where memories are made and stories are shared, all under the gentle glow of candlelight.

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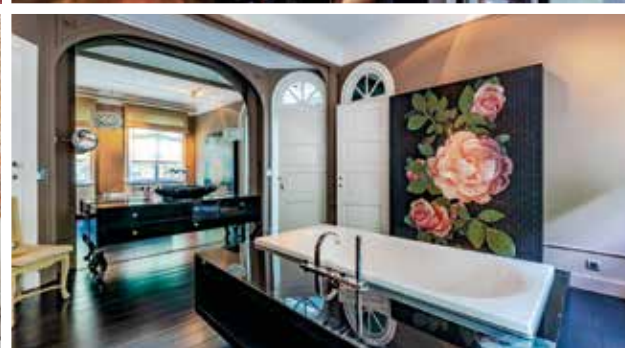
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