

MARYLEBONE JOURNAL

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CHRISTMAS SPARKLE

BARBARA WINDSOR,
GIFT IDEAS AND
THE CONRAN GUIDE
TO CHRISTMAS

LA BELLA FIGURA
THE WORLD
OF BELLA FREUD

BEATLES FOR SALE
HOW THE FAB FOUR
BECAME SHOPKEEPERS

SPANISH GOLD
A WEALTH OF
IBERIAN ARTISTRY



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BAR FLY MARK RIDDAWAY

I was once the face of British cocktails. I'd just finished a meeting in The Langham's spectacular Artesian bar one quiet weekday afternoon when a photographer approached saying she'd been asked to take pictures for a major feature in the New York Times about how London had become the drinks capital of the world—but there was hardly anyone in the bar and absolutely no one drinking cocktails. Moved by her plight, I posed with a drink, pretending to be a suave man with loads of friends just out of frame. Two weeks later, there I was on the front cover of the Dining Out supplement of America's greatest newspaper, brandishing an elaborate cocktail (rum, banana liqueur and 20-year-old sherry, if I remember correctly) and looking, to the untrained eye, like a bit of a tool.

Ironically, back then there were few people in London less likely to visit a cocktail bar. I wanted my drink poured into a pint glass, not fuffed around with by a hipster with a muddler and a blow torch; I wanted it served in less than a minute, and I definitely wanted change from a tenner. Recently, though, I've started to see the light. Marylebone has some fantastic bars—one of which, Purl, is the focus of our lead feature in this issue—and I've been quietly seduced by their sophistication and earnest drinks geekery. It may be time for me to be the face of British cocktails again. If any drinks brands, bars or massive US newspapers need a cocktail model, I'm very much available.

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NEWS

Bill Moore, chief executive of The Portman Estate, will be stepping down in May 2018. Bill joined the Estate in 2011 after a distinguished career in the Army, and has had a significant impact on the business. His successor will be **Oliver Fenn-Smith**, who in his 12 years as the Estate's property director has been responsible for a raft of successful strategic property deals. "The last six

years have been fascinating and rewarding," says Bill. "I've thoroughly enjoyed working with the talented people at The Portman Estate and with the wider business community. I felt it is right for me to free up my time to take on further strategic leadership roles and most importantly for the Estate's leadership team to be given the opportunity of progression."

The Portman Estate and The Howard de Walden Estate are joining forces to organise the **Marylebone Food Festival**. This celebration of the amazing food and drink on offer across the neighbourhood will take place 8th-18th March and will feature many of the area's finest restaurants and retailers. For more info, visit marylebonefoodfestival.com



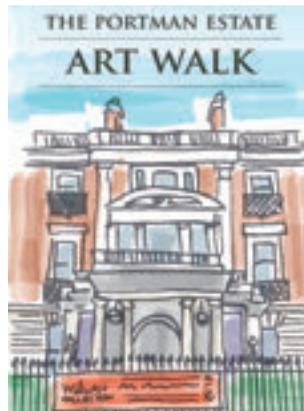
Marylebone's retailers have featured prominently in the **Slow Food London awards**, voted for by the thousands of London-based members of the Slow Food movement. The Ginger Pig and Gail's were named as runners-up in the butcher and baker categories, while La Fromagerie featured in second place in both the cheesemonger and delicatessen lists.

The **Paddington Street Gardens Christmas tree** will have its lights switched on at 3:30pm on 7th December, at a free event featuring music from St Vincent's RC Primary School choir, local vocalist Lili Phillips and the Orion Orchestra brass players. The event is hosted by Druce Estate Agents, W1 Developments and Westminster City Council.



As the sun set on 15th November, The **Marylebone Christmas Lights** event drew a sizeable crowd to Marylebone High Street to watch local resident and national treasure Dame Barbara Windsor light the place up in every way possible. The event, which was organised by The Howard de Walden Estate, raised money for the Home School Support charity.

See pp42-44



The Portman Estate has created an illustrated **art walk**, designed to guide art-lovers on a whistle-stop tour of Marylebone's public art, sculptures, statues and notable residents. The walk should take no longer than an hour to complete. A beautiful map with a wealth of information on its many cultural attractions can be downloaded at portmanestate.co.uk

The **Old Marylebone Town Hall**, one of London's most famous wedding venues, is reopening in January following a major refurbishment. The hall, which has been closed since 2013, has been completely transformed, with some contemporary design added alongside the 1920 period features. The exterior and famous stone lions have been carefully restored.

Transport for London has published its proposal for the **transformation of Oxford Street**, a plan that is likely to have a significant impact on Marylebone. The public consultation is open until 17th December, so there is still time for your opinions to be heard. Visit consultations.tfl.gov.uk

After 19 years of sterling service as chairman of The Howard de Walden Estate, **Peter Barton** is retiring in December. He will be succeeded by **Sir William Proby**, former chairman of the National Trust. **Lord Kakkar**, a life peer and professor of surgery, will be bringing his medical expertise to the Estate as a newly appointed non-executive director.

The Howard de Walden Estate has made a donation to St Marylebone CE School's **Elizabeth Phillips Wider Opportunities Fund**. Named after the school's former headteacher, the fund helps pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds participate in a wide range of enrichment trips and activities that they would otherwise struggle to access.

Old Marylebone Town Hall



ARRIVALS



Dinny Hall, one of London's most respected jewellery designers, is opening a new store at 66 Marylebone Lane. Working from her studio in Notting Hill, the designer has spent the past three decades creating inventive but understated pieces using genuine gemstones and the highest quality gold and silver.

Lexihealth, a medical concierge service, has arrived in the Harley Street Medical Area. Its service, which covers all aspects of healthcare, provides expert assistance at every stage of a patient's journey: appointments, referrals, screenings, second opinions, diagnosis, personalised treatments and, where needed, travel and accommodation.

Amir and Limor Chen, the couple behind the highly successful Shoreditch venture Strut & Cluck, are opening their second restaurant at 56-58 Marylebone Lane. **Delamina** will offer a menu of seasonal dishes inspired by eastern Mediterranean home cooking, using local ingredients and ethically sourced produce.

The PRIORITY Wellness Centre has opened at 41 Harley Street. The centre's team have expertise in treating a wide variety of mental health conditions, including depression, stress, anxiety and addictions. Specialist support is also available for young people and those impacted by fertility issues, pregnancy and parenthood.

Cutting-edge Turkish fashion brand NU is opening its UK flagship store at 15 New Cavendish Street.



Much-loved Marylebone florist Jane Packer has moved from New Cavendish Street to 55-57 George Street.

With a bauble-festooned wreath surrounding the storefront, it's difficult to miss the new festive pop up shop from beauty brand **Clarins** on Marylebone High Street. Step inside, and you'll be greeted with an equally gorgeous array of skincare products which are available for you to personalise to create a perfect gift for a loved one—or yourself.



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Up front.



STREET STORIES WEYMOUTH STREET

As with almost everything in Britain, Marylebone's streets have long been defined by a rigid class system: the posh streets surround the garden squares, or else run north to south; the bourgeois streets run east to west.

Weymouth Street is a solidly middle-class citizen. Like Devonshire Street one block to the north, it was brought into being in the

1770s and early eighties, after the completion of the grander sweeps of Harley Street and Portland Place brought a need for cross streets to join them together. Its Georgian houses, few of which remain, were modest compared to the area's more impressive townhouses. Uniform in style and generally of three or four storeys, they were flat-fronted in stock brick, with very little dressing: respectable but unremarkable.

Weymouth Street's residents were mainly professionals or—slightly more glamorously—artistic types, including portraitist Mary Grace, engraver William Say, playwright and journalist Edward Topham and his lover, the actress Mary Wells.

In the 19th century, as Harley Street and Wimpole

Blue plaques

None. Perhaps the most notable presence here was the great scientist, Michael Faraday, who as a young man in the early 1800s lived with his parents at number 18.

Landmark building

A rare domestic design by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, best known as the creator of Battersea Power Station and the red telephone box, 22 Weymouth Street was far more low-key and compact than most of his architectural work, but no less distinctive. With its modernism off-set by a classic, symmetrical simplicity, it proved less divisive than some other 20th century interventions, and is widely regarded as one of the area's jewels.

Street began to emerge as centres of medicine, some of that character spilled over onto Weymouth Street, with private physicians and surgeons setting up practices. The controversial Mesmeric Infirmary transferred from Fitzroy Square to 36 Weymouth Street in 1854, promoting hypnotism as an alternative to anaesthetics, but it didn't last for long.

The old Georgian housing stock started to disappear from around 1880, as the original leases expired and the Howard de Walden Estate pursued a programme of piecemeal redevelopment. The resulting streetscape is a mix of homes, medical properties and commercial buildings in a variety of neoclassical styles, anchored close to the high street by some vast domestic blocks.

One significant change came with the development of 'bijou' houses at some of the junctions with perpendicular streets. Previously, these joins had been marked by the blank return walls of the houses and stables on the north-south streets and mews. In 1886, the architect Barrow Emanuel won permission from the Estate to replace the old stable block on the corner of Harley Street with a small house facing Weymouth Street. This sparked a rash of similar developments, including remarkable examples of bijou houses commissioned by Bovis Ltd in the 1930s from some of the country's top architects, including George Grey Wornum (39 Weymouth Street) and Sir Giles Gilbert Scott (22 Weymouth Street). Bourgeois, yes—but beautiful.



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Up front.

“

The biggest pleasure
of being an actor is
the creative process.
You create this world,
dive into it, live in it

LOCAL LIVES

HELEN ROSE-HAMPTON

Helen Rose-Hampton is a professional actor and has just appeared in *Richard III* at The Cockpit theatre on Gateforth Street. She lives on Wyndham Place with her husband and their two dogs

WORDS: JPAUBIN-PARVU
PORTRAIT: ORLANDO GILI

I was born in Wolverhampton, but grew up in Shropshire. My family did relocate to Newquay, but only for a few years—there was a sudden influx of stag and hen parties, and I guess that's not ideal when you're trying to bring up three little girls, so we moved back to Shropshire.

I always wanted to be an actor. There have never been any actors in my family so it's a complete mystery as to why. There are childhood photos of my sister in her little nurse's outfit—and she's a nurse now—along with ones of me dancing around and playing the fool. So I guess it was set in stone.

At the age of seven I appeared in a musical about the bible called *Kids' Praise*, which was for my nan's local Methodist church. And I loved every minute of it. I remember being desperate to have more attention, to not just be part of the chorus, so I was really pleased when they picked me out as the little girl who Jesus would pick up and walk with to

the edge of the stage. I was over the moon about that.

I wanted to go to drama school, but my parents couldn't afford to send me and I wasn't able to get funding from the government. But for the last three years, I have received acting training from Dominic Kelly, who is part of the Salon Collective. They run weekly classes and acting training at The Cockpit theatre in Marylebone and have changed the way I approach acting. I owe them such a lot.

For me, the biggest pleasure of being an actor is the creative process—going from a blank page, to suddenly being able to go in-depth into this character, who is usually far away from who you are. You create this world, dive into it, live in it.

And the pains—oh, where do I start? The many, many, many auditions you go to and then don't hear back from. Never being able to book a holiday, because the minute you do a job comes in. That always, always happens. Not knowing

when the next job's going to come through the door, which is kind of exciting, but also terrifying.

I'm not an extrovert at all. I'm quite shy and that's probably why I act, because I have an opportunity to not be that way—to be somebody different. When I'm on the stage, it's a chance to show off, but under the guise of a character. Standing up on the stage as myself would be horrendous. Public speaking, anything like that, I get very nervous about.

Back in about 2007, I went to New York to do a summer school at The American Academy of Dramatic Arts. Off the back of that, I managed to get the role of Lady Macbeth in a very small production. It was part of a Shakespeare festival and we won the award for the best production. I remember sitting on the stage during a break, just thinking, "Wow! This is pretty cool." It was a tiny little stage in a theatre off Broadway, in the middle of nowhere. But it was a moment I'll never forget, sitting there on a New York stage and breathing it all in.

Doing *Blithe Spirit* earlier this year at the Middlesbrough Theatre was another fantastic experience. The theatre



itself is just beautiful, the northern audiences were wonderful and the company I worked for, Less is More Productions, is fantastic. They try as much as possible to give northern actors the work. I have a base up there because my uncle lives in Hartlepool, so I got the part of Ruth. I find Noël Coward plays quite difficult, but loved it all the same. That was definitely a highlight.

I have just appeared in *Richard III* at The Cockpit, which was a brilliant production. I played Queen Elizabeth, the sister-in-law of *Richard III*. I even got to fight in it, having trained in stage combat before we started rehearsals, so that was exciting. It's a very fresh and edgy production with a fantastic director and a dynamic production company, Front Foot Theatre. The Cockpit is such a versatile space. It allows you to have a lot of freedom in what you do with your character.

It was very handy working so close to home. Being able to just saunter up to the theatre without having to rely on public transport was an absolute dream. If only every job was like that. I was very lucky indeed.

My husband and I have lived in Marylebone for about two and a half years. We have two dogs, so that keeps us out in Regent's Park and Hyde Park. We do a lot of walking and I also go to the gym at the Seymour Leisure Centre. My husband is a member of Home House, so we spend a lot of time there, and we also love going to the Everyman Cinema on Baker Street.

We have just discovered Il Blandford's on Chiltern

Street, a fantastic family run Italian. It's rather like going into an Italian family's front room and having dinner—it's just so lovely and relaxed. That's our favourite place at the moment.

I also sew. I had a couple of years out of the acting business when we lived in the south of France. My husband was working and I didn't have anything to do other than be a housewife, so I taught myself to sew—curtains, dresses, you name it. It's almost mathematical, so it's completely different to acting, trying to work out all the dimensions and everything. I'm not very good at maths, so it takes me a lot longer than it probably would take anybody else. But I love doing it.

Most of my family are still up in Shropshire, so my husband and I go up there as often as possible. It's just so beautiful and we have a little house on the Shropshire Hills. We try to escape London as much as we can.

Work wise I have nothing on the horizon at the moment. Christmas is upon us and that's a very quiet time of the year. But then again, I could get a phone call this afternoon that completely changes everything—so who knows? It's exciting.

**PAST PRESENCE
MICHAEL POWELL
& EMERIC
PRESSBURGER**



The 20th century's great crucibles of cinematic creativity leap easily to mind: 1930s Hollywood, 1960s Paris, 1970s New York.

Wartime Marylebone is probably not on the list—but there's a case to be made that it should be, thanks to a half-decade burst of brilliance from a pair of filmmakers at the peak of their powers.

In 1925, Michael Powell, the son of a Kentish hop farmer, abandoned a short-lived career in banking to start from the bottom in the film industry, working as a studio hand, stills photographer and bit-part actor. His first directing jobs were on 'quota quickies'—low-cost films dashed out to meet the quota of British-made pictures that cinemas were forced by law to show. Between 1931 and 1936, he knocked off a staggering 23 films, the quality of which often belied the speed of their production. In 1937,

Powell wrote and directed his first truly personal work, *The Edge of the World*, the beauty of which brought him to the attention of the great film producer Alexander Korda.

Powell's first film for Korda was a wartime thriller, *The Spy in Black*. With the production hampered by a verbose script, a Hungarian-Jewish émigré, Emeric Pressburger, who had arrived in London in 1935 after fleeing from Nazi Germany, was brought in to lick it into shape.

Powell and Pressburger had very different backgrounds and contrasting temperaments, but on that film each man found

his foil. After working together twice more as director and screenwriter—*Contraband* (1940) and *49th Parallel* (1941), the latter of which won Pressburger an Oscar—the pair decided to turn their partnership into something more formal. On their next film, *One of Our Aircraft Is Missing* (1942), they took joint responsibility for every aspect of the production, and for the first time shared the credit "written, produced and directed by Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger".

Over the next decade, Powell and Pressburger's production unit, *The Archers*, would create a body of work as serious in its intent and virtuosic in its execution as any in the history of British film, right in the heart of Marylebone. Between 1942 and 1947, their business was based at Dorset House, Gloucester Place. Here, the pair conjured up a run of genuine masterpieces: *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp* (1943), *A Matter of Life and Death* (1946), *Black Narcissus* (1947), and *The Red Shoes* (1948), all four of which feature in the BFI's list of the top 100 British films. A distribution deal with the powerful Rank Organisation gave them commercial reach, but without creative interference (theoretically at least), and the results were spectacular.

They grafted for hours on end in apartment number 120 of this vast 1930s modernist block, threatened by air raids, surrounded by none of the trappings of Tinseltown glamour. According to Powell, they never bothered to properly furnish their spartan three-room flat.

After falling out with Rank over the cost and slow schedule of *The Red Shoes*, Powell and Pressburger left both their distribution deal and their Marylebone flat, and the magic began to fade. For those five years, though, Dorset House was as close to the epicentre of the film world as it's ever likely to be.

QUOTE

ELIZABETH BOWEN

Novelist, lived at 1-7 Clarence Terrace



**Intimacies
between
women often
go backwards,
beginning in
revelations
and ending in
small talk**



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Up front.

MY PERFECT DAY

PAUL COSTELLOE

The Gloucester Place-based designer describes his perfect Marylebone day

Breakfast

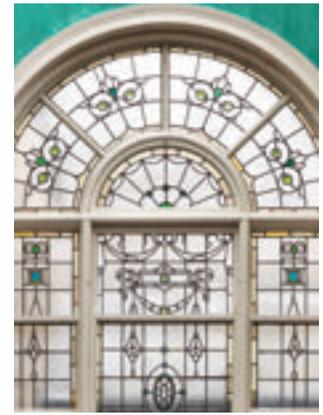
My father and mother, no matter what happened, would have breakfast together before my father went to work, and I like to keep that habit with my wife. However, if we are in Marylebone for breakfast, we do go to that lovely bakery Bonne Bouche.

A spot of fresh air

I have been known to stop off in Hyde Park for a brainstorm or a snooze in my deckchair, as I cycle through there on my way into work or back home.

A new outfit

I am a designer, so I make the worst shopper. I hate buying clothes for myself. I'll get a good coat—I bought a nice one from Rossellini on Baker Street—but other than that I will wear my own clothes.



Clockwise from top left:
Il Blandford's, Daunt Books,
Daylesford

Coffee break

I like to escape to The Koppel Project on Baker Street to get some peace from the office, to sketch and to have a coffee.

Culture

We have a good relationship with the Graham Hunter Gallery. Graham is a lovely man—he has just commissioned some more fashion paintings, actually. I do really like the little galleries tucked away on Chiltern Street too. I've bought some great pottery from A&D.

Shopping

It would have to be Daunt Books. They host wonderful talks from artists and writers. I'm usually hovering in the back, looking for presents, so I'm a voyeur to some

extent, but I do think it's fantastic. I also like the magazine shop opposite the Chiltern Firehouse—they have a great selection, and their little sweet counter reminds me of sweetshops when I was a kid. Something about the smell.

Pre-dinner drinks

The Barley Mow on Dorset Street. They do a great pint, it's well priced, the staff are lovely, and they have those great snugs. I'm a Carling man really, but they have a good selection of craft beers.

Eating out

Il Blandford's serves the best Italian food in the whole of London—and I have lived in Italy. The second best is around the corner from there: Anacapri.

Eating in

The things I love most are good olive oil and salad. I really enjoy making a homemade salad with an oil, mustard and vinegar dressing. Our friends the Bamfords have a cafe and shop called Daylesford, and they do a good job, actually. It feels authentic. We go in sometimes and buy nice tomatoes, new potatoes or fresh cream.

Anything else?

It would be nice to have something that brought you together with other people working in Marylebone, like a little badge, or a lunch every month in one of the garden squares. But other than that, it's perfect—or almost perfect. I suppose, if it was totally perfect, it would be boring.



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Features.

PURLS OF WISDOM



Scarred by a misjudged attempt at home mixology, the Journal heads to Purl, one of Marylebone's most acclaimed cocktail bars, to learn the art of creating the perfect drink

WORDS: CLARE FINNEY
IMAGES: ORLANDO GILI

Features.

Purls of wisdom

I was 14 when I made my first cocktail. Left to our own devices one Christmas, my cousin and I uncovered a dusty selection of liqueur bottles at the back of our grandfather's cellar, complete with a tarnished silver shaker, a rusting strainer and a long-handled spoon. We set to work enthusiastically, indiscriminately mixing some crusty old advocaat with Archers peach schnapps, brandy, Cointreau and tonic water that had lost its fizz circa 1956. Two hours later we emerged, giggling, with all the poise of newborn giraffes and all the makings of a crippling hangover. Two and a half hours later, we were violently sick.

I've not made a cocktail since. When I'm out, I'll indulge in the odd negroni, but that Christmas still haunts me. So, it was with mixed feelings that I embarked on a cocktail masterclass at Marylebone's speakeasy, Purl. I'd been here before, of course: their house negronis are second to none, blending three different vermouths with three different bitters, which are cooked together on a slow heat before being bottled. But my illicit teenage dabbling was still the closest I'd got to understanding the dark arts of mixology.

Like my grandfather's cellar, Purl is underground—a drink-and-you'd-miss-it sort of place on Blandford Street, next to a sandwich shop—but otherwise, it's another world. Once

ensconced, we pull up a bar stool: me, Alice and Ricky, who has bought Alice the masterclass as part of her birthday present. "People come to the class for different reasons," Francesco, our host, begins. "I think in the last four or five years people have become far more interested in this industry." Some just come for a good time; others to learn more about a craft that 20 or 30 years ago was confined to gaudy hotels and exclusive bars, but has since become fundamental to London's culture.

Purl is a serious cocktail bar. "The people who opened this place—Bryan Pietersen, Tristan Stephenson and Matt Whiley—are for me legends of the cocktail world," says Francesco. "They have a great reputation." Though drinks are expertly made with the finest spirits you've never heard of, the spirit in which they are served is one of wry irreverence, with Big Ben moneyboxes, ceramic toadstools and jerry cans used as vessels in place of glasses for all but the most classic cocktails. "Everywhere is serving cocktails these days, so if you are going to be a proper bar it's good to have an identity. Purl is inspired by 1920s speakeasies, and people would not have been drinking out of glasses during prohibition. Alcohol was illegal, so they would have disguised it."

