



Taking a closer look

A Norton Rose Fulbright magazine

RE:

issue 16

RE:

WORK

FIRST JOBS

SLOW FASHION

OLGA

THE PHOTO ESSAY: DOROTHY BOHM

LIFE

RICHARD CALNAN ON JURISPRUDENCE

Law reform is important. We all need to keep up with change. Even better if we can anticipate it—and better still if we can be involved in the process. We might then be able to influence the direction of the reform; and be better able to assimilate the change.

As a profession, we are not very good at this, at least not in England and Wales.

For many years, I was a member of the financial law committee of the City of London Law Society. One of our principal tasks was to review proposed changes to financial law. We were, however, too often asked to comment on new law when it was too late to make a difference. The policy had been set, the drafting done, and our role confined to the periphery.

Successive UK governments have tried to tackle the reform of secured transactions law in England and Wales. The Law Commission published three substantial papers over a three-year period almost twenty years ago. Its goal was to replace the existing law with a completely new system. The overwhelming majority of practitioners thought this the wrong approach. What happened then, and what happened next, provides an illustration of the frustrations of law reform and possibilities for change, even reform, of the process.

The committee that I was a member of was heavily involved in those discussions around secured transactions and produced many responses to the Law Commission's consultation. In the event, the government recognised that there was no consensus of support and the proposals were quietly shelved. Four years of work had achieved precisely nothing.

One conclusion was clear. Practicing lawyers should be involved in the reform process at a much earlier stage. Practitioners can, and should, play a

broader role in the development of law reform.

The members of the financial law committee, myself included, decided to give this a try. Our starting point was to decide what, if anything, needed reform in the area of secured transactions. We looked at this, and then circulated a number of papers among interested parties. Our view was that the basic structure of the underlying law worked well but that there were problem areas which could usefully be fixed. We decided to codify the law. Our current law has grown up over a period of four hundred years and contains complications and elaborations which tend to confuse the issues. We set out to smooth those barnacles away.

A proposal for law reform

Logic suggested that it would then be possible to create a new law, based on the existing law but clearer, simpler and more accessible.

The code is now drafted and has gone through any number of iterations. The discussions are continuing in typical painstaking, unglamorous fashion. But we have a goal in sight, and that is a proposal for law reform which meets the requirements of those who use it in practice and which has been tested by experts in the field. If we achieve this, we may have set a valuable precedent.

Next time: The gift to be simple

RC is a partner with Norton Rose Fulbright in the UK, Visiting Professor at UCL and an author with Oxford University Press. He writes on jurisprudence from an English law perspective.

The historian

Claudia
THE DDR

History touches individual lives. Take my life. I am East German. If you come from the former DDR, you don't easily let go of it. You bring it with you, all those feelings. I left when I was twenty-three and still I feel that 'difference', not in my head, in my heart. It is difficult for me to trust.

I was born in 1966 in Leipzig. My mother was an opera singer and my father a composer. My parents were never Party members and this became a problem for us. My father's name was removed from his compositions. The Stasi came to our home unannounced, particularly when my mother was on a concert tour. Did we know for sure that she was coming back? How good was my parents' relationship?

I longed even as a child to go to West Germany. This was not permitted. It was impossible—unless you were over sixty and there was a family crisis, or you had political connections. Czechoslovakia was the only place you could go without a visa. Still you had to be careful. But I was never careful. And if I stepped out of line there were reprisals, always. When I was fourteen I talked to West Germans at the Trade Fair—and the Stasi took me in for questioning overnight. In Prague, I had the chance to meet other people, until the hotel where I worked was told to break off that contact, and I was demoted. The hardest thing for me to bear was that the Stasi came often, suddenly: You! come with us, we have questions, about you, your friends. I was always in fear. And I said nothing, I said always that I knew nothing.

I made the acquaintance of a man from West Germany and we applied to get married. I had to wait two years for permission and during this time we were not allowed to meet. I lost my job. In the DDR you had to work or you went to prison. There was no 'unemployment'. I was fortunate to find small private jobs or things would have gone badly.

I still lived with my parents. Everyone did. You only got an apartment if you were starting a family. You had to wait forever for these things, for a telephone, or a car. And there was no choice: you took what you were given.

My parents lived in a beautiful apartment in Leipzig, but the State felt that it was too large, so an elderly couple were brought in to live with us. They were nice. I don't think they were spies. You can never be sure. Every fourth or fifth person had some link with the Stasi. It was an efficient system.