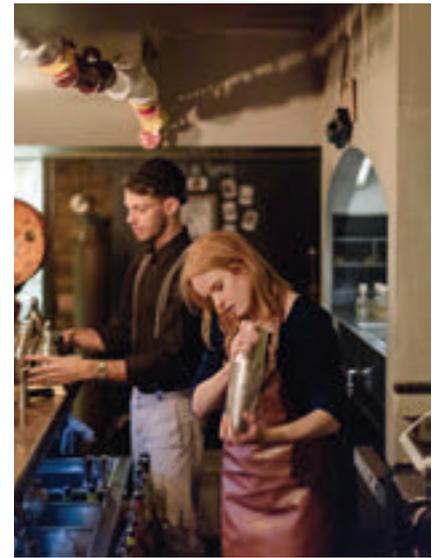
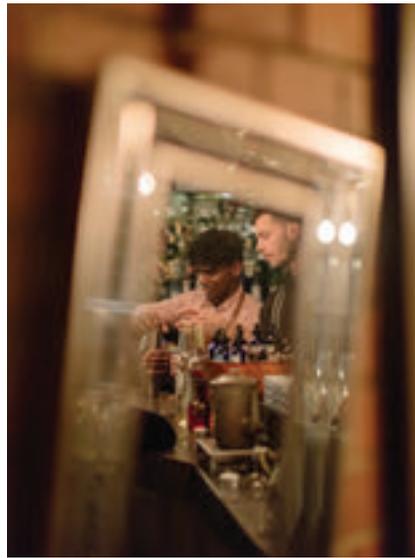
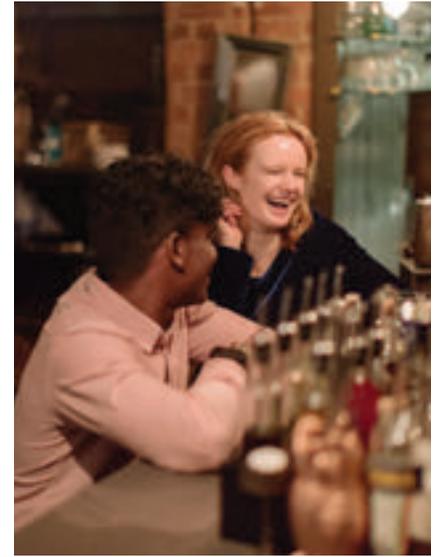
Francesco is here to teach us. "Teach is a big word," he says, "because this is the sort of world in which you are always learning. The aim here is really to introduce to it different ingredients, and different techniques of building a drink." But he is clearly determined to have fun along the way. "So! Here I am talking, and you guys are drinking nothing!" he exclaims. "We'll have three drinks in total this afternoon: one I'll make, one you'll make, and one you can choose from the menu."

To my relief, the starter is none other than my old familiar. "The negroni is an evolution," says Francesco: a collision between Italy's aperitivo tradition and the cocktail culture that sprang up in America in the late 19th century. "Vermouth is a very complex product: 75 per cent



moscato wine, infused with some spice and some sugar. Technically, it's already a cocktail, if you consider a cocktail as three or more ingredients. We were drinking it neat in Italy." Indeed, one of the reasons cocktails took so long to catch on there was because vermouth is in itself a complex enough drink for an aperitif.

Still, what happens in America rarely stays in America, and it wasn't long before Italians sought to "catch the American flavour," smiles Francesco. Gaspare Campari, a pioneering bar owner in Milan, was purportedly the first person to mix his own eponymous bitters with vermouth di Torino, or sweet



vermouth, to make negroni's forerunner, the milano-torino. "Soda water was American. We didn't have carbonisation in Italy—so when Gaspare came to add soda water to his recipe, he renamed it americano," he continues. Sixty-odd years later, it was Count Camillo Negroni who legend has it asked his local bartender to replace the soda water with gin, creating the negroni.

"This a strong drink," says Francesco, swirling the jewel-coloured liquors around a jug with a long spoon and thereby demonstrating one of the simpler mixology techniques: stirring. It's not just about the wrist action: with a drink this strong, the

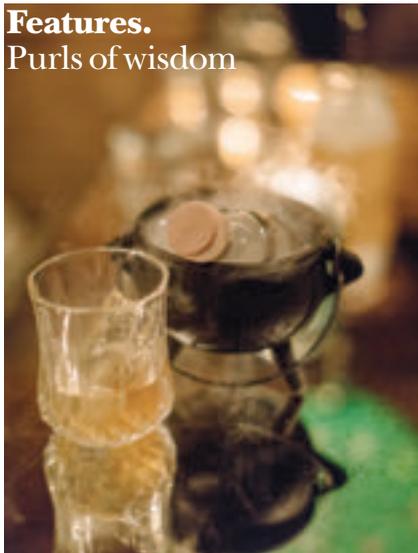
quality and shape of the ice assume far greater importance. "The dilution of water and the chilling of the drink is so important to its taste." Really? we ask in unison. "Really. I'll show you," Francesco smiles, seizing a hammer, and spinning round to a large trough filled with what we now realise is a solid block of ice, crystal-clear and glinting in the candlelight. "If the ice is too small or has holes in, it will break up when we shake and make the drink watery."

He attacks this in-house iceberg with gusto: hammering, chipping and carving until finally turning triumphantly back toward us, a large, smooth piece of icy shrapnel in his hand. This he stirs with the

triumvirate of Campari, Plymouth gin and sweet vermouth, allowing the flavours to muddle and unfold. A sliver of orange peel, stroked around the outside of the glass ("so when you have finished, you still have the scent on your hands—my special touch") then plopped inside the drink finishes it off. Alice is delighted. "Oh, that is good. That is very, very good," she whistles. We could sit here for the rest of the afternoon sipping negronis and listening to Francesco—but as every good teacher knows, the best way to learn is not just to drink, but to do.

He fetches aprons: hardwearing, pocketed and cool in a way only subterranean speakeasy bar aprons

Features. Purls of wisdom



could be cool. Pulling mine on I feel strangely empowered, like a mad scientist in pursuit of the elixir of eternal youth. Mercifully, for Francesco and my fellow classmates, the only elixir I'll be conjuring up today is a tequila sour cocktail: a potent mix, but not one that promises to prolong life to any great degree. Handing me the shaker—a two-piece Boston shaker, as opposed to the sealed three-piece shaker which “we can't use because we need to introduce air to egg-based drinks”—Francesco runs us through the ingredients: lime juice, sugar syrup, tequila, falernum, cherry liqueur and Miraculous Foamer, an egg white substitute. “It's vegan-friendly and less rich than egg white, but it still produces creamy foam.”

“Sour based cocktails are great drinks to play with,” he continues, as I measure 35ml of quality tequila into the shaker. “Seventy-five per cent of the drink is sorted—egg white, lemon or lime and sugar—so you just choose the spirit, and the liqueur.” The maraschino cherry liqueur takes me by surprise, being a) clear and b) genuinely palatable—a far cry from the glacé cherry puree I'd envisaged. I add some of that, followed by the mysterious falernum: Purl's own infusion of rum, lime, sugar, peel, herbs and spices, which, Alice points out, you could “happily drink a whole glass of”. “Everyone's

falernum is slightly different, reflecting the personality of the bartender,” says Francesco. Anyone can follow a recipe, he continues, “but this kind of job is about more than how you make a drink”.

“I've kind of been in this industry since I was 11,” he explains—throwing a forgiving light on my own initiation in the cellar all those years ago. “I worked in my family's bar, in the kitchen and stockroom.” Growing up in the Italian countryside led to endless experimenting with the fruits, roots and herbs that grew around his home. He made his own ice, suspecting even then that ice made with purified water would serve the drink better than cubes made from tap water. “It's easy enough to make in a freezer box,” he says, bashing some more of the iceberg for me, “but it will take you a while to boil the water, cool it down, and freeze it all the way through.”

While this is a length to which I cannot possibly imagine myself going to at home, it offers a hint of the relentless perfectionism that underpins Purl. Francesco and the team are just coming to the end of compiling their new menu: a process that takes them two months, twice every year. They buy new vessels, stew new bitters and infusions, and dream up innovative approaches to serving drinks. While we're here, someone is served a cocktail with a balloon above it. Dry ice, lightbulbs and candleholders also feature. Though the team here all love and admire the classics, they are driven by “a competition with yourself to keep on coming up with new ideas”.

Meanwhile, I'm sticking resolutely to the recipe. Adding the requisite lime juice, sugar syrup and egg white substitute to the liqueur and tequila, I stir the mix together and taste it “to quality check,” grins Francesco. “When making drinks, balance is so important between acidity, bitterness and sweet.” It tastes... strong, I cough, through a teaspoon of sour tequila. “Yes, don't worry,” he assures me. “It will dilute a bit with the ice as we shake.” Closing the shaker, I



Growing up in the Italian countryside led to Francesco endlessly experimenting with the fruits, roots and herbs that grew around his home. He made his own ice, suspecting even then that ice made with purified water would serve the drink better than cubes made from tap water

go to give it the full OutKast Hey Ya! treatment—but he pulls me up short. “Two hands! You don't want the top flying off.” This is a serious work out, I think, my arms aching and brow sweating after a meagre 10 seconds. Bartenders are usually on the slim side, and it's easy to see why if they're doing this for six hours every day.

At long last, we're done. Straining the ice away, I give it one last 'dry' shake before pouring the foaming velvet into the glass. “Hold it high to keep the foam,” Francesco instructs. “Tap it to get the last of it out.” The creamy liquid crests the top of the glass but, remarkably, stops just short of spilling out. A swirl of lemon zest, wiped around the glass and squeezed once over the surface is then placed on top to complete the picture: it looks like a real, sour-based drink. No one taste is dominant—this must be the elusive balance Francesco spoke of—but melds together in one smooth, sour wave of tongue-tongling, hair-raising, cockle-warming nectar. I'm inspired. I'm pleasantly merry. And when, another Francesco-made cocktail later, I resurface, I feel I can finally put that teenage subterranean ‘mixology’ experience well and truly to bed. There is, I now understand, far more to mixing drinks than just mixing drinks.

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SPANISH GOLD

The Wallace Collection's landmark
El Greco to Goya exhibition casts new
light on some of the great masterpieces of
Spanish painting. The Journal takes a tour

WORDS: CLARE FINNEY



Features. Spanish gold



The Martyrdom of St Andrew (1616-24)

Luis Tristán de Escamilla
The Bowes Museum

Tobias Restoring his Father's Sight (1652)

Antonio Pereda y Salgado
The Bowes Museum

Portrait of Juan Antonio Meléndez Valdés (1797)

Francisco Jose de Goya
The Bowes Museum

Between you and me, I've always found Velázquez's *The Lady with a Fan* the most underwhelming of the Wallace Collection's highlights. Sure, it's accurate enough: the lady is discernibly a lady, the fan recognisably a fan—but I could never quite see the point. "Give me Brizo the dog, or a still life hare any day," I'd think, as I sauntered past on my way to the Dutch masters. But a tour around the Wallace's latest exhibition, *El Greco to Goya: Spanish Masterpieces from The Bowes Museum*, throws fresh perspective not just on this lady, but all of the collection's Spanish art.

My guide for the day is Isabelle Kent, a young curator whose extraordinary knowledge makes a mockery of the fact that she's only recently joined the institution, fresh from university. "I remember watching a Goya documentary when I was five and seeing those works at the Prado," she says, by way of explanation. "My love of Spanish art just went on from there." She's excited by this exhibition in the way an astrophysicist might be by a probe

that shows a new aspect of a planet we thought we knew and understood.

"Neither the Wallace nor the Bowes"—the latter being the art collection from which this exhibition hails—"are known for their Spanish art. They are better known for their French and English paintings," says Isabelle. For the Wallace Collection, the exhibition represents the chance to attract new visitors and remind regulars of the existence and significance of its works by Velázquez and Murillo. For the Bowes Museum, situated up in windswept County Durham, it is like a postcard, "a little pocket of the Bowes in London, which will hopefully encourage people to visit them in the north-east".

On the surface of it, these collections share many characteristics—the Bowes has even been dubbed the 'Wallace of the north' in art circles. They are both housed in grand manors, and the Bowes, like the Wallace, is the product of a 17th century family's passion for procuring great art. One similarity is particularly striking: the illegitimacy

of the eponymous collectors. While both John Bowes and Richard Wallace were of aristocratic descent, they were also both, to use the vernacular, bastards. But when it comes to the art in question, it seems their collections are more identifiable by their differences than their kinship.

Though bequeathed to the nation in 1897 by Sir Richard Wallace's widow, the art at Hertford House in Manchester Square was, at the start, a private collection. "Richard Wallace and the fourth Marquess concentrated on getting the best pictures they could, at any price really. They were outbidding the Rothschilds at auctions," Isabelle marvels. John Bowes and his wife Joséphine were quite different. Theirs was a commitment to collecting for educational purposes: to elevate their small market town of Barnard Castle to a seat of artistic learning. They bought their *El Grecos* and *Goyas* not because they were in high demand, but because they weren't. "They were completely unfashionable. At the time they were painted, they were too



‘out there’, and by the time the Bowes were collecting, not enough time had passed for them to be re-appreciated,” Isabelle explains.

Indeed, the only reason the Bowes family got them in the first place was thanks to a dealer who liaised between them and the widow of an important art collector. “The Conde de Quinto in Paris had built up his own private art collection. After he died, the Countess de Quinto needed money, so she sold them through Benjamin Gogué, a dealer whom she trusted. Perhaps too much,” Isabelle smiles. She has seen the Bowes archive, and it’s clear from Gogué’s letters who got the better deal.

Gogué didn’t suggest works were fashionable. But he did say they were worth saving—and it is as well he did. The first painting to catch your eye as you step into the intimate space of the gallery is, Isabelle tells me, “probably the best example of El Greco’s work in the UK.” Its subject is the tears of St Peter: the disciple, upon hearing the sound of the cock’s crow, realises he has denied

Jesus three times and breaks down, weeping in penitence. With his eyes raised to the sky, his hands wringing together, St Peter is everything you’d expect from a religious artwork—but there is far more to get out of this piece than Christian imagery.

“El Greco depicts this scene a number of times, but this is without doubt the first that he did. It is so worked and controlled.” In the foreground, a sprig of ivy is as naturalistic as something you’d find in a Van Ruisdael landscape; in the background, Mary Magdalene is depicted hurrying toward Peter from Christ’s empty tomb in what Isabelle describes as a “loose, abstract, almost cubist” sort of way. “Of course, I don’t want to be proto-modernist,” Isabelle corrects herself quickly—though I can’t say I’d picked up on it. “It’s just interesting, because Picasso loved the works of El Greco, and Cézanne made a copy of his paintings, so there was clearly a connection there.”

Particularly exciting for Isabelle—and indeed, for anyone who likes seeing the texture of oil paint—is

the opportunity to see this version of the Tears of St Peter lit in splendid isolation, free of the glass that normally covers it. “When you are in a museum with hundreds of paintings on a single wall, you cannot light it in this way,” she says, “and you have to protect them.” For this exhibition, the Wallace has been given permission to remove the glass covering, unleashing the vivid colours and tactile strokes of El Greco’s brushwork.

Look out for his signature, splayed audaciously across the side of the painting: “People just didn’t sign their work like that in this period, particularly in Spain where artists were still very much thought of as craftsmen.” Born and raised in Crete, before moving to Spain via Italy in later life, El Greco was proud of his Greek heritage, and signed his name in the most prominent position, large and flamboyant.

Behind us, the rest of the collection beckons eagerly, starting with two Goya paintings, equally accomplished and taken not from the bible, but from all-too-real life. “This was

Features. Spanish gold

another one that Bowes had to be convinced by,” says Isabelle. “Goya wasn’t really popular at the time, but Gogué persuaded them.” The painting, executed when the artist was recovering from a life-threatening illness in the 1790s, is of the inside of a Spanish prison: pitch black, but for the circle of light shed by an arch. Within that, a group of prisoners are eerily visible, each in varying states of dishevelment. “It looks like Goya’s depicting the different stages of prison life: one man is naked and bound, one is in rags, and this man seems to have just arrived, still in his fine garments,” observes Isabelle. It’s easy to miss the man slumped in the background, pale and skeletal, but he must have been there longest. “See, he is old and his beard is long and straggly.” Small, dark, painted on tin in place of canvas, it feels like a window into Goya’s disease-weary mind.

Mercifully, the subject of the neighbouring work offers some consolation: a prison reformer whom Goya painted after his illness. By this point, Goya was part of a group of thinkers who met regularly to discuss art and the need for social justice. Juan Antonio Meléndez Valdés was one such thinker, a politician appointed to reform the incarceration system while at the height of his government career. “He was one of the most important politicians in Madrid at the time,” Isabelle tells me. Goya captured not the politician, but the person. “It’s a

subtle portrait. The reddish cheeks and the furrowed brow show this is not an idealised version,” she continues. “It gets to the heart of who he was as a person—and as a friend.”

The two works complement each other perfectly. The cause and the crusader; the companion and the conversation he would have had with Goya during that period. In theory, these are the only Goyas to be found in the exhibition. In practice, the collaboration has provided ample opportunity for certain works to be reattributed and reassessed. “Next month we are having a symposium at the Wallace Collection and a lot of Spanish art scholars are coming to talk about this exhibition and various aspects of it.” As part of that, the Wallace Collection’s director, Dr Xavier Bray, will argue for the inclusion of a ‘new’ Goya, on display in this gallery. “One of the great things about this exhibition is that it gives us the chance to consider the paintings without glass, in isolation, on their own terms.”

Dr Bray will suggest the reattribution to Goya of a portrait of a woman, previously thought to have been painted by one of his followers. Another scholar will do the same for *A Levitation of St Frances*, a religious piece currently believed to have been produced by a workshop of Jusepe de Ribera, rather than by Ribera himself. “The white face, with its red, bloodshot eyes,” admires Isabelle, “it doesn’t feel like something a workshop would do. It is so intense, so beautifully realised.” Part of the excitement of this collaboration is the possibility of reappraising a few overlooked paintings and giving their creators the credit they deserve.

Thanks in no small part to Gogué, the Bowes Museum has one of the largest collections of Spanish paintings in the country, spanning three centuries. The 13 works which are at the Wallace now are a mere taster, chosen for their diversity (“you have the drama, still lives and more intimate scenes represented”) and for the various questions they arouse. Over the months of its opening, art scholars and lovers will come from around the

world to revel in these works, and the indulgent intimacy of this exhibition. Yet while here, visitors would do well to spend some time rediscovering those remarkable Spanish paintings the Wallace Collection has always had on its walls.

“The Bowes has a selection of art not represented by the Wallace, and we have an area of Spanish art the Bowes hasn’t collected.” Those looking to remind themselves of the Wallace’s Merillos and Velasquezes in light of the El Greco to Goya exhibition can follow a trail of red signs, discreetly tacked to the signature claret-coloured walls. There are the portraits of the Prince Baltasar Carlos, pre-school age and adorably comical in his royal finery or miniature suits of armour, riding a pony. There are Murillo’s scenes of religious events, with their entrancing fusion of grace, and emotional realism. And of course, there’s *The Lady with a Fan*, staring blankly out from a grey background and clinging defensively onto her shawl.

For years, she is thought to have been a member of Velázquez’s family: he must have been roping them into sitting for him for practice, after all. Yet as their historical knowledge has broadened, researchers increasingly believe her to be Marie de Rohan, the French duchess of Chevreuse. “She was a very manipulative figure in the French court—good friends with the queen. But when she fell out with the queen she had to flee France for Madrid, and the protection of Philip IV,” says Isabelle. “We know Velázquez painted her, from a letter of the time, but the portrait has never been identified.” Could this be the fugitive Duchess of Chevreuse?

We’ll probably never know for certain. But the thought of it is intriguing—and that is the beauty of this collaboration between these two great galleries. An interesting fact, a shift in perspective, a talented curator—even the removal of a glass pane—and those paintings you once sallied past can appear in a fresh and beguiling new light.

EL GRECO TO GOYA: SPANISH MASTERPIECES FROM THE BOWES MUSEUM

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Features.

Bella Freud talks to the Journal
about Vivienne Westwood, slogan
knitwear and the Marylebone of
yesteryear

WORDS: JACKIE MODLINGER
PORTRAIT: MARY MCCARTNEY
FASHION IMAGES: DAVID ABRAHAMS
SHOP IMAGES: JAMES LYNDSEY

La bella figura



Divine

Features.

La bella figura

That creativity would be in her DNA was a given. Bella Freud is, after all, a scion of the dynastic Freud family—daughter of painter Lucian, great-granddaughter of distinguished Viennese psychiatrist Sigmund, her mother and sister both acclaimed writers. Bella's eponymous store on Chiltern Street is testament to her talent. Opened two years ago, the décor—reclaimed stone floors, bespoke brass rails and opulent velvet carpet—is the work of Retrouvius architect Maria Speake, the same creative hand behind Bella's Ladbroke Grove flat, where she lives with son Jimmy and border terrier Joey.

The objective: "I wanted to create an intimate shopping experience with an apartment-like feeling—a bit like stepping into a friend's for a cup of tea and leaving with her favourite jumper." The designer may be high-profile—aficionados include Alexa Chung, Kate Moss (who once famously exchanged a pair of split trousers for a pink pair here), Laura Bailey and chanteuse Alison Mosshart—but she loves to cock a snook at The Establishment. "Upmarket irreverence" is how Bella defines her signature style, with its whimsical statement knits, slogan tees and edgy tailoring, the latter honed in Rome at fashion and tailoring schools. A child of the 1970s, her favourite inscriptions include '1970', 'Ginsberg is God' and 'Je t'aime Jane' (as in Birkin).

Bella's designs are collectable, aspirational pieces in simple shapes, often androgynous, translated into luxe fabrics. She has a way of embracing trends while still remaining true to herself, as exemplified by her use of corduroy, night-for-day pyjama jackets, ruffled shirts and her take on the tuxedo.

The pre-collection (transitional between winter/spring) has just landed, and very rock 'n' royalty it is too, the latter being one of the key themes, with cashmere, merino wool, lurex knits sporting such slogans as 'Lord', 'King of Kings' and 'Royalty', as well as crown motifs.

The tuxedo, her strong suit, is translated into classic black velvet or ivory barathea for a 'le smoking' three-piece pants suit, aptly named 'Bianca' (after Bianca Jagger, who wore a white one when she married Mick). "I love tuxedos. I think they're just great, because they have that day-for-night thing, a bit like menswear—you can dress it right up depending on the shirt or tie, for formal, you put a turtleneck with it and the whole atmosphere is completely changed. It becomes more Miles Davis. I love those nuances of tailoring. A pale blue suit and it becomes really kind of spivvy and David Bowie-ish," enthuses Bella.

I learn that the whippet-head logo used since the brand's inception is the work of Bella's father, Lucien. "My dad drew it as my logo. It's his whippet, Pluto," Bella tells me. Pluto lives on, appearing on signature knits, t-shirts, cushions, wrapping paper and carrier bags, sometimes writ large as on the store's vitrine, other times a barely-there miniature.

She has arrived fresh from a trip to Paris, whippet-thin, her finely-chiselled face with its high cheekbones and defined eyebrows bearing a striking resemblance to her mother Bernardine Coverley—a multi-talented gardener and writer who taught further education and dance, and was the subject of one of Lucien's masterpieces, painted when Bernardine, then aged 17, was pregnant with Bella. Pregnant Girl was sold in February 2016 for a cool £16 million.

Was her mum a stylish dresser? "I have just dim recollections. She wasn't wildly interested in fashion, but she was very beautiful and just looked good. She would wear 'hippie' things. I used to make clothes for her when I was about 14—I remember making her a

brown corduroy A-line skirt just below the knee. She always looked great, my mum. She would wear vintage stuff as well, 1940s dresses and a brown velvet coat that I was always trying to borrow off her, and when she was really young, she wore Biba. I remember she had really nice boots. She had so little money that she would just buy the occasional thing," recalls Bella.

Today, Bella is wearing, well, Bella: a double-breasted black and white checked Harris tweed coat with sheepskin collar, over her favourite black schoolboy-style trousers, paired with navy satin contrast-piped shirt. We sit on her red corduroy sofa, which strikes an immediate chord, being one of her favourite fabrics. "I love it—there's just something so stylish about it. When someone's wearing a corduroy jacket, you think 'ooh, there's something going on there... and suddenly it's all come back into fashion. I love it for interiors as well—a corduroy sofa's really nice and cool."

Born in London, Bella and younger sister Esther (a novelist) were educated at the Rudolf Steiner school in Sussex. Bella left school at 16 "and worked in shops, just wasted my life, had a teenage rebellion, then got back on track," she reflects. The girls spent part of their childhood in Morocco enjoying a somewhat Bohemian existence—the inspiration for Esther's book *Hideous Kinky* made into a film starring Kate Winslet.

Over to Bella, who takes up her story.

Was your childhood really as nomadic as portrayed in the film?

The film was a story, so some of it wasn't. We lived in a very kind of hand-to-mouth way and some of it was great and some of it less so. The film was really good actually—a lot better than I expected and obviously having Kate Winslet in it was amazing. She's such a good actor.

How did you get on with your sister Esther when you were growing up?

I've got lots of half-siblings, too, but Esther was the person I spent the



Features.
La bella figura



“

I met Vivienne Westwood through the punk rock scene and one day asked her for a Saturday job. I'd just cut my waist-length hair into a crop and she said, "I like your haircut, so yes, you can have a job."

Bella Freud

Features.

La bella figura

most time with. She was very close to me and continues to be so—she's one of the most important people in my life. It's an incredible luxury to have a great friendship with your sister, because it's just so deep.

Were you interested in clothes as a child?

I liked uniforms and boys' clothes. I suppose because probably boys seemed to have more power, so on some level I liked the idea of their clothes giving me a kind of freedom. They suit me, boyish clothes. It's funny how some women look more feminine and pretty in a boyish piece. I think that's what suits me.

It was a stint with Vivienne Westwood that kickstarted your fashion career. How did this come about?

I met her through the punk rock scene and one day asked her for a Saturday job. I'd just cut my waist-length hair into a crop and she said, "I like your haircut, so yes, you can have a job." That's how I started. When I left Italy, I went back to work as her assistant, so I learned everything about fashion from her. She was very patient on some levels, because I went to work for her knowing nothing, really, but it's the experience that really counts. It was great, she was an amazing teacher. I love her—hardly see her, but she's in my heart.

When did you launch your own brand?

In 1990. I left Vivienne and did a collection of my own the following season. Four or five years later I did my first show at The Polish Club. I got this message saying, "Oh, Kate [Moss] said she'd do your show!" It was a good start.

Where do you draw inspiration for your signature sweaters?

It could be anywhere. A lot through reading. If I'm watching a film or just talking to someone, some words will just jump out as workable, so I'm always on the lookout. I am trying not to have a cute slogan. I don't want to tell anyone what to do or be like, a message... though I hope they'll have a resonance somewhere along the line. I take trouble thinking about them, so I hope they have that reverberation.

What are your favourite fabrics and colours?

I love crepe. I think wool, corduroy, crepe and denim; they've just got to be the best. I like black, but I am really into colour, like acid yellow. I love red and green. I go through phases of bright pink and orange—orange was always a favourite, I just love it. It's a wonderful colour and it suits me. Pale blue, too, I really like.

Do you see people buying a total wardrobe of just Bella Freud pieces?

Part of doing just a knitwear brand for a while is that the knit is the connection between suiting, really, so it's easy to just wear a jumper with whatever else you have, but I like to offer the whole thing if someone wants it. I like the idea it doesn't take over the person, but that they bring it to life.

Why did you choose Chiltern Street as the location for your store?

I have always liked this area. I used to have breakfast with my dad in Maison Sagne [now Patisserie Valerie] as a teenager and this area was my first experience of delicious food, really—Danish pastries, no one had those. I loved that place, it was really fantastic. Everyone was a Jewish refugee. I remember the owner, Mr Stanley, saying: "We have a new cake today, it's called niche" and I thought that was so chic. My father just roared with laughter. My sales agent, Maria Lemos, has a shop, Mouki Mou, further down the street and she insisted I look at this area. I

was looking at another shop in Chiltern Street when this came up and when I saw the place, I completely fell for it.

Are you enjoying being in the area?

I don't know what it is about Marylebone, but I like being here. It's very cosy. I like going to Fischer's, I often have breakfast there—lunch and dinner, too, but breakfast at Fischer's with one of my sisters is my favourite. I really love Hardy's restaurant, the Monocle Café, the Firehouse is a fun place to have a meeting. Also, there's a lovely shop called Content Beauty Wellbeing on Bulstrode Street. The girl who started it used to be my pattern-cutter.

How do you maintain a work/ life balance?

I used to be very workaholic, in terms of working late and not having any beginning or end. Now I get a lot more done, but actually when my son was born—he's nearly 17 now—it made me become more organised. I didn't want to be a mother who wasn't ever around, where something else is always a priority.

How do you spend your down time?

I love walking, reading, having a good snooze in the afternoon. Sometimes, even if I'm really tired, going to an exhibition makes me feel calm and relaxed. I travel mostly for work—I've just been to Asia—and my son Jimmy likes to go to LA, which I really enjoy. I like to go to places for a reason, but now I am a bit more adventurous. I go to pilates twice a week and play badminton with my friend Neville.

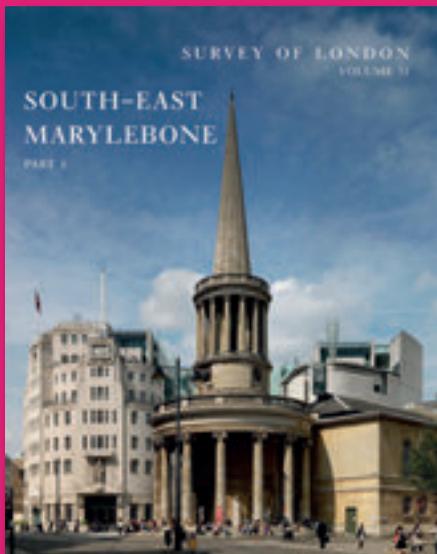
What's in store for the future?

I'd like to do more homeware, interiors, and really build up that side of the business. I'm going to do a pop-up shop in New York next year and maybe also in Japan. I'd like to do more with denim. I love this shop and have no plans to have another in London. It is important to be intense and not dilute things.

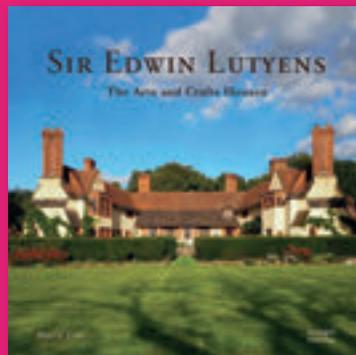
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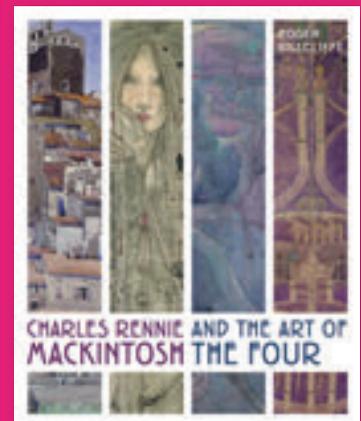
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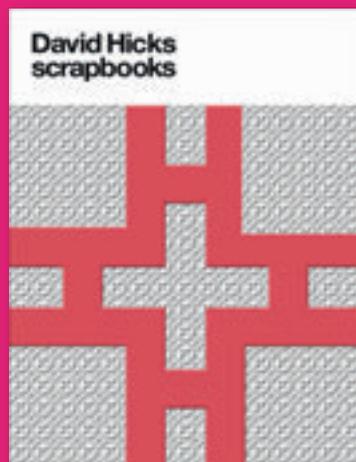
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Features.

BEATLES FORSALE

The story of how, 50 years ago this month, the world's biggest band opened a psychedelic clothes shop in the middle of Marylebone—and managed to make a complete pig's ear of the entire venture

WORDS: JEAN-PAULAUBIN-PARVU

The Fool design team, creators of the Apple boutique's distinctive aesthetic



Features. Beatles for sale

These days, to be considered truly successful, every pop megastar needs their own successful line of clothing. When former One Directioner Zayn Malik launched his debut Versace Versus collection earlier this summer, he joined a list of musicians-turned-designers that already included Beyoncé, Jay-Z and Kanye West. But pop icons dabbling in the rag trade is nothing new. Fifty years ago this month, a popular beat combo began selling a range of clothing and accessories from their own shop, right in the heart of Marylebone: the Apple boutique on Baker Street.

This venture was bound to succeed. In 1967, the Beatles were at the height of their powers. The biggest band on the planet, their album Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band topped the charts on both sides of the Atlantic. On 25th June, they performed All You Need Is Love to an estimated 350 million viewers on Our World, the first live global television link. No wonder they fancied their chances of flogging a few frocks and jackets.

London, although hardly San Francisco, was witnessing the shoots of a psychedelic revolution. Hippies were starting to appear, along with the whiff of pot. As Pink Floyd took up residency at the UFO Club on Tottenham Court Road, boutiques such as Granny Takes A Trip sprang up along the King's Road. Karma was in, colour matching was out.

The stated aim of the Apple boutique was to create "a beautiful place where beautiful people can buy beautiful things". The Beatles had the keys to 94 Baker Street, a four-storey Georgian townhouse and an unquestionably beautiful place. Now all they needed were the beautiful things for the beautiful people to buy.

The band turned to The Fool, a hugely influential design collective, comprising of Dutch artists and designers Simon Posthuma, Marijke Koeger, and Josje Leeger, along with Englishman Barry Finch. Though best known for their collaborations with the Beatles, The Fool also designed stage clothes and album covers for the likes of Cream, the Move and Incredible String Band, plus lavish clothes and interiors for films and theatre productions.

Illustrations created for the Saville Theatre, which was being leased by Beatles manager Brian Epstein, first brought The Fool to the attention of the band, who were soon gadding about in their colourful designs, such as the psychedelic tunics worn for the recording of All You Need Is Love.

In September 1967, The Fool received £100,000 (around £1.7 million in 2017) and the mission to design and stock the Apple shop. Armed with a tonne of cash and total artistic freedom, they set to work during the autumn and early winter.

Simon Posthuma described his vision for Apple to the Sunday Times: "It will have an image of nature, like a paradise with plants and animals painted on the walls. The floor will be imitation grass and the staircase like an Arab tent. In the windows will be seven figures representing the seven races of the world. There will be exotic lighting and we will make it more like a market than a boutique."

Pete Shotton, childhood friend of John Lennon and former washboard player for the Quarrymen (the precursor to the Beatles), was appointed shop manager. Shotton had been running a Hayling Island supermarket jointly owned by Lennon and George Harrison, and for a short time his retail team at Apple would include the model Jenny Boyd,



A stream of complaints about the shop's mural had been made to Westminster City Council. Yes, the Beatles might very well be "more popular than Jesus", but even the Messiah would have needed permission to paint that four-storey psychedelic cosmos, and no one at Apple had bothered to apply



The great giveaway gets underway at the Apple boutique, causing chaos

The invitations to the in-crowd read: “Come at 7:46. Fashion show at 8:16.” The public lined the pavement outside the shop clamouring for a glimpse of the Fab Four and their celebrity chums. The bruiser of a clown who juggled apples for their amusement was simply getting in the way.

A British Movietone News crew was hot on the scene. “To mark the opening the proud owners gave an apple juice party,” reported the narrator in a clipped tone. “John Lennon and George Harrison were the hosts. The other two Beatles were out of town. Paul’s in Liverpool and Ringo’s in Rome.”

British Pathé also made it along to “a hippy happening in the psychedelic social structure”. The narrator sounds almost mocking. “And the beautiful people of London made their flower way to Beatles George and John’s with-it Aladdin’s cave, only they call it Apple. It’s a new kind of boutique in Baker Street catering for specialised tastes.”

And smells, as Pattie Boyd, then Mrs Harrison, later told BBC Newsnight: “There was sort of a combination of a smell of patchouli oil and incense that was burning everywhere. So it was immediately exotic as you walked in.”

But there wasn’t a whiff of booze. The shop had no alcohol license, so guests were served apple juice—a huge shock to the system of Keith Moon, who attended along with Eric Clapton, Twiggy, Cilla Black, Kenneth Tynan, DJ Alan Freeman, Cream bassist Jack Bruce and Richard Lester, the director of the Beatles’ films.

Ever versatile, The Fool provided the musical entertainment. On cue they burst into the shop dressed like the cast from a panto. Simon Posthuma played Arabic music on a flute while Barry Finch kept the beat on an ethnic drum as Josje Leeger clanged tiny finger cymbals. This was world music as nobody wanted to imagine it.

Apple opened to the public two days later. In terms of footfall, the shop was an instant success, but when it came to actual sales the enterprise was a disaster from the off. As the months rolled by it became clear that Londoners were treating Apple

younger sister of George’s wife Pattie.

With their designs for the clothing, The Fool delivered with interest. No clash of colour was judged too extreme and when it came to fabrics their weapons of choice included lavish silks, tapestry and velvet—lots and lots of velvet. A mandarin-collared, forest green velvet jacket that flared at the waist and boasted puffy bell sleeves risked fading into the background next to lurid gypsy dresses and capes adorned with brightly coloured stars. Jenny Boyd and Beatles’ wives Pattie Harrison, Cynthia Lennon and Maureen Starr had no problem dressing up like Van Gogh’s easel, happily modelling The Fool’s

creations for a photo shoot.

But the outlandish threads were nothing compared to what the design collective had in mind for the shop’s exterior. And in November Marylebone held its breath as the gang got busy with pot and brush. The scaffolding tower was finally removed to reveal a gigantic, four-storey psychedelic mural depicting an Indian goddess surrounded by swirling images of outer space. Even the chimney pots received the full cosmic treatment. The mural contrasted sharply with the grey facades of the adjoining buildings. Monotone this most certainly wasn’t.

A grand launch party was planned for the evening of 5th December.

Features.

Beatles for sale

as a tourist attraction, but had no intention of dipping their hands into their pockets.

This had everything to do with the price of the clothes. The Fool had used the most expensive fabrics available and insisted on having silk labels in every piece of clothing. When Pete Shotton pointed out to John Lennon the problem with pricing these garments, he received the following piece of commercial wisdom: “We’re not business freaks, we’re artists.”

The stock might not have been selling, but it was certainly disappearing. In the days before security cameras, shoplifting became the number one pastime at Apple. But in an era of peace and love nobody wanted to make any accusations.

Instead there was a reshuffle. The running of the shop changed hands from Shotton to former theatrical director John Lyndon, who himself was soon replaced by Caleb Ashburton-Dunning. The latest manager surely knew his tenure would be brief, given he was also employed as the in-house astrologer at Apple Corps, which operated from the same building.

Not even an appearance in 1968 MGM caper *Hot Millions* could turn the shop’s fortunes around. But worse was to come. A stream of complaints about the shop’s mural had been made to Westminster City Council. Yes, the Beatles might very well be “more popular than Jesus”,

but even the Messiah would have needed permission to paint a four-storey psychedelic cosmos, and no one at Apple had bothered to apply. The council finally acted, issuing Apple with an enforcement notice to paint over the mural.

“We were absolutely furious about it and couldn’t understand their reasoning at all,” recalled Pattie Boyd. “It seemed, as far as we were concerned, to brighten up the whole street. It brought an awful lot of tourists, who were fascinated, and endless photographs were taken of it. And it was just a fun thing.”

In May 1968 the shop’s exterior was duly whitewashed, with the word ‘Apple’ painted on each fascia in cursive script. “Once we were told we had to get rid of the painting, the whole thing started to lose its appeal,” said George Harrison in an interview conducted for *The Beatles Anthology*. The Beatles decided to pull the plug and announced that they would be shutting the shop and giving away the remaining stock.

The enterprise had lost an absolute fortune. “Our course just isn’t shopkeeping,” explained George Harrison with delicious understatement. “It’s not really a mistake. The only mistake that anyone ever made was getting born. All the rest is life.” George was presumably twanging his sitar as he launched that spiritual javelin.

Paul McCartney explained his band’s motives in a press release. “Apple is mainly concerned with fun, not with frocks. We want to devote all our energies to records, film and our electronics adventures. We had to refocus. We had to zoom in on what we really enjoy, and we enjoy being alive, and we enjoy being Beatles.” They also enjoyed helping themselves to the stock. “We went in the night before and took everything we wanted,” Ringo Starr later recalled.

The great giveaway at Apple began on 30th July 1968 and lasted two days. BBC footage shows crowds jostling for prime position outside the shop, few if any resembling flower children. Looting was a polite affair back then and there’s little

pushing and showing as the police try to handle the bargain hunters.

Though several youngsters tumble as they squeeze through the door, they do at least remember to smile up at the camera. A pretty Canadian lass looks faintly aroused as she tells the reporter how shaken up she is, while others rush about filling bags with garments, many still on their hanger. The management request of only one item per person is universally flouted.

Apple closed its doors for the final time on 31st July 1968. But the drama of the ill-fated fashion boutique didn’t end there. Paul McCartney, perhaps disgruntled at the demise of the mural, decided to leave his own mark on the building. On 7th August, McCartney drove new girlfriend Francie Schwartz and assistant Alistair Taylor to the shop and daubed the words “Hey Jude” on the now whitewashed windows. The following day a Jewish passerby, not realising this was a reference to the Beatles forthcoming single, mistook the graffiti for an act of anti-Semitism.

“He suddenly saw back to the Nazi regime from the Second World War, when they used to put signs on Jewish owned shops in Berlin,” recounted Alistair Taylor. “He jumped out of the car and threw this soda siphon straight through the window. Paul and I had never even given this a thought. Naturally, we didn’t press charges.”

There ended The Beatles’ brief foray into the rag trade. The Georgian townhouse at 94 Baker Street was demolished and rebuilt in 1974. A Heritage Foundation plaque now hangs from the wall in honour of John Lennon and George Harrison, who, it says, both “worked here”. One can hardly imagine them manning the tills, dealing with customers or running around in the stock room. But they did, at least for a few short months, bring a splash of psychedelic colour to Marylebone.

Their shop may have been a commercial flop, but it shows just how far ahead of the game the Beatles were in attempting to market their name—a name as big now as it was half a century ago. The Beatles remain the best selling band in history. Beyoncé, Jay-Z, Kanye West, Zayn Malik: you’ve a long way to go.



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Features.



Light entertainment

Dame Barbara Windsor was the star of this year's Marylebone Christmas Lights event. She talks to the Journal about living in Marylebone, missing Albert Square and meeting the Queen

INTERVIEW: ELLIE COSTIGAN
PORTRAIT: ALAN OLLEY

It may not end up as thoroughly embedded in British cultural history as her flying bikini top in *Carry On Camping* or her fights with Pat Butcher and Pauline Fowler in *EastEnders*, but for a long-term resident of Marylebone, it still registered as a minor career highlight. On 15th November, Dame Barbara Windsor mounted the stage as the guest of honour at The Howard de Walden Estate's Marylebone Christmas Lights event.

Barbara has been appearing on stages since the age of 13, having visited the theatre with her grandmother as a young girl and fallen in love with the buzz of it all. She learnt her craft as a theatre

actor before finding fame as the archetypal 'good time girl' in the bawdy and very British *Carry On* films, alongside her much-missed friend and fellow Marylebone-ite Kenneth Williams.

Her role as a national treasure was given a second act in 1994 when she was cast in *EastEnders* as Peggy Mitchell, the fierce East End matriarch and owner of the Queen Vic pub, a role that made her a major force on prime-time television for more than two decades.

In 2000, Barbara received an MBE for her services to the entertainment industry and last year, she was made a dame—as a confirmed royalist (that she chose 'Windsor' as her

stage name back in the 1950s was no coincidence) this was a major high point in a career that has been packed with them.

How long have you lived in Marylebone?

I moved to Marylebone around 30 years ago. From a young age, ever since I did my first West End show called *Love From Judy* at the age of 14, I had always wanted to live in the West End. I had to wait until I was in my fifties to achieve it, and it was the best thing I ever did.

Shoreditch, where you were born, has changed a lot in recent years. Would you ever move back?

I left there when I was a child, because my mother couldn't wait to get us out of there. It has undergone such a great transformation, there is no way she would recognise it today. It has become a fashionable place to live—people are now trying desperately to move into not out of the East End! But for me, I am so happy in Marylebone—although the

Features.

Light entertainment

East End still has a very special place in my heart.

Do you have any favourite local haunts?

There are so many. I love walking in Regent's Park and along Marylebone High Street. It has the best shopping and restaurants and still maintains that village atmosphere. Among my favourite places are Fischer's, the Golden Hind fish and chip shop, Patisserie Valerie, and of course my everyday shopping in Waitrose and Johnson Cleaners. There are shops for anything you wish to buy—there is something for everyone and even a great gym, Third Space, where my husband Scott spends his early mornings. And if you're feeling under the weather, there is always great help at Madesil Pharmacie.

Acting has been part of your life from a young age. Were there ever times you thought about changing direction?

Absolutely not. I love it and intend to stay in it as long as the public want me to!

You played the role of Peggy Mitchell in EastEnders on and off for 22 years. What did you think of the character? Do you ever miss Albert Square?

I loved playing Peggy. I'd met so many women throughout my life who were like her—proud, strong

SUPPORT NETWORK SCHOOL HOME SUPPORT

It is a sad and frustrating truth that those children who stand to benefit most from education are those least likely to regularly receive it: school absences are over three times higher among children hailing from deprived areas than those from more affluent ones. School Home Support, the charity beneficiary of the Marylebone Christmas Lights, aims to address the potent cocktail of issues that can undermine a child's access to education: poverty, domestic violence, parental substance abuse, family breakdown and housing problems.