The building was in a state of disrepair because no one felt responsible. It belonged to the People. Everything belonged to the People. And the sanitation was bad. There were street cleaners but the streets were dirty. There was a river in front of our building and this river was black with waste, even old furniture was thrown into the river.

My parents live in Dresden now, in what used to be my grandmother's home. My mother loves plants and now, in their eighties, they have a little garden.

You take the prison with you. My parents also. Everything that in West Germany is taken for granted—the freedom to think and speak independently—we never learned that in the DDR. We were led by the hand from birth to the grave. It is hard later to change. Even if you had stood against the system, even then it is hard. The people in Europe are confident. I find that East Germans underplay who they are, what they are capable of. For me, it was always important to go all over and to be free. But I feel not free! It's ironic, I stay here, I don't do so much.

I can say one good thing from my life as an East German. In the DDR we learned to make something from nothing. Some days there were no vegetables, other days no bread, and still somehow I learned how to prepare a good meal.

I miss my family. I am quite alone. No brother and no sister. The marriage only lasted a few years. But I have music, and this is the most important thing in my life. And there are friends with whom I have learned to be open.

Nobody can imagine how it was, this life in the DDR. There is a film that shows it: *The Lives of Others*.

Way of life

IN NEW YORK

Paul Keller

One morning, not so long ago, I was on my way to work after dropping my six-year-old at school. It was cold and beginning to rain. I had four long blocks to go before I could enjoy the shelter of the office. Without an umbrella, I was walking with purpose. But a red light halted my progress almost immediately. To escape the increasingly determined rain, I hunkered down under the awning of the corner convenience store in front of buckets of overly fragrant flowers. Hands deep in my pockets and shoulders half covering my ears. Through rain-splattered glasses I watched impatiently for the red to turn green. As I stood there, a smartly dressed elderly gentleman, maybe in his eighties, shuffled up next to me, also seeking refuge.

This gentleman had come prepared. He had an umbrella. But, to me, he seemed a bit off. Maybe it was the way he was dressed. His brown corduroy sports jacket only partially covered his red polka-dotted bow tie and mismatched red-and-white striped shirt. A pair of slightly worn blue slacks and well-worn loafers completed his sense of fashion.

It took forever for the red to change. And it was obvious to me that this struggling, gentle man was in a state of some agitation. He clearly needed to get somewhere, but he couldn't decide on his direction: West or North? He would motion first one way, stop, reconsider his direction, then choose another. His steps were getting labored and he was getting more and more frustrated. West? Or North?

"Can I help you, Sir?"

"Uhh, yes, perhaps. I have a date with my, hmmm, 'girlfriend'. Well, almost girlfriend", he stuttered, embarrassed. Smitten on a gal, this eighty-plus-year-old guy was on his way to a breakfast date. Classic.

"She told me to meet her at the Tisserie Café and gave me the address, but I can't read my own handwriting." He pulled out a crinkled, wet piece of paper. The ink was one big blob.

"It looks like a 53 to me," he said. Meaning 53rd Street. "But she said I had to go up town, so maybe it's 55. I'm going to be late. But I can't be late. This is too important and I don't want to disappoint her." She was one lucky lady.

"I know exactly where Tisserie is", I said with authority. "It's on 55th. But how about I get you there to make sure you don't lose any more time?"

"Really? That would be wonderful. I can't walk as fast as you, but I'll hurry it up as best I can. I'm a mess, and I'm nervous but, young man, I'm excited. I don't date that much." He gave a chuckle.

Right then, just as we got started, the owner of the convenience store stepped in front of us. He had heard the whole story and, bearing a handful of the flowers from his outdoor buckets, said, "Give these to her! It'll explain why you're late." I love this town.

Ten minutes later, we were a few paces away from the café. I handed him the flowers so he could walk inside with them in hand. His lady was waiting at the table nearest to the door. She, too, was dressed to impress, and was much younger. Late seventies. She smiled as he fumbled with the heavy door, and rose to greet him, giving him a hug and a kiss on the cheek. They were going to have a great date. And I was going to have a wonderful day.

PK is a partner in New York.

"I love this town."



THE GLOBAL FOOD CHALLENGE

Reporting back on our global charitable initiative for 2019
Fighting hunger and reducing food waste





we volunteered at foodbanks
we organised food drives
we raised funds for homeless shelters
we cut back on food waste at home and at work
we cooked 1495 meals at Sydney's 'Cooking for a Cause'
we collected 5000+ kg of food for people in need of it

#LAWAROUNDTHEWORLD

^NORTON ROSE FULBRIGHT



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Eating out



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The guide



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The guide



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Back streets



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Obiter dictum, Why?