Children who grow up without the emotional and educational

women with a feisty temper who would protect their family at all costs. It was one of the happiest times of my life. And yes, of course I miss Albert Square and my old work colleagues.

When you look back over your career, what are you most proud of?

I am proud that I chose the acting profession and I have been fortunate in my career to have worked with some of the most talented actors and creative teams, having been part of two iconic British institutions: the Carry Ons and EastEnders. Sixty-five years I have been in the business and there have been lots of highs, like starring on Broadway in Oh! What a Lovely War. There have been a few lows as well, but I learnt from them.

Last year you were made a dame. How did it feel when you heard the news?

Overwhelmed, shocked and truly honoured. I love our country and the people in it and have always been a royalist. All I could think about when the letter arrived informing me I was to become a dame was my mum and dad and all my family who are mostly no longer with me—how proud they would have been. I was very lucky to receive the honour from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth herself at Buckingham Palace. Please believe me, it doesn't get any better than that.

support they need to break the cycle of deprivation simply perpetuate it for future generations, yet few schools have the resources required. SHS works with schools, parents and children to address the causes of poor behaviour and attendance. Its practitioners liaise between schools and families to improve learning and attendance, and work to solve a range of complex issues, from ill-health to anti-social behaviour. The Ready for School programme sets out to nip potential issues in the bud: working with families to make sure that they are prepared for their children to start at school, and providing training courses for teachers.

SCHOOL HOME SUPPORT
schoolhomesupport.org.uk

As well as being a community celebration, the Estate's Christmas Lights event also raises money for an important cause—this year, School-Home Support. How involved are you in fundraising?

I have been involved in various charities for many years now, including many children's charities. There are no words to stress how important these money-raising events are to each individual charity. Young people are our future and we must all do our best to make sure they get the best start and support in life. The British people, fortunately, are very charitable and that's something we all should be proud of.

Is it your first time going to the Marylebone Christmas Lights?

No, I've been to the lights switch-on event many times in the past—whenever I wasn't working. It has a wonderful atmosphere and it really marks the start of the Christmas celebrations. It's a great day, and I couldn't wait to flick that switch at last.

What are your Christmas traditions?

Most of my life I have worked at Christmas, in the theatre, which was a lovely way to celebrate with the public. Nowadays it's with my loved ones, which makes it just that bit more special.



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Culture.

QA

GAVIN ROBERTS

The director of music at St Marylebone Parish Church on battling stereotypes, making classical music accessible and eating too many mince pies

INTERVIEW: ELLIE COSTIGAN
PORTRAIT: CHRISTOPHER L PROCTOR

Do you have a musical background?

None of my family are really musical at all—though my mother used to play the piano a bit, so it was probably in there somewhere. I started going to Saturday morning group-singing lessons aged four and we had a piano in the house, so I used to come home and pick out the tunes. Singing has always

been part of my musical education, alongside the piano and then subsequently the organ. It's remained the basis of my profession, which is now mainly playing piano as an accompanist to singers. Music is one of those professions you suddenly find yourself in. It chooses you, in a way. I'm very lucky.

How did you go from singer and pianist to director of music at the church?

I studied at Cambridge and while I was there I did an organ scholarship. When I left, I had no idea what I wanted to do. I looked for jobs in music publishing, or recording classical music as that was my degree. It never occurred to me you could make a living out of being a performer. Then I was offered a job as an organist here, 15 years ago, at first mainly playing organ for the choir. People started offering me bits of work: playing for choirs, accompanying singers, working for opera companies. Suddenly I had a freelance career. The church was a launchpad. More recently I was made director of music, so there's a lot more admin: fixing the singers, choosing the music, organising the carols, as well as weddings, memorials and funerals. The rest of the time I work at Guildhall School at the Barbican Centre, as a freelance piano accompanist.

You also founded Song in the City, which combines classical music with social agendas. Tell us about that.

While studying at the Guildhall, I had to organise

some concerts as part of my exams. Before I knew it I'd organised 12, in one of the City churches. Song in the City started as a lunchtime concert series, and as time's gone on it has become more socially engaging. We took part in LGBT history month the last couple of years, telling the story of artists and musicians who were part of that community. We've done projects with mental health patients, such as Creative Madness in Song, for which we commissioned composers to make songs out of patients' poems. We try to put on concerts that mean something to the outside world—to take something that's traditional, the classical genre, and put it in the real world and reinvent the stereotype of classical music being all bow ties and suits.

Do you think music has an important role to play in addressing mental health issues?

I began Song in the City with a programme called Songs from the Asylum, which told the story of composers who ended their lives in an asylum, starting in the 19th century. In the 20th century, patients were allowed to compose—it was seen as a good thing—whereas before then all pens and paper would have been taken away. In the last 100 or so years, there's been a complete change in attitude. Projects like Creative Madness in Song are increasingly seen as useful medicine for those who suffer with mental ill health—certainly those that took part in the project found it hugely therapeutic. At the





“
We try to put on concerts that mean something to the outside world—to reinvent that stereotype of classical music being all bow ties and suits

Guildhall, there's even a music therapy department, which includes the study of music and psychiatry and dementia, learning disabilities and communication disorders. The role of the arts in treating mental health is increasingly seen as being valuable.

How does this feed into your work at the church?

I have brought all of that experience to the church, in the form of things like the St Marylebone Festival. I love putting performances together that try to educate audiences and have something meaningful to say. The church runs an amazing series called Music for the Moment, working with people affected by dementia, and for this year's festival we ran a project called One Creation. It was all about musicians and artists from different faith backgrounds coming together through performance, and celebrating commonality. My friend Alice Sielle, the artist who pioneered the project, sees it as her answer to extremism. The church is very open to that sort of thing; I think it's more important than ever for different faiths to work together.

Do your productions and events at the church tend to have a religious bent?

No, not at all. The concerts aren't of a religious nature—the church sees its mission as being part of the community. Anyone who passes through the door is valuable, even if it's just to come and see this beautiful space, have 20 minutes of sitting quietly, or come to a concert. The amazing

thing about the festival was, we always had refreshments afterwards and lots of the local businesses donated bits of food and drink, so there was that communal aspect. It allows people to see the church as a hub, as much as a place to worship on a Sunday morning. The church is not a museum. That's what their new project, Changing Lives, is mainly about: tapping into what the community needs and the role the church has to play in that, which is fantastic.

Music is integral to the church's heritage. How does that manifest itself today?

We're very lucky to have a professional choir which sings on a Sunday morning. Our assistant director of music, Thomas Allery, also runs a children's choir, which rehearses on Sundays and performs once a month at Sunday service. Having professional musicians working in the church costs money, so it's nice for parents to see the benefit of having that and it allows us to train the next generation of professional musicians. We also have an organ scholar, Bertie Baigent, who's brilliant. He's studying conducting at the Royal Academy of Music. The Academy does all of its organ teaching in the church, on our 30-year-old Rieger organ. If you go in Monday to Friday, you'll hear the students practicing. The poor organ gets played more than any instrument in the country!

You put on some ambitious productions. What are the challenges that come with that?

I always like to include some element of theatre—we did a concert based on the Robert and Elizabeth musical, for example—but it can be difficult. You're trying to play the piano, organise the musicians, check that the wine is ready to be served. Liz who works in the parish office is fantastically supportive, but there are only two of us, with a small team of volunteers. We try to use the church space so that it's as communicative as possible, but even if you raise people up on a stage there are sightline problems. We have these amazing balconies, which we used in the One Creation performance, so that's a practical use of space. We're always asking, how can I use the space to maximise the performance?

Do these productions help make classical music more accessible to a wider audience?

I think so. I'm happiest when I can confidently say to friends that aren't necessarily into classical music, "Come along to this, you will enjoy it." And then when they do, there's that amazing feeling of doing something that's not in any way alienating

or elitist. The reinvention of comic opera *Così fan tutte* that Bertie organised, for example, was fantastic. But some song recitals can be very formal occasions and there's sometimes a sense that you have to be knowledgeable to appreciate it. A lot of people think when it comes to classical music or opera, "I'm not sure how I'm supposed to behave, what I'm supposed to wear, when I'm supposed to clap." But as musicians, we love the repertoire and we want to share it with people. We're singing songs, at the end of the day, which is something everybody has done since childhood. It's the most communicative tool we have. We try to create an environment where people feel comfortable.

None are more so than Christmas carol concerts...

It's amazing, the carol service is really a Victorian invention and yet this combination of choir singing and the audience joining in, singing their favourite carols, is a formula that resonates—particularly when there's mulled wine and mince pies afterwards! Christmas is of course about celebrating the birth of Jesus, but these concerts are still popular in an increasingly secular world. It captures people's imaginations. My December is always night after night of carol concerts, and they're always packed. I won't be able to eat another mince pie by the time Christmas comes.

ST MARYLEBONE PARISH CHURCH
17 Marylebone Road, NW1 5LT
stmarylebone.org

WHAT'S ON



ABACUS, CAPITAL, BASE

Until 11th February
RIBA
66 Portland Place,
W1B 1AD
architecture.com

Emerging architects Nicholas Lobo Brennan and Astrid Smitham's (APPARATA) site-specific installation in the RIBA entrance reframes classical architecture, using contemporary materials and construction technology to highlight its restrictions and opportunities. The installation runs alongside RIBA's major exhibition from Pablo Bronstein on the ongoing dominance of Georgian architectural ideas, which presents 50 new drawings of contemporary buildings, all of them built in a Georgian style.

Below: ring by An Alleweireldt

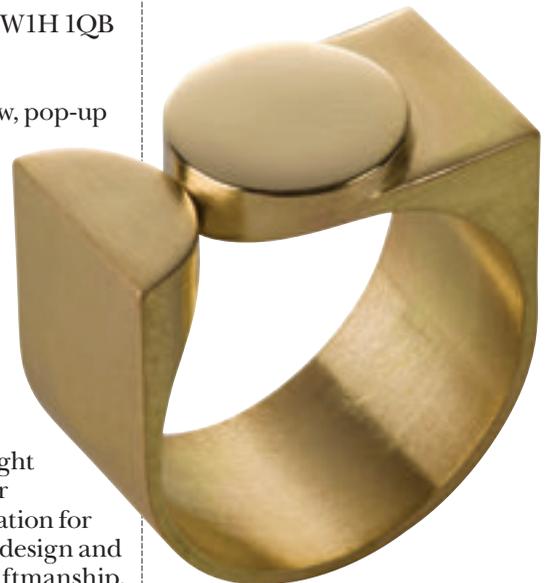
Above left: Abacus, Capital, Base by Nicholas Lobo Brennan and Astrid Smitham

EXHIBITIONS

DESIGNER JEWELLERS GROUP CHRISTMAS SHOW

4th—23rd December
67 York Street
67a York Street, W1H 1QB
67yorkstreet.com

In a one-off show, pop-up event space 67 York Street sees a collection of handmade, one-off pieces created by members of the Designer Jewellers Group—a co-operative of designers, brought together in their mutual appreciation for individuality of design and professional craftsmanship.



MATTHEW ALEXANDER: FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF IMPRESSIONISTS

Until 23rd December
Thompson's Gallery
3 Seymour Place,
W1H 5AZ
thompsonsgallery.co.uk

Matthew Alexander has a reputation as one of Britain's finest landscape artists, gleaned over 40 years in the art world. In his latest solo show, the artist reinterprets the views of well-known impressionists, including Alfred Sisley in Louveciennes, Monet in Veheul and Picasso in Pontoise.

ON HIGH: IN HOPE

Till 22nd December
jaggedart
28a Devonshire Street,
W1G 6PS
jaggedart.com

An exhibition from a trio of artists whose works centre on the theme of movement. Expect collaboratively hand-carved wooden mobile sculptures from Juliet and Jamie Gutch, and figurative forms comprised of intricate paper birds from jaggedart stalwart Rachel Shaw Ashton.



Laurie Steen

PAULINE BATISTA AND MADELEINE STACK: FATAL SOFTNESS

Until 6th January
The Koppel Project
93 Baker Street,
W1U 6RL
thekoppelproject.com

In their two-person exhibition, Pauline Batista and Madeleine Stack explore the pitfalls of western culture, centering on the ceaseless pursuit of progress, including images of defunct and obsolete technology, once deemed cutting edge and now valueless.

CHRISTMAS EXHIBITION

Until 23rd December
Cube Gallery
16 Crawford Street,
W1H 1BS
cube-gallery.co.uk

Cube Gallery brings together a diverse roster of works from both familiar artists—including gold leaf cherry blossoms from Jack Frame, Lori Katz's ceramics, and line drawings and watercolours from Kate Evans—and two new artists to the gallery: painter Laurie Steen and multi-media artist Stephanie Tuckwell.



PICTURE FROM AN EXHIBITION PAVANNE, BY CARMEN HERRERA

Carmen Herrera was born in Havana in 1915. She's been painting since the age of eight—but didn't sell a painting until she was 89. "Carmen grew up in Cuba, but she did a lot of travelling and eventually moved to New York when she met her husband," says artist liaison Caroline Matisse. "She spent her formative years as a painter in Paris. Her earlier work was much busier, but by the time she left Paris, her art was completely abstract—she's been painting in the same style since."

While Carmen had some success in France, exhibiting alongside the likes of Piet Mondrian and Theo Van Doesburg, when she returned to the US her work wasn't well received. "Because she's a woman, people weren't receptive." Carmen continued painting without recognition until she was "discovered" in 2004. She has been represented by Lisson Gallery since 2010. This latest exhibition, her first in London since 2011, will feature 'estructuras', paintings, and works on paper, all created in the past 18 months.

Interestingly, Carmen's recent work focuses on black paintings, which isn't typical," says Caroline. "Her palette tends to be yellow, green, red, blue and orange—straight from the

tube, never mixed. Everything we're going to show is black, with one other colour." The works are, however, characteristically geometric and bold. "Having trained as an architect, Carmen has a fascination with lines and angles. Her work is well planned out, it's very methodical," says Caroline. "She sketches out an idea on graph paper to work out the composition, then draws and paints over it until she's happy. It goes from there onto canvas."

Carmen began designing 'estructuras'—or 'structures'—in the 1960s and "sees them as a link between sculpture and painting". Pavanne has been recreated from a 1967 design. Earlier works were rendered in wood; Pavanne is aluminium and acrylic. "It's a monument to Carmen's brother, who was at the time dying of cancer. It's been a really special project for her, and for us."

Aided by her assistant, Carmen continues to draw and paint every day, in the same Manhattan apartment she's lived in for more than 50 years. At 102, she's at the prime of her artistic career.

CARMEN HERRERA

Until 13th January
Lisson Gallery
27 Bell Street, NW1 5BY
lissongallery.com

Culture.





REIMAGINING NATURE: HITOMI HOSONO'S MEMORIES IN PORCELAIN

Hitomi Hosono combines elements of her Japanese heritage with European tradition in intricate ceramics, inspired by the botany of London's parks. Each porcelain leaf and flower is press-moulded and hand carved, then applied to vases and bowls, enveloping the object's underlying shape.

Until 15th December
Daiwa Anglo-Japanese
Foundation
13-14 Cornwall Terrace,
NW1 4QP
dajf.org.uk

EL GRECO TO GOYA: SPANISH MASTERPIECES FROM THE BOWES MUSEUM

Until 7th January
The Wallace Collection
Manchester Square,
W1U 3BN
wallacecollection.org

Two British institutions, the Wallace Collection and the Bowes Museum collaborate on a major new exhibition featuring Spanish masterpieces such as El Greco's *The Tears of Saint Peter* and Goya's *Portrait of Juan Antonio Meléndez Valdés*. See feature pp22-26.

MATIAS SERRA DELMAR: A CHANGE IN THE WEATHER

Until 31st January
Carousel
71 Blandford Street,
W1U 8AB
carousel-london.com

Matias Serra Delmar's work, which centres on the theme of opposing dual elements, makes use of acrylics, watercolours and line drawings. These new bold, abstract works make characteristic use of colour to capture the Herefordshire countryside.

Cuarteto Casals



MUSIC

CUARTETO CASALS

12th December
Wigmore Hall
36 Wigmore Street,
W1U 2BP
wigmore-hall.org.uk

Spanish ensemble Cuarteto Casal—quartet-in-residence at the Escola Superior de Música de Catalunya in Barcelona—perform three works by Beethoven, and a new score by contemporary Italian composer Giovanni Sollima, concluding with a rendition of the first Razumovsky quartet.

SPRING CONCERT SERIES

9th January—25th March
Royal Academy of Music
Marylebone Road,
NW1 5HT
ram.ac.uk

The Royal Academy of Music's spring series kicks off with a production in the new theatre of Jonathan Dove's opera *Flight*. Other highlights will include a Russian programme with the Academy Symphony Orchestra and Oliver Knussen, and the music of Duke Ellington directed by Keith Nichols.

LONDON CONTEMPORARY MUSIC FESTIVAL

3rd—10th December
Ambika P3
35 Marylebone Road,
NW1 5LS
p3exhibitions.com

Now in its sixth year, the annual music festival run by writer and curator Igor Toronyi-Lalic and held in Ambika P3's subterranean event space was founded to provide a home for the "promiscuous music lover". A week-long festival pass invites you to experience a wide array of genres and styles: experimental music, erotic films, afrofuturism, Al battles, live electronic sets and much more, including a performance from the highly distinctive American vocalist Joan La Barbara.

Joan La Barbara



Culture.

THE ACID TEST

BY ANYA REISS



The Killing of a Sacred Deer

FILM

THE KILLING OF A SACRED DEER

12th & 14th December
Regent Street Cinema
309 Regent Street,
W1B 2UW
regentstreetcinema.com

Greek director Yorgos Lanthimos, the auteur behind *Dogtooth* and *The Lobster*, has acquired yet more acclaim with the release of his new film, *The Killing of a Sacred Deer*, which won best screenplay and was nominated for the coveted Palme d'Or award at this year's Cannes Festival. In this typically queasy, uneasy thriller, Steven Murphy (Colin Farrell) introduces a fatherless 16-year-old boy to his family, and things take a turn for the sinister.

THEATRE

THE ACID TEST

5th—9th December
The Cockpit
Gateforth Street,
NW8 8EH
thecockpit.org.uk

Nineteen-year-old Anya Reiss wrote her first play, *Spur of the Moment*, two years ago—and it was met with critical acclaim. In her second kitchen sink drama, *The Acid Test*, Reiss depicts the lives of three young flatmates, whose night is interrupted by the arrival of one of their fathers, who's been kicked out of the family home. An awkward evening of alcohol, weed and emotional outpouring ensues, touching on generational divides, familial relationships and the responsibility of adulthood.

BOOK REVIEWS

WORDS: SASHA GARWOOD

THINGS A BRIGHT GIRL CAN DO

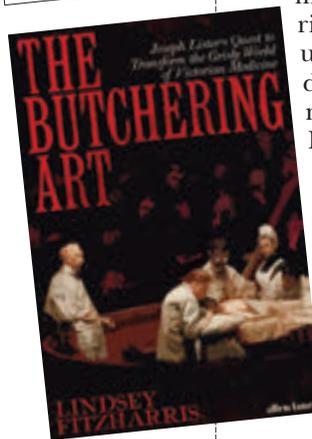
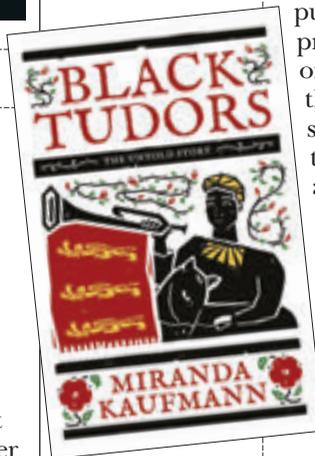
SALLY NICHOLLS

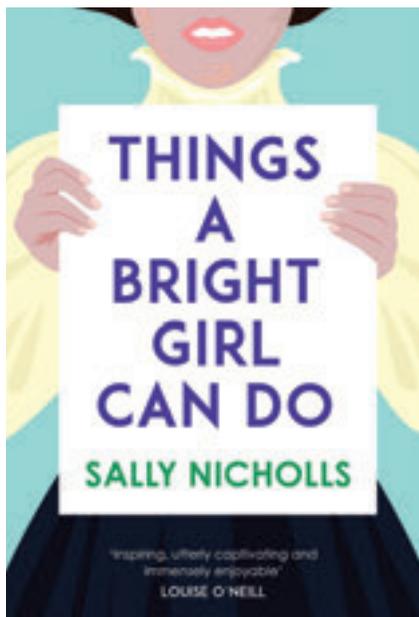
£12.99, Anderson Press

Things A Bright Girl Can Do is the kind of young adult novel that I really want to time-travel back and give to my 12-year-old self, because it says a significant number of important things in an engaging and thought-provoking way. Plus, it's a ripping historical yarn that manages to be almost entirely cliché-free—no mean feat for a triple-coming-of-age novel.

The antagonists here are not repressive husbands or mean fathers but structural inequalities and social systems that require the oppression and sacrifice of those who lack status and resources. Its title is a nod to a 1914 book called *301 Things A Bright Girl Can Do*, which taught its putative readers a wide range of practical, constructive and more-or-less dangerous skills, and while the novel demonstrates a pleasing selection of options for girls across the class spectrum, it also stands as an uncomfortable reminder of the ways in which people then and now have tried to limit each other on the basis of their gender.

Evelyn is 17, engaged to the artistic and supportive Teddy since early childhood but irresistibly drawn to university and the growing suffragist movement for women's rights. May lives with her unconventional, politically driven mother in cheerful middle class chaos in the East End, raised on a steady diet of polite, insistent activism and disregard for social nicety, while the relatively impoverished Nell wears men's clothes, works in a jam factory to support herself and her family and spends a lot of time at the fist-strewn, window-breaking frontier of the Suffragette crusade.





As England tips into war, all of them have to decide where their loyalties lie and how much they are prepared to give up for what they want.

Nicholls' characterisation is excellent, with Evelyn, Nell, May and those around them pleasingly believable. The queer sexuality Nell and May share is sensitively drawn and free from stereotype, and the coercion, misunderstanding and resentment that so often characterises representations of Edwardian heterosexual relationships is endearingly absent from Evelyn's engagement to Teddy. However, this is not to say that the girls face no conflict on their journey to adulthood, and the sometimes fatal clashes in ideology and desire that challenge them are all the more moving for growing out of individual situation and background, rather than traditional class or gender lines.

Similarly, the impact of war on Evelyn, May and Nell's previously stable—if unsatisfactory—existences is all the more powerful for the quotidian realism with which it is described. Nicholls' writing is clear, accessible, emotionally nuanced and occasionally funny, and she's clearly done her research. *Things a Bright Girl Can Do* captures the intensity of adolescent emotional experience, and it makes for a moving, frequently poignant, sometimes amusing tale.

BLACK TUDORS MIRANDA KAUFMANN

£18.99, Oneworld Publications

Black Tudors is an important book. I don't just say that as someone who teaches early modern history—although it's certainly a valuable resource in that context—but as someone who lives in a world where concepts of 'history' are both politically loaded and repeatedly whitewashed, as if early modern England had been about as racially diverse as the Nobel Prize shortlist. Black Tudors contests this myth in the best possible way, by going back to surviving documentary records and building a series of case studies of black Tudor figures, exploring their lives and communities and any impact their colour may (or, often, may not) have had on their experiences.

Kaufmann's case studies are pleasingly diverse in rank and gender, ranging from Dederi Jaquoah, the Prince of River Cestos, to Henry VIII's trumpeter John Blanke and sex worker Anne Cobbie. My particular favourite was Cattelena of Almondsbury, an independent single woman, who sets fruitfully off balance our assumptions about gender and power in early modern England. The background and livelihood of each character is explored, along with a fascinating selection of useful contemporary information, from the silk trade in which Reasonable Blackman made his living to the perceptions, practicalities and persecutions of sex work.

Despite the paucity of definite evidence—Kaufmann's necessary ambivalence about whether or not a particular person got married or raised a child is occasionally frustrating to the narratively-minded—Black Tudors is also a treasure trove of fascinating Tudor trivia, illegitimate births jostling with syphilis treatments, fornication prosecutions with colonialism and international trade. It's also eminently readable, its conversational tone wearing its undoubted learning lightly. Alongside its innovative focus, Black Tudors is social history of the best kind: that which invites us to examine our own sociocultural preconceptions.

THE BUTCHERING ART LINDSEY FITZHARRIS

£16.99, Allen Lane

Lindsey Fitzharris's *The Butchering Art* is a splendidly colourful, frequently wince-inducing and always fascinating account of Marylebone man Joseph Lister's battle to bring hygiene to surgery. The quiet, dedicated Quaker Lister, with his lifelong passion for microscopic study, affectionate relationship with his intelligent wife and his bouts of depression, is in some ways an unlikely hero, but he's all the more endearing for that. Fitzharris wisely pulls in a lot of brilliantly horrifying context and the choleric, eccentric figures of Lister's colleagues, mentors and opponents lest Lister's earnestness becomes too much for us. He emerges from the book a determined, brilliant figure of quiet modernity, the hero that generations of patients needed and a metaphorical patron saint of modern medicine.

Fitzharris's descriptions of pre-germ theory surgery are, well, vivid. Doctors who pride themselves on never washing their hands or clothes, 'lucky' operating jackets so stiff with pus and blood they stand up on their own; rats in operating theatres, brutal animal abuse in the name of research; medical students covered in decaying brain matter—it's utterly horrifying and enraging even at 200 years' distance. But this just throws into sharp relief both the arrogance of assuming current medical knowledge is as complete as it ever can be, and the importance of quiet, evidence-based study like that Lister engages in.

The book zips along, its articulate and engaging tone rich with incident. Not everything, fortunately, is a medical horror story—the time on honeymoon when Lister gathered frogs for experiments and they escaped in the house, for example, or the affectionate extracts from his conversations with his father, give welcome light relief from the onslaught of gore and guts, and Fitzharris clearly has a deep scholarly understanding of her topic. If you're not overly squeamish, *The Butchering Art* is a fascinating insight into a relatively unknown area of history.

Style.



QA

ANNE
BLANCHARD

The creative mind behind Agnès b's latest capsule collection on theatrical costume design, bourgeois taste and dressing like a ninja

INTERVIEW: CLARE FINNEY

How did you and Agnès meet?

I know Agnès because she produced the last short film I made with my company five years ago, *Les Condiments Irréguliers*, and we have always kept in touch. The film was about a poisoner, set in the 18th century. Agnès knows absolutely everything about 18th century art and architecture, so she was interested from the beginning. It's been in many film festivals since and has won several awards.

How did you get into costume design?

My mother is a very big fan of the theatre—she goes once or twice a week—and I started going with her when I was very young. I just loved it; the way they shut down the lights and real people tell you a story. I know it is not true for everyone, but I have lived probably the most magical moments of my life in the auditorium. Unforgettable moments. You share things you don't share in a cinema. And, because I loved sewing from a young age, when I realised I could link my two passions, that was that. I've done this ever since and I cross my fingers that it never stops.



I live on my own, I have a child, I am working and have a heavy social life. But I still want to be a woman, looking strong and beautiful

Have you designed for the retail sector before?

It is my very first time in fashion. I did this as a one-off, really, for Agnès. We get on very well and she likes what I do, I think. Our sense of aesthetic just clicked.

Why do you think that is?

Agnès saw some of the films I was working on and what I do in the theatre, and I think we have a pretty similar background: both from strict, square, bourgeoisie families, both going out to rediscover and rework the elegance of the bourgeois woman. She is very rock and roll, and I suppose I am too, and maybe there is something that made her think we could be part of the same idea.

What do you mean by bourgeois?

My grandmother was one of the perfect bourgeois women: she was very strict, very strong, but when it came to fashion she had 'the taste'. She was really cool. I used to take a lot of her garments and wear them in different ways—though never revealing anything at all! I was not allowed to wear things with buttons opened, or show my décolletage, or wear

anything transparent, though I would have loved to. Still, I found her fashion very elegant. I think on young and older bodies it looks tremendous. It is a nice way to show a woman's figure, and it suits daytime and night time. It's comfortable, sexy and it looks good.

There is a feel of the 1940s about your collection.

What is it that inspires you about that decade?

Personally, I need inspiration because that is what I am used to in the theatre. Passion for the old days is very instructive for me. What I like about the 1940s, and the reason I designed this collection, is that for me those women were the most powerful ever. They had to handle absolutely everything, because there were no men—and they did it, and they looked amazing at the same time. I live on my own, I have a child, I am working and have a heavy social life, and I'm not the only one doing that, either. But I still want to be a woman and I am glad that we are women, looking strong and beautiful.

How have you translated that into a contemporary collection?

The main problem with my grandmother's outfits as they were, was that you couldn't do anything while wearing them. They are perfectly cut of course, but if I started sewing, writing or cycling, the dress would tear straight away. Having a very classical, straight skirt and jacket but in a jersey fabric that stretches means I can live my life, not just stand there looking pretty. Also, my colours are

Style.



different—brighter and happier. We are a bunch of happy ladies these days, and I hope that will continue.

Did Agnès give you much guidance?

I have a strong connection with Agnès, but she believes that when she gives an opportunity to someone to design a mini-collection, they should have all the freedom. We spoke many times throughout the process, but I didn't want her to know too much, really. I am thankful for the freedom she gave me.

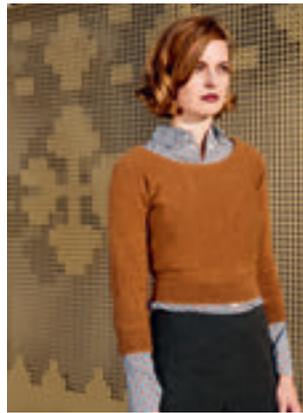
How much of a change was it, moving from designing for theatre and film to designing for consumers?

For theatre or cinema I only make one unique

piece. I have no idea about mass production. This was the first time people told me, well, if you do this kind of fastening rather than this one, it costs more, and you need to think about that. I also had to make garments that would work with most human shapes. In theatre or film, you create something on the body of a particular actor.

Are designing for film and theatre very different to each other?

The cinema is close up: it is realistic, and they want absolute historical accuracy as a result of that. From the beginning, I have mostly been interested in theatre. I go often and I'm fond of dressing actors there, because you don't need the same accuracy. You need to create a character. You



need to know that when the actor enters on stage, the audience knows who he is even if he pops in and pops out again. Good or bad? Funny or wise? In theatre, you can make people believe whatever you want them to believe, you are building personalities. There is something so much more... characterful about designing for the stage.

Is that what you do when designing collections, build characters?

That is how I dress each morning. I think about what mood I am in, and create a character accordingly. My ninja outfit—black turtleneck with big black trousers and big black shoes—is for days I've not had enough sleep or I've had too many drinks the night before. Bright blue is for when I feel like making a stand against the director I am working with at the moment. She believes people "shouldn't wear colour", so if I'm feeling confident I'll wear a yellow shirt and a fierce blue outfit that really... piquer les yeux [stings your eyes].

There is a lot of colour in your collection...

I am very proud of that. Black is good, I wear a lot of black, but it is for my ninja days really. I don't have a single thing that is black in my collection because there is enough black in the world. Besides, Agnès does beautiful black clothes. Her black trousers fit perfectly, and I am happy to wear them when I am a ninja. Strong, bright colours bring life into your day.



Every day, I think about what mood I am in, and create a character accordingly. My ninja outfit—black turtleneck with big black trousers—is for days I've not had enough sleep or had too many drinks the night before



AGNÈS B
40-41 Marylebone High Street,
W1U 4QH
agnesb.com

Style.

MY FAVOURITES HASTI GHAVAMI

The manager of By Malene Birger picks out the best of the current collection

Tumelo coat £535

The inspiration for the whole collection was Scarface—that scene where Michelle Pfeiffer’s character is dancing, and she is so comfortable, sexy and confident. She is her own muse, dressing to impress herself rather than other people. Those characteristics are in these pieces. This coat is a good example. The double zip, the colourful lining—it is all about the details. It is sportswear, but luxurious. It is functional—you can unzip the bottom so you can sit easily—and you can wear it in the evening, and wear it in the day.

Elenasoo trousers £650

Leather trousers are always a favourite. Wear them with a blazer or



a silk blouse, and it is glamorous chic. Add some heels and you are ready for cocktails. These are a great shape. They are long but we can cut the length very easily. We are a Scandi brand, so the fit is long, but we know not everyone is so tall.

Simmy shirt £190

This is one of our best



sellers. Silk shirts are so in, and this one is really beautiful. It is nice to have something so simple: you can dress it up and you can dress it down, too.

Javiera blazer £415

This is another easy to wear item: striped and double breasted, with a good length. It is a nicely tailored shape, which you can

wear with jeans. There is a matching skirt, too.

Iauno skirt

£165

This metallic skirt you can wear with boots or with heels. It is very easy. I can go from the office to an evening out just by changing my shoes.

Sibvil hooded sweater

£235

The whole point of the collection is that whatever you wear and however you choose to wear it, you are a woman. You impress yourself. Even jumpers like this sporty, mohair hoodie are confident and cool.

Bioncy sweater

£215

Some mohair jumpers can lose hair, but this doesn't: it is kid mohair, so it is really soft—it doesn't itch at all—and I love the pattern. It looks great with jeans, but even a creamy silk blouse underneath this jumper works very well. The layered look is one Malene Birger does beautifully.

Adolina dress

£650

I can see Michelle Pfeiffer wearing this sheer maxi dress embellished with sequins and beads: a sophisticated person in the 1980s. I dress it with ripped jeans, a tank top and heels. You can really play around. We had a customer who went to Dubai and wore this just with a bikini. She sent a picture. I love that—but you can wear it as a dress also. What I love about this collection is that you can really play around with it.

BY MALENE BIRGER

28-29 Marylebone High Street,
W1U 4PL
bymalenebirger.com

INSIDE KNOWLEDGE BERNICE AFFAT

The owner of West One MYB shares her tips on beauty treatments for the festive period



We are in winter. It might not always feel like that outside, but in terms of nail colours, we are definitely in winter—and that means dark colours. Reds are perennially popular of course, but while in summer it tends to be the brighter, fire engine reds, now it is the deeper shades: burgundy, crimson and maroon.

The new shades for the season are iridescent colours and metallics.

We don't have a huge range of these, because our clients here like quite classic looks—just yellow golds, rose golds and a few shades of silver. Some people like to do all their nails red but for the ring finger, and have that in glitter, but again it depends on the local demographic.

Our clients in Marylebone are generally looking for a timeless look, for nail shapes as well as shades. We've been through the long and pointy trend, but now it's all about the short, natural oval you can actually type with.

Naturally, the colour of your nails will depend on what you're wearing. We had a lady in the other day who wanted to match her dress exactly, which we can try and do if you bring in the dress itself, or a picture. You might want a neutral shade, that will go with various outfits: I've talked a lot about dark shades, but don't forget that nudes are in all year round and you can wear them with anything.

People tend to associate waxing and spray tans with summer—but when the frocks are out, legs are out, and you want to make sure they are presentable. It's worth having a pedicure, too, if you're going to be in sandals with your dress. Shellac is the most popular type of treatment, for fingernails as well as toe nails—it lasts for a few weeks but isn't too hard to take off, provided you come into the salon. People do peel it off at home, but we really don't advise it! It's not the best thing for your nails.

As far as the face is concerned—well, where to start! Brow shaping and tinting are popular, but if you really want to make a statement with your eyes you can have the total lash lift and tint. This is where we use a silicone gel pad to set the lashes back a bit, as well as tinting them—so for up to six weeks you don't need to wear mascara, which is really handy over the festive season. We can do eyelash extensions and infills for those who want more voluminous lashes, too.

Facials are worth thinking about at this time of year. The heating is on, the skin is drying out, and you'll need to keep your skin hydrated—particularly with all those drinks parties. Drinking water is a fairly simple way of doing that, but facials can also help. The other benefit of a facial of course is that it provides some much-needed downtime—not to be underestimated in the run-up to Christmas.

WEST ONE MYB

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IN YOUR ELEMENT

The Journal pays a visit to Chuan Body + Soul to enjoy a massage and discover why the specifics of our emotional state and least favourite time of day are of interest to a therapist

WORDS: CLARE FINNEY
IMAGES: JOSEPH FOX



I've been prescribed earth oil, because my form suggested I was 'overthinking'—a fairly permanent state of mind for me, so I welcome the intervention

"If you could just fill out this questionnaire"—the receptionist smiles, handing me two sheets of paper. The first I could fill out with my eyes closed, as could anyone: not on medication, slightly low blood pressure, no grim chronic diseases, etcetera, etcetera. The second—well. "Which season do you prefer?" it starts off. I hover between summer and autumn. "What time of day are you least motivated?" I look at the options. 'All times' isn't there, so I opt for 'afternoon', thinking of the post-lunch slump. I circle my favourite colour (green), my least favourite weather condition (wind), and my emotional state (mounting anxiety). Finally, I hand my completed forms back to reception and head with relief to the relaxation room.

There, amid an oasis of plush cushions, herbal teas and fresh fruit, wellness manager Aldona Gidzinska is waiting to enlighten me. Chuan Body + Soul treatments are inspired by traditional Chinese medicine, she says, and "in that philosophy, there are five elements we need to balance, in order to be happy and healthy: earth,

fire, wood, metal and water. They believe that if you remove one, you won't get the full benefit of the others," she continues, "which is why we ask you some quite unusual questions in our elemental questionnaire."

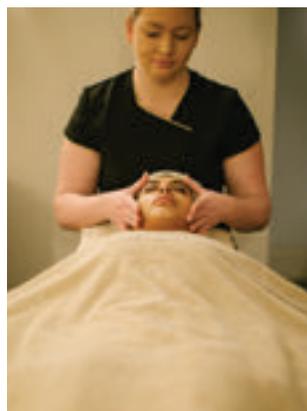
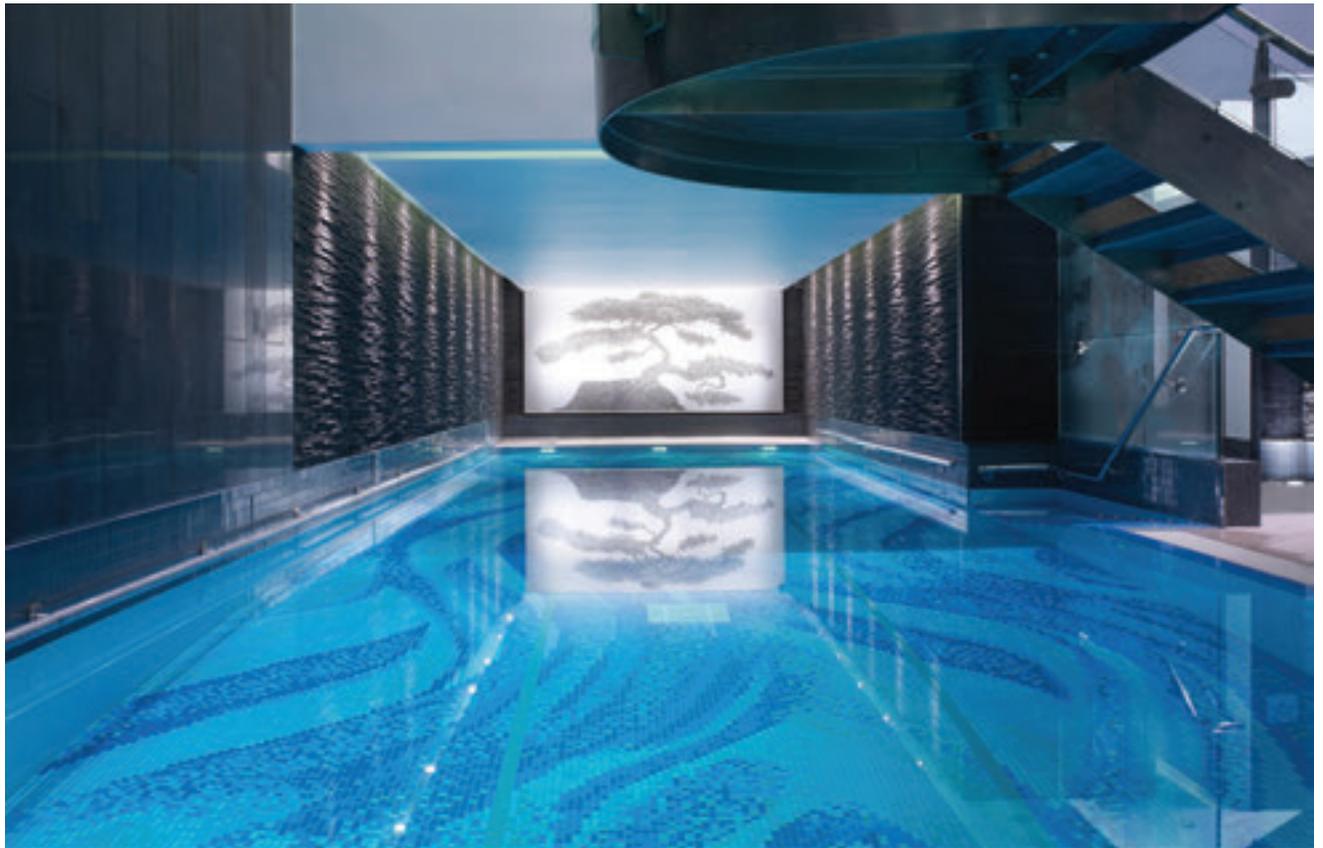
Put simply, the idea behind these questions is to "make you think about how you're feeling emotionally when you arrive." Thus, as well as "the standard, westernised questionnaire", the Chuan therapists hope to determine your personality and state of mind, such that they can match the massage to your mood. After all, a massage or facial is often as much an emotional as it is a physical experience. "We try to think outside the box," says Aldona—a thinking which extends not just to the elements, but to the whole spa experience: from the lockers (easily opened with a magnetic wristband so there's no fiddling with coins and keys) to the GHD straighteners in the bathroom, to the herbal tea and pile of fresh berries you receive at the end of your treatment.

"The herbal teas have all been blended by a traditional Chinese doctor," explains Aldona, "and the one you receive matches your treatment." In order to get the most out of your experience, she recommends taking your tea and fruit in the relaxation room after changing, "just to have time for yourself. What we have really tried to do with our rebrand is create an atmosphere that clients feel they can sit in and relax, as well as a place for

productivity, like the gym."

Aldona also advises arriving early, to enjoy the facilities: a 16-metre pool, sauna and steam room, as well as the music-filled relaxation room. Outside the sauna, a polite notice kindly requests you enter without your mobile phone's blinking, buzzing distractions. "We have very limited cell phone access, and that is helpful"—not for the spa's card payment machines, she smiles wryly, "but it does mean when you come here you are really getting away." Having forgotten my costume, the pool is not an option for me, but I enjoy a toasty 15 minutes in the sauna prior to my treatment. When my therapist collects me, my red face is no longer the result of incompetent ticket users on the tube.

I'm having the Chuan Harmony Massage, the most popular treatment at Chuan Body + Soul—and with good reason, being 60 minutes, full body and fairly mild. At no point during the 60 minutes of kneading and pushing do I feel we stray near the level of pressure that could be described as masochistic: this is no pain, all gain. I've been 'prescribed' earth oil, because my form suggested I was 'overthinking'—a fairly permanent state of mind for me, so I welcome the intervention. I could have opted for fire instead—I was 50-50 between the two elements, apparently—but when offered a blind smelling, I was drawn to the former, which smelt surprisingly un-earthly. "It's related to the lips, liking sweet flavours, and late summer," says Camille Roberts, my designated masseuse. It



smells like eucalyptus and fresh mint tea.

I lie down; first on my front, then on my back, a soft towel discreetly preserving all modesties. I am plied with oil and pummeled gently, but firmly from the tips of my fingers to the tops of my toes. Camille asked me beforehand which area she should pay particular attention to, and I respond in the fashion I imagine every other working Londoner does: “My back has been playing up recently.” The satisfaction I feel after she has unknotted and rolled out the various twists and gnarls in my laptop-weary ligaments is akin to that of climbing into smooth, freshly washed bedclothes.

I think I fall asleep. I certainly drift in and out of consciousness, and come

to gently, to the sound of Camille whispering that she is just going to fetch my tea and fresh fruit while I got ready. The tea is fragrant and refreshing, served in a beautiful Chinese teapot alongside raspberries and blueberries in a dainty porcelain bowl. This is contentment. If only I could be teleported from here, as it is, the Victoria line awaits me. But with a new back, a new scent, and a new sense of energy following the massage, I almost feel ready for it. “Chuan means flowing water in Chinese,” smiles Aldona, “and the reason we called our spas that is because we want you to leave feeling refreshed and renewed.” Mission accomplished.

CHUAN BODY+SOUL
2 Cavendish Place, W1B 3DE
chuanspa.com



INVISIBLE INK

Kay Greveson, qualified nurse and owner of Regent's Park Aesthetics, on a new technology for tattoo and scar removal

WORDS: ELLIE COSTIGAN

"Are you sure you won't regret this?" was the last thing my apprehensive mother said to me when, at 18 years old, I and my two best friends decided to get matching tattoos. And, being 18, my reply was a confident: "Of course not!" Needless to say, these days, the sharpie-esque star on my hip causes me to wince whenever I catch sight of it.

It's a story that's all too common. That pattern you once loved; that quirky symbol; the name of a boy/girl friend who ended up a thing of the past, etched permanently onto your skin. Now, however (breathe a collective sigh of relief) not only do tattoos no longer have to be permanent, but improvements in technology mean removal can be far less painful and more effective than it used to be.

"The Plexr machine we have allows us to remove tattoos using a method called sublimation," explains Kay Greveson, nurse and owner of Regent's Park Aesthetics on Wimpole Street. "It's not a laser, so it doesn't damage the skin." Laser tattoo removal works by dispersing the ink into the body, from where it is eventually excreted; Plexr

tattoo removal works via "little burns to the skin that create access to the dermis, which is where the tattoo ink is located". A dressing is applied to the treated area, which encourages an osmotic response that soaks up the pigment. "It's less invasive and not as painful," says Kay. Treatment lasts for 30 to 40 minutes and around six treatments are usually necessary. "We do a patch test on the area first, which gives an indication of how many sessions you're likely to need."

But that's not all the Plexr machine can do. "We use the same machine to do a number of treatments, including mole and scar removal, using a similar technique," Kay continues. "Scar removal works by doing little controlled burns to the skin that help flatten the scar tissue. It's really good for things like acne scars—both for pitted and discoloured skin." It works by ionising gas in the atmosphere, which forms a plasma that works to shorten and tighten skin fibres. "It doesn't actually touch you—there's a little spark that jumps between." There might be some redness immediately after the treatment, which settles within a few hours,

and some scabbing—but the skin usually heals within seven days. Happily, only one treatment is required to permanently reduce scarring.

With Kay, you're in very safe hands. Having qualified as a nurse in 2001, she continues to practice within the NHS, alongside her work at her bricks-and-mortar private practice on Wimpole Street. "There are various courses you can do to specialise in aesthetics, and you usually have to be certified by the Nursing and Midwifery Council to do them," she explains. "I go on about three courses a year to keep my skills up and stay on top of new techniques and products. You've really got to know what you're doing."

Each treatment begins with a consultation to put the patient at ease and ensure clear understanding of what to expect. "It's important to manage people's expectations. If you have really severe scarring, the treatment might just improve it: you can't always expect a completely clear complexion," says Kay. "It's about talking people through it, giving them the opportunity to ask questions and listening to what their concerns are, then using my experience to explain what's possible.

"These things can interfere with your confidence and make you feel really self-conscious, so it's important to have a friendly, open approach and put people at ease. But when you've been a nurse for 16 years, that comes pretty naturally."

REGENT'S PARK AESTHETICS
19 Wimpole Street, W1G 8GE
regentsparkaesthetics.co.uk

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Style.



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Paul Smith, £95

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Cox & Power, £4,975

Love Game eyeshadow palette
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Cologne & Cotton, £28

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J Crew, £29

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Clare V Luce bag
KJ's Laundry, £315

Catherine Tough lobster ankle socks
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QA

NIKKI SHER

Head of buying and creative at Toast on Syrian baubles, off-beat colours and cultured customers

INTERVIEW: ELLIE COSTIGAN

Have you always worked in fashion and interiors?

I started in the industry when I was 21. I joined Arcadia Group when I graduated, then spent a year at Warehouse buying for the American franchise. I'd never been to New York before and when I went, I completely and utterly fell in love with it—so I moved there. I was ambitious; I wasn't going fast enough, and the fashion industry is much bigger over there. I ended up working for The Limited, which is a big company with huge labels like Victoria's Secret. When I came back I joined Nicole Farhi as head of retail and buying, and spent nearly 10 years there. It's a lovely label—all about quality and texture; it's really very beautiful, much like Toast.

Where do you think your love of this sector comes from?

My mum has been in the fashion industry her whole life—I definitely inherited her genes. She's 73 now and still works full time. She started as a window dresser in Leeds, but left when she was 16 and came to London. She met my dad when they were in their early twenties and they bought their first store in Cranleigh, Surrey, so right in the middle of the countryside. I worked with her for a while before I came to Toast. It was during that time I met my husband and had a baby. I started at Toast when Ruby was one and a half. I really needed it—I've always worked really hard, so without it I was a bit lost. As much as I worship her!

You joined Toast three years ago. What does your role encompass?

I came in as head of buying and my remit was to look at the product and refresh it. It's been going for 20-odd years and like every brand, sometimes you need fresh eyes to keep it moving forward.

I wanted to feel able to wear the clothes and love every piece, and establish a point of view that was different to everybody else's, while holding on to the values of Toast.

I was—I am—so passionate about the product, I was getting myself involved in how things were shot, who we were casting, how the styling looked online, if the outfits were right, what the windows looked like. I wanted to keep that momentum going, right through to the point of sale. Eventually I was offered the role of head of creative, so it was a natural progression.

What do you look for in a piece?

For us, the key attributes are it needs to be handcrafted—not widely available or mass produced. It has to have an element of social consciousness about it, that's so key to our DNA: it has to be natural dye, organic, fair trade, or something that's made with authentic, artisanal methods. There needs to be a story to it. The design team do a lot of site visits, they go on research trips for inspiration and they come back with amazing video stories.

For example, the dressing gowns and jackets are incredible—they're made from recycled saris and we know the women who make them are paid above average. We've

got amazing block print tassel throws: the design is carved out on a block and is literally hand printed, so it's very labour-intensive. You're inevitably going to get variants, but that irregularity adds to its beauty. We've got these lovely baubles coming in for Christmas which are all hand-blown in Damascus in Syria, which they are still managing to get to us despite all the turmoil.

The ceramics are all British-made. There's a lady we're working with at the moment, Pip Hartle, who's based in east London. Brickett Davda—which does a line of earthenware tableware—is based in Brighton and we've been working with the lady behind that for about 15 years. We commission lines that are unique to us, but also occasionally buy from an artist's own collection—it's not mass produced, so we're fine if it's also in the V&A, for example. But everything has our handwriting. It's a small collection, but it's very thoughtful.

Do you approach the homeware and clothing collections similarly?

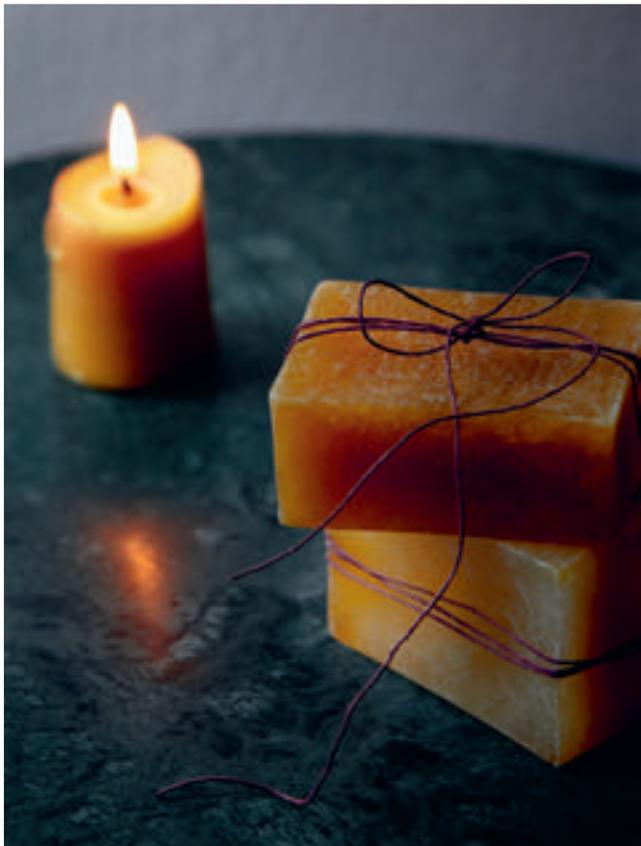
Everyone works from the same concept board drawn up by Jessica Seaton, our brand director. Each designer will translate it into their product category, so we make sure that whatever we're doing in homeware sits really well with that. Currently, for example, we have velvet in the main collection, so we have beautiful velvet cushions and throws. Our homes are an extension of ourselves—the way we dress is quite similar to how we like to dress our homes,

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a lit candle in a dark, textured holder. The candle is lit, with a bright flame. The background is dark and out of focus, with some light spots. The overall mood is contemplative and warm.

“

Times are changing and people are feeling more socially conscious, wanting more from their products than just the materiality. They want to understand that there's a story behind it that's important

Home.





so the lines are blurred. If a Toast customer loves what's she's wearing, she'll love how we've curated our homeware.

Everything we do in clothing and homeware is created with the same intention: to encourage people to slow down and be mindful. We're not about fast fashion. Everything is designed with great care and made with exceptional material and in that way, everything links together.

The Toast aesthetic is distinctive. How would you define it?

We have a very strong colour palette, unique to Toast—we never go with primaries, we always go off-palette and come up with really rich combinations. There's something quite artistic about it. It's eclectic—slightly off-beat,

but also really wearable, with lots of cultural references. We'll take a typical madras check, for example—an authentic technique from India—and then we'll re-colour it. We love colour—we want things to pop, but with something that's surprising.

When Jess and Jamie started the company more than 20 years ago, they were real mavericks of their time—now everything is about simplicity, functionality and beautiful design: the qualities that Toast was founded on. So it's still very relevant. We don't follow fashion, but there are always nods to what's happening culturally in the world. Everyone feels really immersed in the brand: we're clear on what a Toast colour is, a Toast shape, and who our customer is.



When Jess and Jamie started the company more than 20 years ago, they were real mavericks of their time—now everything is about simplicity, functionality and beautiful design: the qualities that Toast was founded on

How has the homeware collection evolved?

It started with nightwear, but over the years it would fluctuate, depending on what was going on at the time and how much travelling Jess and Jamie had been doing. They would never just put things in for the sake of it. Since I've been here, we've identified areas that are really popular and put a lot of energy behind them. One of those is bedding and everything that sits around it. We've got organic ticking stripe sheets that are really beautiful, which are offset well by our solid colour linen sheets. When we go to India and look at throws, we make sure they will dress those sheets, our cushions and everything around that. We're almost building someone's bedroom for them.

Who is the Toast customer?

She is intelligent, cultured, discerning—she knows what value for money looks like. She's got her own style because she knows her own mind, but it's never over the top. She's stylish and modern, no matter what age she is. We're ageless. In fact, we've seen huge growth in 25 to 35-year-old buyers. I think times are changing and people are feeling more socially conscious—wanting more from their products than just the materiality of it. They want to understand that there's a story behind it that's important. Our products are things to be kept, they're not throwaway. That translates across both fashion and homeware.

Toast is still reasonably small, with only four London locations. Are they deliberately placed?

We think what we've got is very special and want to continue to introduce the brand to a wider audience, but we've been very careful about our growth. Marylebone has been having a real moment. It's gorgeous. It's such a good position for Toast, with Caravane and The Conran Shop also there. When you walk into Daunt Books, you get that feeling—it's so authentic, which is how people feel when they walk into Toast. It makes you feel so good, you want to take it home with you. It's tranquil and creative at the same time. You calm down when you walk into the store—which is exactly what you want in your own home.

TOAST
44 Marylebone High Street, W1U 5HF
toa.st/uk

HOME HELP

Stephen Briars, creative director of The Conran Shop, on decorating your home tastefully for Christmas

INTERVIEW: CLARE FINNEY

What are the top Christmas decorating trends for this year?

While the traditional red and green colour scheme will always be a favourite, it is nice to see alternative festive trends emerging alongside this. Every year there are a handful of new trends that influence how we style our homes for Christmas, and there are a number this year: metallic, statement lights, kitschy Mexicana and all-whites.

What does each trend entail?

When Christmas trees go up all over London, I am certain we'll see a good few of them dressed in warm metallic: brass, copper, bronze and so on. We've a number of different decorations for those looking to emulate that trend, from our handblown precious metals Christmas tree topper, to our metallic baubles—one set of which come with eyes painted on, and the other just simple silver, gold, rose gold and copper tones. In fact, we've a whole metallica range this year.

As for statement lights, we've added a bit of a modern touch with an eclectic range of both string and outdoor lights. I particularly like the mini-cube string lights, with a rainbow effect, and the warm white LED lights that come in the shape of a wreath.

The Mexicana theme is also big this year—we wanted to bring in some quirky ornament designs that buck the traditional trends. We've got piñata decorations, tacos, hot chilli sauce and tequila baubles, some tonal fans. Kitschy Mexicana is fun.

How do you do the all-whites look without things getting samey?

When dressing your home in one colour, it's important to play with different textures to make things interesting. Even if you aren't into the all-white theme, using a white backdrop allows the other colours and textures to pop. The snow on an eggshell bauble is a good example of this, or our snowman Christmas tree decoration. Both are part



of our Taiga collection: Taiga is the Russian word for snow-capped forests, and the collection is designed to evoke the season's first frost, elemental tones and the natural beauty of woodlands.

How do you toe the line between enthusiastic and gaudy?

Nothing is too much as long as you're getting creative and allowing yourself to experiment. It is okay to decorate outside the box. It all comes down to injecting some personality.

What are the dos and don'ts of decorations?

There are no dos and don'ts really, it all comes down to whether you want to create a statement Christmas at home or

whether your decorations are an extension of your interior style at home.

What particular decorations are you excited about?

I'm particularly excited about our Lumio book lamps—their versatility allows them to decorate the middle of a table, adding intrigue to any dining scenario, as well as hanging as beautiful light pendants. The walnut or orange and green combination is particularly Christmassy. We've also played around a lot with cactuses and coloured sand this season, which brings a completely new energy to this time of year.

THE CONRAN SHOP
55 Marylebone High Street,
W1U 5HS
conranshop.co.uk

5

FIVE OF THE BEST TREE DECORATIONS

Clockwise from far left:

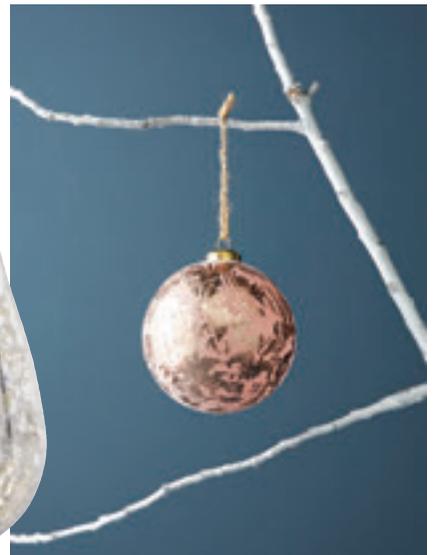
Watermelon slice
The Conran Shop, £8

Palm tree
Oliver Bonas, £8

Bullfinch
Skandium, £4

Flocked glass ornament
Anthropologie, £16

Antiqued drop glass bauble
The White Company, £4



Food.

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I was travelling around Europe in a tiny car with two surfboards when I met chef Nobu Matsuhisa. Mr Nobu was always pushing the boundaries and creating something new



QA

KEIJIFUKU

The co-owner and head chef of Dinings on surfing, sushi and why the idea of a 'pure' cuisine is a fallacy

INTERVIEW: VIEL RICHARDSON
IMAGES: CHRISTOPHER
L PROCTOR

How would you describe Dinings?

In Japan it would be called an 'izakaya', which is a relaxed, informal dining place. We serve our own unique style of sushi and sashimi as well as Japanese tapas.

Where did your love of food come from?

When I was a child, my father would always make a bento box for my lunch and I remember watching him cooking and making up the boxes. I always wanted to help but was restricted to cleaning the boxes.

Also, our neighbour ran a 'taishu shokudo'—in English it would be a cafe—and when I was 13, I started working there doing the washing up and some front of house work. There were lot of regulars coming and going and I found the food interesting. I also liked the smiling faces. Seeing the joy this simple place brought to so many people made a big impression on me.

When did you start working in kitchens?

My real love growing up was surfing. At 21 I moved to a place called Mie, north of Osaka, to pursue my dream of being a surfer. The brother of one of the other surfers ran a 'sushi kaiseki' place. I needed a job and had some kitchen experience, so started working there. That was the first time I was in a kitchen cooking for the public—all I did was eat, sleep, surf and cook. I worked there for three years before moving to France, because the surfing scene in Europe was more advanced.

When did your focus change from the surf to the kitchen?

I was travelling around Europe in a tiny car with two surfboards when I met chef Nobu Matsuhisa. I had gone for an interview at his Nobu restaurant in Paris and was stunned when I saw this huge restaurant serving Japanese fusion food and sushi, because I didn't know of his reputation. That was when I really focused in on the cooking. I only trained in that kitchen for nine months because of visa restrictions, but moved to the Nobu kitchen in Park Lane and finished my training there.

How was the training?

It was very demanding, but very inspiring as well. Mr Nobu was always pushing the boundaries and creating something new, while at the same time serving amazing food. You had to master the technical skills but there was always space for creativity in the Nobu way of cooking. One dish I remember clearly was the sushi-sashimi 'omakasei', which is when the customer asks the chef to choose from the best selection of that day's produce and create a dish for them. To do this well takes skill, a deep knowledge of the ingredients and a connection with your customers. It is a dish I love to do because it pushes your creativity.

How does your time at Nobu influence how you cook today?

I think that the biggest influence is in my creativity. Mr Nobu was always thinking of the customer. In those days not

many people outside Japan ate raw fish. Mr Nobu changed this through innovation. In Japan, sashimi is normally fish with wasabi and soy sauce. But with Mr Nobu sashimi could have garlic, soy sauce, sesame oil, carefully prepared vegetables, he used a wide choice of European or South American ingredients. That for me was very inspiring, it was true fusion cooking. That is still a key part of my approach.

You opened Dinings with chef Tomonari Chiba. Where did you meet him?

I met chef Chiba in 2001 in the Nobu at Mayfair. He was also head chef at Ubon [another Nobu restaurant] at Canary Wharf when I worked there. He is a brilliant chef and was the youngest Nobu head chef at the time.

Did he influence your cooking?

When creating dishes he was always talking about the customer's experience. He said we are in Europe and the menu must reflect that. So around 70 per cent of his ingredients are European and 30 per cent would be Japanese. What he was always trying to avoid was producing some kind of pastiche Japanese food, like in some kind of Japanese show.

What is your process for thinking about a dish?

It always starts with the customers and the staff. Of course I will have ideas, but I always listen to see what the customers are saying and what ideas the staff are coming up with. I will also see what the market is saying. In the days of El

Food.





Bulli, it was all foams and spheres, but now that has passed and there is a move toward simple, ingredient-led cooking as opposed to dishes designed to show off high technique.

Give us an example of a dish you have recently created?

‘Maguro’—tuna—is very important in Japan. They say that if you don’t serve maguro, you are not a sushi restaurant. I created very simple maguro sashimi with truffle and foie gras. That is one of our signature combinations and it is very popular. We are also making a sizzling plate called Japanese toban-yaki. The plate is the toba, on top of which you can serve beef, lamb, duck or fish with mushrooms, enoki, seasonal vegetables. This was actually an idea that

Mr Nobu created, but we do it in our own way here.

It all seems very eclectic.

That is how all cooking is. Every cuisine borrows ideas from others as cooks travel around the world. There is no such thing as a ‘pure cuisine’. Whether it is ingredients, cooking methods or techniques, we are all learning from each other. This is why the staff and customers are so important to the direction the restaurant has taken. Yes, I am the head chef, but I could not do this on my own.

So what is the core principle you are looking for in your food?

I am looking for simple clean dishes with a real clarity of purpose and defined flavours. You need to know what the dish is

about. It is easy to pile layer after layer onto a dish, but then you can lose sight of the original idea—what is the main ingredient, and which are the supporting cast? Suddenly the dish has lost focus and the customer is not getting the best experience.

You have mentioned the importance of the customer relationship several times.

Everything comes back to this; it is why the front of house staff are so important. In fact, in Japan when you start in a restaurant you have to work front of house before you can work in the kitchen. In some places this can be for up to a year. The idea is that you understand this relationship when in the kitchen. Often it is the accompaniments and presentation that make the dish Japanese, and the front of house staff explain the history and context of the dishes so the diner understands and is excited about the dish by the time it arrives, and then gets more out of the whole experience.

Why Marylebone?

In about 2003 I was working with chef Chiba at Nobu, but was thinking

“Every cuisine borrows ideas from others. There is no such thing as a ‘pure cuisine’. Whether it is ingredients, cooking methods or techniques, we are all learning from each other

that it was time for me to do something on my own. Chef Chiba was also looking to branch out, so we started making and selling cakes in our spare time. People liked our creations, which gave us the confidence that there could be a long-term future for any venture. We looked at a lot of premises before being told about this place, which had been a restaurant but was closed. It was in very poor shape but had the facilities we needed and there was something about it that appealed. I liked the fact that it was opposite a wonderful church, which has a beautiful energy.

How was the reaction when you opened?

It was very good but low key, which was deliberate. There were only four of us at the start, chef Chiba, his wife on pastry, myself and one staff member. If the place had been busy from the beginning people would have gone away disappointed. We could not have done all that we needed to establish the concept and still produce our best food for the diners. It is why we let our reputation develop by word of mouth. That way, the staffing and the concept grew organically with the guests, which was what we wanted.

Do you still surf?

Yes I do. I go down to Cornwall when I can, which is a bit difficult with a business and young family. But I love it down there. It has great seafood and good surfing—what more could I ask for?

DININGS
22HarcourtStreet,W1H4HH
dinings.co.uk

WORLD OF WINE

ROBERT GIORGIONE

A beginners guide to letting wine breathe

The question of whether wines should be given time to breathe is one that I'm often asked. Will the wine taste better poured straight out of the bottle into your glass or will it need a little aeration beforehand?

When choosing a wine, either in a restaurant, or when browsing the shelves in a wine merchant, most people will be looking for a wine that can be drunk straight away—the practice of 'laying down' wines is for collectors. I too am a believer that wines are made to be drunk—but the trick is knowing how to get the best out of each wine when you do. Most commercially-available wines can be drunk straight away and the 'breathing' part can be done while the wine is swirling around in your glass, naturally coming up to room temperature.

A younger wine may be improved slightly by giving it a little aeration before drinking—whenever I open any bottle of wine, be it screwcap or cork, I always let the wine breathe naturally for a minute or so. However, decanting an older wine—which perhaps comes from an outstanding chateau or vineyard and has spent many years being matured in the bottle, during which natural sediments form—is absolutely vital. In my opinion, most full-bodied wines—from opulent and fragrant whites and flavoursome and powerful reds, to a decent vintage port—also benefit from being decanted.

Saying that, oxygen is the mortal enemy of an opened bottle of wine—we've all seen a half-drunk bottle lose freshness and go flat, and inevitably we pour it down the sink. There is now an interesting gadget from Coravin that allows you to serve fresh glasses of wine from the same bottle over weeks or even months: a syringe is inserted through the cork to deliver the gas then, due to cork's elastic properties, it neatly reseals the bottle once the syringe is withdrawn—perfect for those special wines to be enjoyed over two or three nights.

In addition, my advice would be to get hold of some decent glassware, so that each wine, whatever its type, has the perfect shape and environment in which to express itself. I have several preferences for wine glasses, including Zalto, Riedel and Italesse. I suggest you visit EuroCave or Philglas & Swiggot in Marylebone and ask a friendly member of staff to assist you.

5

TWO WINES TO ENJOY WITHOUT DECANTING

2015 Greywacke Riesling, Marlborough, New Zealand Vinoteca, £21

A super fresh, highly aromatic, dry riesling made by legendary wine maker Kevin Judd. Best served lightly chilled and perfect with fish and seafood.

2015 Felton Road Cornish Point, Central Otago, New Zealand Philglas & Swiggot, £43.50

One of the best examples of a single vineyard, New World pinot noir. Felton Road Cornish Point is powerful and fruity, and would drink perfectly with seasonal fare and game dishes.

THREE WINES TO ENJOY AFTER DECANTING

2014 Pieropan La Rocca, Veneto, Italy Philglas & Swiggot, £29.50

One of Italy's finest white wines, produced by the Pieropan family. La Rocca is a highly aromatic and flavoursome wine, ideal lightly-chilled and decanted around half an hour before serving.

2004 Viña Tondonia Rioja Reserva, Rioja, Spain Vinoteca, £29.50

A traditional rioja, aged for a few years in oak barrels, then a few more years in the bottle. Allow this flavoursome red to breathe for up to one hour and serve with roast meats or game.

2002 Taylor's Quinta de Vargellas Vintage Port, Douro, Portugal Waitrose, £29.99

A big, broad single estate vintage port with black fruit flavours, hints of liquorice and stewed fruits. Allow to breathe in the decanter, keeping any natural sediments in the bottle. Perfect with a platter of artisan cheeses.

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@rovingssommelier

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

Md Moinul Islam, head pastry chef at The Marylebone Hotel, on a piece of kitchen kit that he couldn't live without

INTERVIEW: VIEL RICHARDSON

It may not be the most glamorous piece of equipment, but the one thing that I could not do without in the kitchen is my professional mixer. Anyone who has ever tried to mix cake batter or knead dough by hand will understand immediately what I mean. On any given day, the pastry kitchen at The Marylebone Hotel will be creating a wide variety of things: there are desserts for the restaurant, sweets, a wide variety of cakes for The Pantry, as well as bespoke ones for special occasions. We also make different types of bread, rolls and buns. For all of this, batter has to be mixed, fillings made and dough kneaded, so the kitchen simply could not function without our mixers.



TOP NIBBLES

BRITISH BLUE CHEESES

BLEDINGTON BLUE

Made by hand with the organic milk of Daylesford's own British Friesian herd, who roam freely on the green pasture of the Bamfords' farm in Gloucestershire. The cheese is matured for four weeks and has a natural rind, resulting in a soft young blue with a rich, piquant flavour and creamy texture.

DAYLESFORD FARM SHOP & CAFÉ
6-8 Blandford Street, W1U 4AU
daylesford.com

BEENLEIGH BLUE

Created by Ticklemore Dairy as Britain's answer to Roquefort. While available all year-round, this crumbly, softly tangy ewe's milk cheese from Totnes in Devon is at its peak from now until January, and pairs perfectly with light English honeys—and a glass of sweet white Pacherenc du Vic-Bilh Vendemiaire.

LA FROMAGERIE
2-6 Moxon Street, W1U 4EW
lafromagerie.co.uk

BLACK JACK

This hard, mature, crottin-style goat's milk blue is made by husband and wife team Lyn and Jenny Jenner, with their own Toggenburg and Saanen goat's milk at Nut Knowle Farm near Hailsham in East Sussex. An interesting cheese with a strong flavour, it's coated in edible charcoal and has naturally-occurring moulds. One for the serious cheese-lover.

MARYLEBONE FARMERS' MARKET
Cramer Street car park, W1U 4EW
lfm.org.uk

We strive to create a very high level of patisserie, so even though these machines are designed to assist the chefs, it is definitely not a case of simply putting the ingredients in and walking away—these are complex bits of kit and you have to get a feel for how they work. Mixing dough, batter or fillings using these is very different from mixing by hand or using domestic machines. Whenever someone new arrives in the kitchen, I have to start their training from scratch and tell them to approach the machines as if they are learning about an entirely new piece of equipment.

Once you get to know them, they become integral to your work—while they allow you the freedom to be doing other things, they are

always somewhere in your thoughts. You spend your day nipping back to them to check on the doughs and batters: what is the texture like, the taste, what colour is it, what is the smell, what sound is the paddle or motor making? As you get to know the machines, you will notice that these can change during the mixing process. This constant attention to the mixers builds a connection to them that you do not have with other equipment.

I actually have two of these machines and they are on whenever the kitchen is open. Any time you come into the kitchen there will be something in the mixing bowls—their whirring noise is like the soundtrack to life in the pastry kitchen.

THE MARYLEBONE HOTEL
47 Welbeck Street, W1G 8DN
doylecollection.com/marylebone



FOOD PHILOSOPHY

STEPHEN WORRALL, MANAGER OF CADENHEAD'S WHISKY SHOP AND TASTING ROOM

INTERVIEW: ELLIE COSTIGAN
PORTRAIT: JOSEPH FOX

1—We are the main outlet for Springbank distillers in England. At Springbank, 100 per cent of production is done on site. In the last 10 years or so, it's more than doubled in size—but without overdoing it. They're never going to go into mass production. Our customers want an aged product, and everything that comes with that.

2—Vintages are disappearing. They were always at the top end of the market, but now they're supremely priced because of the scarcity—they can cost a lot of money for something that's not necessarily that interesting. You can get really amazing tasting whiskies at five, six, eight years old, and the price point is usually quite reasonable.

3—By law, you have to age scotch whisky for a minimum of three years and it's got to be done in a reused spirit or wine cask. One of my favourite types is done in bourbon wood. It's just beautiful—you get a really nice balance of creamy vanillas, oaky notes, and your distil really comes through, it's not overly dominated by the wood.

“**6**—I don't want to sell a £5,000 bottle of whisky—that's not really my market. This is not a museum, it's a shop

4—Young people today are much more willing to experiment, rather than just drinking to get slaughtered, though you wouldn't think it if you believed some of the red-top media.

5—I tend to add a tiny bit of water to whisky. You can buy water droppers—don't take them to the pub, it looks very dodgy—which allow you to put literally one drop in. It changes the flavour profile greatly.

6—We could have you arrested for putting ice cubes in whisky. It just tastes of cold. To get the flavour, you need it at room temperature.

7—We don't chill-filter our whisky. To maintain consistency, the mass market often chill-filters it to take the proteins and oils out, so it doesn't go cloudy. Then they add caramel to replace the colour. It doesn't kill the whisky, but it's an unnecessary layer.

8—I don't want to sell a £5,000 bottle of whisky—that's not really my market. I sell whisky that people want to drink. It's not a museum, it's a shop.

9—I worked in the fashion industry for years and years,

at various companies. But it got to the stage that people weren't people, they were just units. And I went, right, I'm off.

10—You need to try the Marylebone Gin. Oh my god, it's fantastic. We don't normally carry other people's gins, but it's so good we're going to carry that. With ice and a slice of cucumber, it's heaven.

11—A lot of people say, “I don't understand tasting notes.” I'll say, “Okay, Do you like tripe?” If they've not tried it, I'll explain how it tastes and they'll say, “Oh no, definitely not”—just from a description. I say, “So, you do understand taste—that's all it is.”

12—My absolute favourite whisky is Springbank 15. It's my desert island whisky. Though there have been some whiskies released for our 175th anniversary that make that decision harder.

13—Like every 15-year-old back in the late seventies, I used to go to bars in Liverpool and get away with buying whisky and soda. But I never got drunk on it. For me, alcohol has always been a sociable thing; you sit with friends, talk. I've spent many a night drinking, putting the world to rights. It's a relaxing thing.

14—You don't often get 175-year-old businesses. Why has Cadenhead's endured? I think it's the mixture of quality and good, old-fashioned determination not to change.

CADENHEAD'S WHISKY SHOP
AND TASTING ROOM
26 Chiltern Street, W1U 7QF
whiskytastingroom.com

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PROFESSOR
ALISTER HART

Consultant orthopaedic surgeon at The London Clinic explores the impact of 3D printing on the world of orthopaedics

INTERVIEW: VIEL RICHARDSON
PORTRAIT: ORLANDO GILI

What was it that first attracted you to orthopaedic surgery?

I specialise in hip and knee problems and I love the fact it is a very technical field. It combines the complexities of working with load-bearing and moving parts of the human body and the processes and materials involved in designing and fitting surgical implants. I love the topographical nature of the field. The complexities are what interested me—I think all medics like problem-solving.

What kind of problems do you face?

How do you get a hip replacement to last for a lifetime? Why does one particular type of implant fail and another succeed? What is the best way to secure an implant? Which materials are best for them? These are just a few of the questions we ask, and the answer can vary from patient to patient. What did the patient do to the implant, and can we learn from their experiences, both good and bad? These are complex questions, which we need more research to understand.

Are you involved in this research?

Yes, working as a surgeon I was encountering significant problems with orthopaedic implants, which got me interested in research. The more involved I got in research, the more interesting it became—and now I spend half my time in research and the other half in surgery.

What has been the biggest change in the field in your time?

The biggest change has been the advent of 3D printing technology. It fits with the broader idea of personalised medicine and has made inroads in orthopaedics in recent years. There is still some resistance to its use in certain scenarios, but the possibilities it opens up for the creation of implants are incredible.

How is it impacting on the field?

Traditionally the implants we use in hip and knee replacement surgery are mass-produced in a range of standard sizes. As a surgeon, you choose the closest size to the one you need and then do your best to fit it in the optimal position. But because

there is an almost infinite variety of human sizes, this can sometimes be difficult, and occasionally impossible. 3D printing technology allows us to create implants tailored to specific patients.

Can you give us an example?

There are examples where someone's joint is malformed, either from birth or through trauma or disease. One patient had an accident 20 years ago which smashed his pelvis and left it in an abnormal position. He came to us because his mobility was deteriorating and he was in increasing pain. We designed and fitted a bespoke hip implant and he is now walking without crutches for the first time in 11 years. In this case, the standard implants were simply not feasible, so a custom-made implant was the only option.

Is this the only way you use the technology?

No. We are also using 3D printer technology to make guides that help with the planning and performance of implant surgery. For example, if we are taking the head off a thigh bone in a hip ball replacement procedure, we need to know precisely where and at what angle to make the cut. The more accurate this is, the easier it is to place the stem of the implant in the right position.

We use CT scanning images to precisely plan the cut. Using these scans we can design physical guides that fit snugly to the patient's bone. Once in place, they are used



I love the topographical nature of orthopaedics. The complexities are what interest me—I think all medics like problem-solving

to guide the cutting instrument, resulting in a very accurate cut.

How does this technology work with standard implants?

Using guides actually gets the best out of the standard implants by making it easier to fit them in the most advantageous position. It adds a few minutes to each operation but can add as many as 20 years to the life of the implant. This is commonly done in knee operations and less so with the hip, but we still probably have more experience using it in hip operations than anybody else in the world.

How does the design process work?

First we take a CT scan that will give us an extremely detailed map of the area and image of the bones. With that information I design the implant and plan the length and directions of the screws needed to hold the implant in place. Then we send a 3D image of the design with the implant and all the specifications to the facility who will print the implant.

How does the communication between you and the implant manufacturer work?

We exchange 3D images, which you can rotate to examine the design from all angles, then we discuss the specifics via Skype. After this, they print a model in plastic which they send to me. This way I can check it is exactly what I want before giving the go-ahead. As well as a final check, the model is extremely useful in

“
We designed and fitted a bespoke hip implant and the patient is now walking without crutches for the first time in 11 years

planning the procedure with any other surgeons involved. This is important because, especially with hip replacement surgery, we are working close to some extremely important arterial routes, nerve pathways and internal organs, which could easily get damaged.

Is there a preferred material for orthopaedic implants?

Titanium is our preferred material for two reasons. The first is that it is very friendly to bones. Implants made from titanium will stick to bone, which means you can design something that will perfectly mirror the topography of the bone. The other metals we use are cobalt chrome

and stainless steel, neither of which will directly stick to bone, so you need some type of cement between the two.

Why not use only titanium?

Titanium is softer than the others and not strong enough to withstand the load-bearing pressures of a knee or hip joint. We have to use other materials such as ceramic, stainless steel or cobalt chrome for those load-bearing parts. These are connected to a titanium support structure. Most implants will be made of more than one material to harness the best qualities for fixation and the best qualities for movement and longevity.

So are there any downsides to this technology?

The whole process takes longer and it's a bit more complex. You need extremely accurate imaging or the whole process won't work, so that is an extra step for the patient. Then you have to design each implant individually and arrange to get them printed.

Another downside is perhaps more surprising. If you print a perfectly fitted implant but fail to fit it in precisely the right position, it will actually be worse for the patient than fitting a standard implant. An implant shaped to fit the bone precisely will only fit in one position, like putting

a hand into a glove. There is only one way to wear a glove, with every finger in the corresponding finger of the glove, whereas mittens can accept fingers that are injured, swollen and even overlapping. If a bespoke printed implant does not fit exactly, most of it will not actually be in contact with the bone. In the case of hip implants, this means that some of the implant edges will protrude from the bone where they can catch on muscles and tendons. So the extra level of accuracy from the bespoke implant demands an extra level of accuracy from the surgeon.

Where do you think this technology will be in five years' time?

We are at the start of a revolution, no question. This will be used for planning operations to make them easier and the implants last longer. The planning of the procedure is just as important as the implants themselves and 3D printing makes it easier to get both of these more accurate, which has a hugely beneficial impact on the longevity of the implant.

None of what we have talked about would be possible without good imaging, and as imaging technology improves, the process will become even more effective, cheaper and more widespread. Further research will also discover new materials and new ways of securing the implants. It is a very exciting time to be an orthopaedic surgeon.

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The Season Is Upon Us

It's a time for family, gatherings and celebration. It is also a time when engaging in conversation can be very challenging for someone with reduced hearing ability. If you or a loved one experience hearing loss, there are a number of ways to make communication easier.

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www.cubex.co.uk/category/weekly-tip

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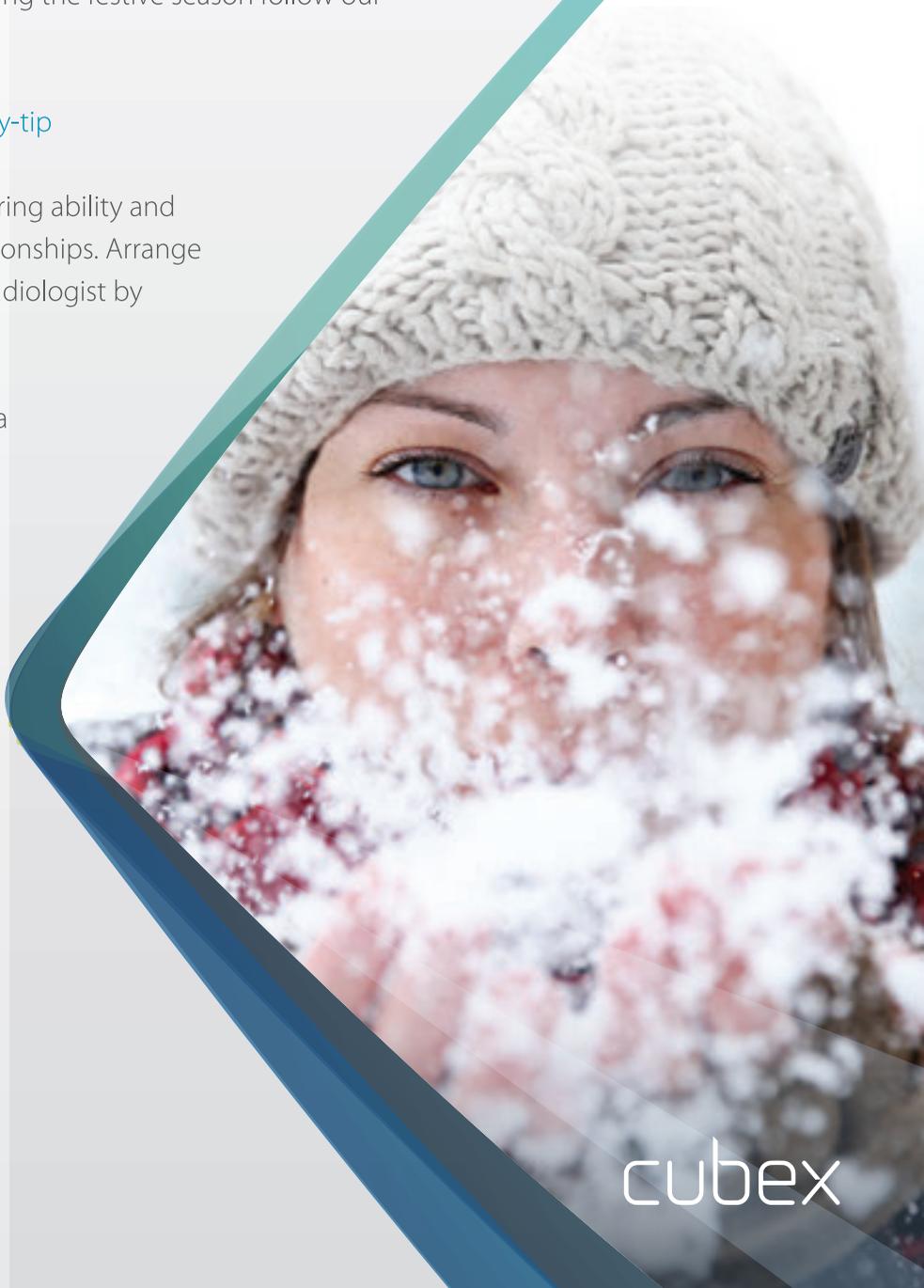
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PEACE OF MIND

Dr Hayley van Zwanenberg, child and adolescent psychiatrist and group associate medical director of The Priory Group, on how parents can best approach young people who may be struggling

INTERVIEW: VIEL RICHARDSON

It is an unfortunate fact that the number of children and adolescents we see struggling with mental health issues is increasing. Some young people end up struggling with these issues or their consequences into adulthood—but the good news is that early intervention can make a real difference, allowing them to put the problem behind them and get on with their lives.

Approaching child and adolescent mental health issues can be tricky

for parents. The adult who realises that their child may be developing a problem often feels at a loss about what steps to take. It is always best to talk to the young person and let them know you are worried about them. Tell them you have noticed a recent change—such as them struggling with sleep or pulling back from their usual activities with friends—and ask if something is worrying them.

It is very important to do this in a calm and supportive manner that does not make them feel pressured in any way, otherwise the young person could become more reluctant to talk.

Asking if there is anything they would like you to do is a good way of showing that you are concerned while letting them feel they have a measure of control.

If things are more serious and you discover, for example, that they are self-harming, it is extremely important not to overreact. It is critical that your first response is calm and supportive. Explain that you realise they must really be struggling to be doing this and that you want to help them. Approach them with

something like, “Let me know when you feel ready and we can talk about what help you would like me to provide.” This might not seem enough when the urge is to do something more proactive, but that calm, supportive first response is crucial.

There is a good chance that the young person will initially struggle to communicate with you, so something I often recommend is the adoption of a traffic light system for them to tell you how they feel. ‘Green’ could mean they are happy and having a normal day. ‘Amber’ could mean they are not feeling great, that perhaps they have seen some unpleasant comments on social media, or fallen out with a friend. It suggests that you shouldn’t worry too much but perhaps ought to keep a closer eye on them than normal. ‘Red’ could mean that those feelings that lead to self-harm are present, so try to keep them busy, distract them as best you can, and don’t leave them on their own until the feelings pass.

It is very important that the young person plays a central role in creating this system. Firstly, it ensures that the definitions—

which can evolve over time—accurately describe their feelings, but just as importantly it will give them a sense of control, which will be absolutely crucial to them engaging with the process. I have found this really helps, as parents can check on the young person’s ‘colour’ perhaps twice a day without it becoming a big thing, and the young person will know how the parent is likely to react to each answer. Once this clear mode of communication has been established, that would be the time to broach the subject of bringing them to us for professional support.

People often think that it is difficult getting adolescents to come in for treatment, but the vast majority are relieved to be here. The Priory Wellbeing Centre has a very discreet, relaxed environment and most people who come here are glad to be in a place dedicated to helping them get better. I have occasionally had some come in very reluctantly but after that first visit, they are happy to return.

The wonderful thing about our Wellbeing Centres is that you can see them making huge differences to the young people we work with. With our highly trained staff giving the appropriate treatment, they start enjoying their lives again, doing better at school and being happier at home. Through these centres, it is possible for them to start the journey to getting their lives back.

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Space.

TWO DIRECTIONS

The Baker Street Two Way project, which began in earnest earlier this year, is set to transform the feel of large swathes of Marylebone. The Journal traces its development

WORDS: MARK RIDDAWAY

Back in 2011, when Paul Neville volunteered to join the Marylebone Association committee and take responsibility for its traffic and city management brief, he quickly became aware of a particular source of angst among local residents. “When I started in the role, the first wave of complaints I heard from members was about how dangerous

Gloucester Place is, how you can’t cross it safely; the same with Baker Street,” he explains. Cars and vans have for decades dominated these two long, wide, one-way streets, which slice north to south through the heart of Marylebone. Pedestrians are forced to either submit to the meagre provision of crossing points or else dive perilously into a sea of traffic.

“I mentioned this to Simon Loomes at The Portman Estate,” says Paul. “He just smiled and said: ‘Don’t worry: we have a plan.’”

This plan—now known as the Baker Street Two Way project—had already been several years in the making. In 2008, The Portman Estate had commissioned Jan Gehl, a renowned Danish architect and urban design consultant, to produce an assessment of the public realm on the western side of Marylebone. The Estate’s aspiration was to “encourage a rebalancing of the use of public space between pedestrians on the one hand and vehicles, which have come to dominate, on the other”. One of the report’s recommendations was particularly compelling: the Baker Street-Gloucester Place gyratory system needed to go. Quietly but determinedly, the Estate set about trying to make that happen.

In 1961, when the area’s gyratory system was installed, the orthodoxy was that these large single-direction highways would benefit drivers, whose needs at the time were considered absolutely paramount. We now

know better: rather than speeding up journey times, urban gyratory systems slow them down, forcing drivers to follow unnaturally long routes or else attempt to circumvent the flow through awkward turning manoeuvres and rat-runs down side streets. More importantly, they are a blight upon the local environment. On Baker Street and Gloucester Place, vehicles sit across four lanes, revving at the lights before blasting at speed down to the next set of lights, where they sit and rev again—devastating for pollution levels and terrifying for pedestrians confronted by scenes more befitting of a 1970s Los Angeles cop film than a quiet London neighbourhood.

Paul concurred with The Portman Estate that a change was desperately needed. “I agreed that making the roads two-way would solve the crossing problem and make the place more civilised,” he says. “I think the stop-start nature of the traffic—the way that cars zoom from junction to junction—makes this not a pleasant place to be. I also thought that you could make the entire public realm better at the same time.” Cynthia Poole, the planning committee chair at the St Marylebone Society, which represents residents north of Marylebone Road, agreed: “The gyratory has always been the worst thing about this area. Where I live, it turns us into an island in a sea of traffic.”

Businesses on and around Baker Street, an area with a high proportion of commercial tenants, were, it turned out, equally



keen for something radical to be done. When the Baker Street Quarter Partnership, the area’s business improvement district (BID), was launched in 2013, its chief executive Penny Alexander was met with a consistent message from the local businesses that fund and direct the BID. “When we started, we began doing research into what they would like to change, and

Artist's impression of the Baker Street/Portman Square junction from early 2019



traffic dominance was right up there,” says Penny. “In fact, it was the number one priority of our members and their staff for the first three years of our existence.”

Between them, the Baker Street Quarter Partnership and The Portman Estate were willing to pledge millions of pounds to the proposed two-way scheme, and Westminster City Council

was highly supportive of the plan. But for anything to happen, considerable public funding would be needed, together with a fairly epic commitment of both time and resources. The timing, though, was propitious: a shift in philosophy at Transport for London meant that gyratory systems all over London were already under scrutiny. A similar

reconfiguration of the Piccadilly gyratory system had resulted in fewer traffic jams and bottlenecks, and a far more pedestrian-friendly environment. The appetite for change was unquestionably there.

TfL would doubtless have eventually got round to Baker Street, but, says Penny, the backing of both the local BID and one of the historic estates made

the authority’s decision to commit funding even easier. “Our aspirations were a very good fit with TfL’s aspirations, and I think from their point of view it was useful to have local stakeholders who were willing to put themselves behind it, both by speaking up for the idea and putting money into it. Together, it meant that it would definitely happen.”

Space.



So happen it did, slowly but surely. The logistics were far from simple: major traffic projects are notoriously difficult to carry out in central London—no section of road exists in a vacuum, so any change sends out ripples (and sometimes waves) like a rock being chucked in a pond—and the occasionally competing needs of vehicles and pedestrians, residents and businesses, bikes and cars, all need to be taken into account, meaning that no plan will ever be universally perfect. The bureaucracy was also a challenge: Westminster is responsible for Baker Street and Gloucester Place south of Marylebone Road; Transport for London is responsible for the northerly sections of the same roads, plus the behemoth of Marylebone

Road itself. Entirely different parts of TfL have responsibility for cycle lanes and bus routes. A lot of voices needed to be heard and a lot of priorities balanced.

The initial plans for the Baker Street Two Way were published in May 2015. And then the hard work really began: convincing the public. “It’s a big change, and residents wanted to be reassured that this was being done properly, with the right intentions, and that it wasn’t going to damage their roads,” says Penny. “From the outset, Westminster was insistent that this scheme should not push traffic onto residential streets—that would not be acceptable—but the challenge, understandably, was to get people to believe that.” The consultation process, which came in

three separate waves, was long and intense.

Almost inevitably, there were disagreements. “When we first saw the plans, we had some reservations,” says Paul. “The main one for us was that they wanted to stop vehicles turning left at the top of Gloucester Place onto Marylebone Road, which would have meant traffic filtering through the more residential left turns along there instead.” On the St Marylebone Society’s patch, north of Marylebone Road, the rather knotty alignment of streets made the risk of unintended consequences particularly fraught. “Everyone was concerned about traffic being driven into the smaller streets. We’re already blighted by very high pollution and congestion, so anything that did that was fiercely opposed,” says Cynthia.

While some residents began their own vociferous campaign in objection to the scheme, the two amenity societies started intensive talks with Westminster and TfL. “While the protest were going on, we were having constructive discussions—I think we had the same broad aim, just a difference of approach,” says Paul. Bit by bit, the plan was amended to take into account most of the concerns raised by both associations, including amendments to the Gloucester Place turning and to the Ivor Place and Rossmore Road intersections, which had caused particular anxieties.

“The two amenity societies were definitely listened to,” says Penny. “Changes were made.

We’re full of gratitude to those individuals who took so much time to give constructive feedback on the scheme, and continue to do so. They really care—this is their home, so of course they do—and as local residents they understand better than anyone how their area works.” While TfL and Westminster had sophisticated modelling tools at their disposal, something that seems simple when viewed in the abstract can prove to be much more problematic when the unique conditions at street level are taken into account, so the input of residents and business was essential. Without their involvement the final plan would have been very different—and considerably less effective.

Work has now begun in earnest on preparing the area’s roads for the change, and it will continue until early 2019, when the gyratory system will finally be confined to history. Most people now seem relatively content. “There are some who are very pleased, some who are just glad it’s done with, and a few who will never think it’s a good idea,” says Cynthia. “But that is always the way.”

The work won’t stop when the two-way traffic starts, with TfL and Westminster having committed to a six-month monitoring phase to ensure that any unintended consequences are dealt with. “We were adamant that proper monitoring should be part of the plan,” says Penny. “We will go back and look at this once it’s in—it’s a complex scheme, and we know it won’t be perfect from day one.”



The Baker Street / Park Road junction
 Opposite top: the Baker Street / Marylebone Road junction
 Opposite bottom: the Baker Street / Blandford Street junction

The amenity societies will remain resolute in holding the authorities to account. “We think they’ll respond, and we’ll put pressure on them if they don’t,” confirms Cynthia. The St Marylebone Society is carrying out its own pollution monitoring, in partnership with Imperial College London, and is even planning its own assessment of traffic flows.

Both she and Paul are reassured by the ongoing involvement of the Baker Street Quarter Partnership and The Portman Estate. “We’re not going anywhere, the Estate isn’t going anywhere,” agrees Penny. “These are our neighbours, these are people we see all the time, so it would be a complete failure if after going through this process, residents felt they hadn’t been listened to. Neither

us nor the Estate could live with that: we are still all neighbours. Much though it was a difficult process, with some heated meetings and some points that we didn’t all fully agree on, we have all ended up still friends.”

Concerns about traffic have, says Penny, somewhat overshadowed the main point of the exercise. The flow of vehicles should be smoother and the resulting emissions marginally lower, but there won’t be fewer cars on the road, or fewer roads with cars on—that was never really a possibility. “I think partly because of the project’s name—Baker Street Two Way—there’s an assumption that this is all about traffic, and it’s not. It’s actually all about the pedestrian experience. This is all about improving the environment for people

“**We’re not going anywhere, The Portman Estate isn’t going anywhere. These are our neighbours, these are people we see all the time, so it would be a complete failure if after going through this process, residents felt they hadn’t been listened to**

moving around by foot.”

As part of the scheme, pavements will be widened, trees planted, unnecessary road signs removed, dozens more pedestrian crossings installed. Major improvements will be made to the awful crossing outside Baker Street station. Buses will be able to head both ways on both streets, making access easier, and more buses will run along

Baker Street rather than the more residential Gloucester Place.

Within a few years, the expectation is that both roads will look and feel very different to today. “Currently, as a pedestrian, you feel like you’re walking down an A-road; sitting in a pavement café you feel like you’re sitting at the side of a motorway,” says Penny. “The ambience, the feel of the streets, is just so unwelcoming. Visitors put their heads down and march through, residents find other routes. In the future, we expect that the retail offering will evolve and people will hopefully choose to spend time here.” Baker Street will be two-way—but metaphorically at least, it is only heading in one direction.

BAKERSTREETTWO-WAY
 bakerstreettwoway.co.uk

Space.

ASK THE EXPERTS

Paul Thomson, head of lettings at Druce Marylebone

Do I require a specific tenancy agreement to run a business out of my rented apartment?

If the tenancy is taken out in an individual's name under an assured shorthold tenancy, you can work from home but you cannot register a business at the address. You should not have paying clients visiting you, either. Once you start using a property for business purposes, you have to take into account insurance, health and safety, and business rates. As such, you require a license.

Are there certain interior trends that might make a property more attractive to a potential tenant?

We strongly recommend wood flooring, neutral décor, modern appliances, an open plan kitchen and built-in storage. We are seeing a lot more technology go into properties, such as Sonos sound systems and lighting controlled via an app. While these are great to have, the more expensive technology involved, the higher the running costs are.



PROPERTY OF THE MONTH SHILLIBER PLACE

Tim Fairweather on a gem of a home hiding in a quiet Marylebone mews



This is a wonderful house, positioned on a quiet mews street. It would be perfect for a small family or for someone who needs a secure base in London. The property has just undergone a major redecoration with stunning results. The design makes great use of natural light throughout, giving the spacious interior a light, airy feel.

The property is to the rear of the Court House development, so enjoys all the security benefits of having a caretaker on standby. One of the nice things about the property is that it has its own street entrance, giving it the feel of an independent house, while retaining the advantages of being part of a modern development.

The spacious, well-proportioned accommodation is set over three floors and there is also a secure underground residents' car park in the basement, with space to store bicycles.

This property is wonderfully located for the world class amenities of Marylebone Village and the West End, as well as the green spaces of Hyde Park and Regent's Park. It is very well served by transport connections, including Edgware Road, Marylebone and Marble Arch underground stations, and Marylebone and Paddington railway stations.

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QA

NOEL LAKE-JOHNS

The lettings manager at Prime Metro Properties on relationship building, Marylebone's summer peak and the importance of sensible pricing

INTERVIEW: ELLIE COSTIGAN
PORTRAIT: ALICE MANN

How did you come to work at Prime Metro?

I started out working for a large, publicly-listed company, before I spotted the opening here on Baker Street. I've always had an interest in real estate and enjoyed closing deals. I had a really good feeling about the company, so I jumped on board and haven't looked back. I've worked here nearly three years.

What are your day-to-day responsibilities?

I manage the lettings side of the business. I have to motivate my team, make sure they understand what's expected of them and how best to achieve those goals. I spend a lot of time on compliance—making sure that before we close a file, everything that's meant to be in there—as well as following the strict referencing procedures for applicants. There are fun sides to the role as well: we actively try to take on new properties, whether that's speaking to porters or going through the database we've collated over several years. One of the great things about Prime Metro Properties is that anyone can work on client development if they so choose.

What gives Prime Metro an edge?

We are a small independent agency, thriving in a very corporate lettings market. We provide the exposure of a larger agency, but with a very personable touch. From a landlord's perspective, we are very consistent in what we do. There are very few properties we take on that we don't rent out. Our incentive is the same as the landlord's—to rent out their property at the best possible price—and we're very in tune with the market to ensure that happens, even if it means adjusting expectations. From the tenant's perspective, we offer a very personalised service. We take applicants under our wing and show them the best quality properties to suit their needs. A good applicant is valuable to us and to our landlords, so we want to make sure we do the utmost to source them a property.

What's the lettings market like in Marylebone?

When I started here, prices were very high on the rental side, but they have adjusted over time.

We had a very busy summer—September was phenomenal—but that is quite typical of the Marylebone market. We have a lot of universities in the area—Westminster, London Business School, Regent's University and others—so during the summer we get an influx of students looking for properties. It's also the time of the year when new graduates are searching for properties, as well as lots of working professionals.

Do you have any advice for landlords in those slower months?

I would say, try to make sure your property is available in time for the summer peak, so you have the best opportunity to get the highest price. Make sure your property is ready for viewing. That might be a matter of clearing out old furniture—an empty flat is better than bad furniture—or sometimes it's better to spend money on dressing a flat. Make sure your property is priced correctly and ensure you receive regular updates from your agent—ask what the feedback is from applicants and if there is none, ask why there are so few viewings. You employ an agent to give professional advice, so seek it!

What sort of properties do you deal with?

A range: from studios for £330 to £350 per week, all the way up to the higher end with properties listed at £3,500 per week, sometimes more. We recently rented out a lovely four-bedroom property in a block overlooking Regent's Park. It has a fantastic finish: I could see it as a real bachelor pad, or even a family home. It's absolutely stunning. Technically we cover most of central London, but we tend to specialise in Marylebone—though we often spill over into Fitzrovia and Bayswater.

What are the advantages of Marylebone over other central areas?

The fact that it's prime central London, yet feels like a village with lots of boutiques and bars, is



We know our landlords well and they appreciate how personable we are. It's a people-orientated business, so in order to build those relationships you have to hold yourself to a very high standard

key. It feels like a family place, but you're moments from Oxford Street. You can get to Paddington within minutes, so there's easy access to the Heathrow Express. It's very convenient. There have been instances when we've done searches for people who've specifically requested Mayfair, and in the end Marylebone was the more appealing option.

Do you have many repeat clients?

Yes, we know our landlords well and they appreciate how personable we are. It's a people-orientated business, so in order to build those relationships you have to be professional and hold yourself to a very high standard. Credibility is very important when it comes to choosing an estate agency and

it's a small world, so it's important that we are proactive. You have to speak to your landlords throughout, market properties correctly, invest in the right kind of photographs and make sure you're doing everything you can to get these properties rented, because if you don't do your job properly, another agent will beat you to it. And we can't let that happen.

You're a relatively young company, having only been around for five years. What are your intentions for the future?

My vision is to make our bustling lettings team even more dynamic, and I want us to continue to work on expanding our client base. I think the price adjustments that were going to happen have now happened, and things are currently looking pretty stable, so we need to continue to focus on providing a personal touch. We are very much an independent agent, which these days is becoming rarer and rarer, so building those personal relationships is central to what we do.

What's the best part of your job?

It sounds a bit cliched, but meeting new people every day. There's a really social element to being a lettings negotiator. Landlords are quick to become friends, and the variety of people we meet is amazing. I speak to a lot of interesting people from all around the world.



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SHILLIBER PLACE

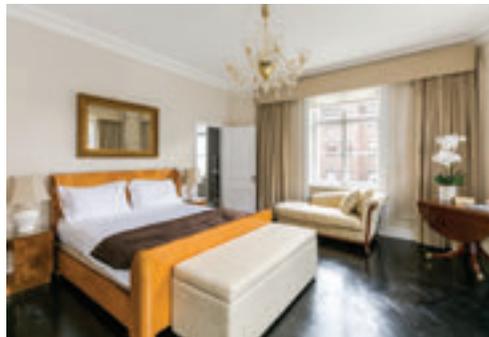
LONDON, W1

£2,395,000
SOLE AGENT / LEASEHOLD

A wonderfully presented three bedroom mews house, ideally positioned along this quiet mews off Crawford Street.

The current owners have undertaken a major redecoration project of the entire house and the end result is stunning, with great plays on natural light throughout. Viewing is highly recommended in order to appreciate the exceptional space on offer. Along with the generous and well proportioned accommodation, there is also a secure underground residents' car park, with vehicle lift.

Shilliber Place is superbly located for the world class amenities of Portman Village, Marylebone Village and the West End, together with the green open spaces of Hyde Park and Regent's Park. Nearby transport links include Edgware Road, Marylebone and Marble Arch underground stations, Marylebone and Paddington train stations and access to Heathrow and the West via the A40. EPC=C.



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MANSFIELD STREET

LONDON, W1

£2,750 PER WEEK + FEES
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A fabulous newly refurbished contemporary apartment set within this prestigious and highly sought after secure block in Marylebone Village.

The property benefits from being renovated to a high specification including polished parquet floors. Comprising an incredibly light and spacious double reception with high ceilings, large windows and feature fireplace, separate fully integrated modern kitchen, large master bedroom with en suite bathroom featuring twin shower and wash basins, second large double bedroom with hand made fitted wardrobes, additional family bathroom and separate WC. The property benefits from 24 hour concierge and lift. Offered furnished.

Mansfield Street is superbly located in this quiet residential street within a few minutes walk to Marylebone High Street, Oxford Street and the open spaces of Regent's Park. EPC=D.

Potential tenants should be advised that, in addition to rent, a tenancy set up fee of £252 per property plus £30 reference fee per tenant will apply when renting a property. Please contact us for further information on other charges that may apply or see our Tenant Guide which can be downloaded from our website.

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Chiltern Street, Marylebone, W1 £1,750 per week
A stunning penthouse apartment. Living/dining with open plan kitchen, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, guest cloakroom, study area, good storage, lovely large balcony off the living area



Bryanston Square, Marylebone, W1 £1,420 per week
A spacious first floor flat with lovely views directly over the square gardens. Reception room, kitchen open plan to dining, 2 double bedrooms, 2 bathrooms (one en suite), lift, private square gardens



De Walden Street, Marylebone, W1 £1,350 per week
A beautifully refurbished and rarely available duplex flat. Living/dining room with open plan kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, large walk in wardrobe, private decked courtyard area



Montagu Mews West, Marylebone, W1 £1,100 per week
A unique 1st and 2nd floor flat in a charming cobbled mews. Living room with open plan kitchen, master bedroom with en suite bathroom, 2nd double bedroom, family bathroom, terrace, 24 hour porter, private parking



Wimpole Street, Marylebone, W1 £775 per week
An attractive flat on the 2nd floor of this beautiful period building. Living/dining room, eat-in kitchen, 2 bedrooms (one with en suite shower room), further bathroom, lift



York Street, Marylebone, W1 £1,500 per week
A sensational air conditioned apartment in a Georgian style development. Living/dining open plan to kitchen, 3 double bedrooms, 2 bathrooms (one en suite), guest cloakroom, lift, air conditioning



Seymour Place, W1

A wonderful opportunity to acquire this bright and airy two bedroom apartment on the first floor, tastefully decorated with the benefit of tranquil views onto the mews, dual aspect Reception with abundance of natural light throughout, a balcony, a Share of Freehold and an extremely well maintained building. Vincent Court is located within minutes' walk of all the amenities of Marylebone, including the leisure and shopping facilities of Baker Street, Marylebone High Street and Oxford Street and the open spaces of Hyde Park.

EPC=D

£1,350,000



**A grand and imposing property.
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BRYANSTON SQUARE, LONDON W1

An extremely tasteful apartment in this very sought after portered block

£2,350,000 STC

SOLE AGENT



The property is situated on the ground floor and has the very rare benefit of French doors from the drawing room and dining room onto the delightfully secluded private gardens. This is a wonderful opportunity for those wanting gracious living, offering all amenities in a completely safe environment with the benefit of reasonable service charges and Share of Freehold.

ACCOMMODATION & AMENITIES

Entrance Hall * Reception Room Open Plan with Dining Room with French Doors onto the Gardens * Kitchen * 3 Double Bedrooms * 2 Bathrooms
24 Hour Portage * Private Gardens * Access to Bryanston Square Gardens * Underground Parking available by separate negotiation

GREAT PORTLAND STREET, LONDON W1

A beautifully appointed, bright lateral apartment

£1,600,000 STC

SOLE AGENT



Situated on the top floor of a handsome period building on the corner of Great Portland Street and Langham Street, with roof top views. The apartment has been newly refurbished throughout and benefits from bike storage and additional storage in the basement. A fantastic apartment, bathed in sunlight in a very cool area, on the cusp of Marylebone and Fitzrovia, so restaurants, bars and transport links aplenty.

ACCOMMODATION & AMENITIES

Entrance Hall * Open Plan Reception Room/Dining/Kitchen * Master Bedroom with Ensuite Shower Room * 2 Further Double Bedrooms
Bathroom * Underfloor Heating in the Reception Areas * Traditional Radiators in the Bedrooms * Oak Flooring * Leasehold 168 Years

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ADMIRAL COURT, BLANDFORD STREET W1

A very spacious 1st Floor, 2 double bedroom apartment

£1,375,000 STC

SOLE AGENT



Flats in this sought after building rarely come on to the market. Rebuilt behind a Georgian façade, with a private gated entrance & the ability to obtain a Licence to rent a garage space, this home will appeal to a number of people wanting to be close to Marylebone High Street. The apartment affords interesting views onto the cosmopolitan corner of the Chiltern Firehouse & the fashionable boutiques & restaurants this part of Marylebone has to offer. Other benefits include high ceilings, large windows and a 155 year lease.

ACCOMMODATION & AMENITIES

Entrance Hall * Reception Room * Kitchen * Two Double Bedroom * Bathroom * Private Gated Entrance * Passenger Lift

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NEW CAVENDISH STREET, MARYLEBONE VILLAGE, LONDON W1



We are pleased to offer this well proportioned, second floor flat boasting a terrace, in a purpose built block of four flats. It is ideally located on the south side of New Cavendish Street close to the junction with Marylebone High Street.

The apartment is light and spacious with the principal reception rooms overlooking New Cavendish Street.

Accommodation comprises:

Entrance hall * Double reception room
Kitchen/breakfast room * Master bedroom with en-suite bathroom and walk in dressing room * Bedroom * Shower room
Terrace.

Please see website for full details

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£2,250,000

DEVONSHIRE MEWS SOUTH, MARYLEBONE VILLAGE, LONDON W1

A wonderful four bedroom mews house arranged over 3 floors to rent in this quiet mews situated just off Devonshire Street. The house is presented in extremely good condition having recently been refurbished to a high standard throughout. It boasts two large double bedrooms and a bathroom on the ground floor with a fabulous outdoor patio. On the second floor a spacious open plan space with a contemporary kitchen, dining and reception room with wood flooring throughout and a guest cloakroom. The top floor comprises of a large master bedroom with an en suite bathroom and plenty of storage and another double bedroom and family bathroom.

Please note that the garage is not included.

Please see website for full details

£1,750 PER WEEK





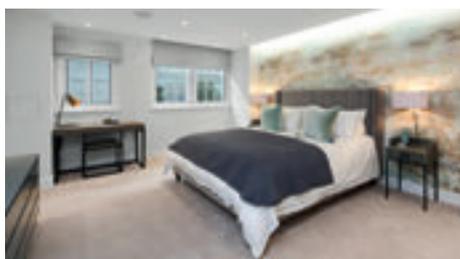
NEW CAVENDISH STREET

Marylebone W1W

A stunning apartment finished to an exceptional standard, close to Marylebone High Street.

Open-plan reception room/kitchen •
2 bedrooms • 2 bathrooms • Study •
EPC rating D

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Marylebone & Regent's Park

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