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Back streets



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Seya Rahnema
The kitchen table



Chaim Wachsberger
Stringers



Richard Calnan
On jurisprudence



Stefan Hagner
Wide Angle



Louisa Lynch
The guide



Lucy Reid
Slow fashion

First jobs

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Sophie Cassidy
Eating out



Mark Heathcote
In your face



Peter Martyr
Playlist



Paul Rye
The moving image



Jamie Cooke
Eating out



Alexandra Howe
The poet



Natalia Mushinska
Stringers



Ketlhotse Sekoko
The guide



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Paul Keller
Way of life, Why?



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I thoroughly enjoyed reading in the last issue of the magazine about the railway adventures of my fellow colleagues. It reminded me of my visit to Vietnam nearly ten years ago. Four days into my trip, I was in Nha Trang and from there I headed north by train, opting for a modest 'soft seat' instead of a hard wooden bench for the hours ahead. As rice fields, villages and temples whizzed past, the food trolley sailed through, selling hot fresh curry and rice, and dried squid.



Different days, different routes, but on every journey the same film. Now, every time I hear 'The Neverending Story' I'm reminded of those long hours on the VNR! Often the only English-speaker, I still managed to interact with my fellow passengers—a game of peek-a-boo with a giggly little girl; and food shared around using sign language and facial expressions to communicate: I tried their *pomelo* and they tried my Musk Life Savers (from Australia). Wonderful memories—the rails are calling to me. Where to next?

Jenny Leslie, London
The guide, issue 15.

The serendipitous joy of returning from a difficult meeting to discover another edition of RE:. The savouring began on page 01. And I paused to wonder: monochrome inside covers—a conscious choice, but why?

And I loved Psyche's piece. We connected at the EMEA conference in Berlin last July. She said we had met before: we hadn't. Then she remembered reading about me in RE:. So when this edition came out, and after I had read Richard Calnan's opening essay, I went straight to her interview. It gave me a lot to think about. Touched a few nerves.

Scott Atkins, Sydney
First person: Psyche Tai, issue 15.
First person: Scott Atkins, issue 13.

Barbara Blake deserved the RE: Writing Prize.

Patrick Bracher, Johannesburg
The poet, issue 15.

Nice idea. I still have dozens of the books that I read to my kids (the ones that were most memorable).

Bill Cavanagh, New York
Books for children, issue 15.

I saw your post on Athena looking for a London food writer. I'd be happy to help!
Sophie Cassidy, London
Find Sophie in Eating out, this issue, and First jobs. Ed.

I'd be thrilled to contribute to RE: (just as soon I'm back from my paternity leave).

Mat Brechtel, Vancouver

Please feel free to add me to your black book.
Sam Inohara, Tokyo

Thanks for thinking of me! I would love to contribute.

Joseph Drapalski, Los Angeles

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Contributing to RE:

Most of the writers and photographers in RE: are Norton Rose Fulbright people. To talk about becoming a contributor or to pass through ideas, please contact the Editor.

RE: is open to new ideas and new points of view. It is published twice a year in print and online.

nortonrosefulbright.com/about-us/re/

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OBITER DICTUM

Latin, deconstructed

By Patrick Bracher, Johannesburg

ratio decidendi

The reasons for the decision. The core reasons for the finding in a court judgment which is binding for future cases unless reversed.

re

In the matter of. Probably the most commonly used Latin word, including in our title.

reductio ad absurdum

Reduced to absurdity. A line of argument used to show that the opposition's proposed reasoning leads to a nonsensical conclusion. The argument is often as nonsensical.

res inter alios acta

A transaction between persons which cannot be relied on by a third party. Car insurance, for example, cannot benefit a third party causing the damage.

res ipsa loquitur

The thing speaks for itself. The Latin equivalent of 'duh'. Not a telephone.

res nullius

A thing belonging to no one. Throw something away, and you lose ownership which the possessor can acquire.

sic

Thus. To indicate a misspelling or other error. Don't use it unless you have to. It looks self-righteous.

sine die

Without a day. An adjournment of court case or meeting, etc to an unspecified date, which often leads to delays.

stare decisis

Stand by decided matters. Past judgments are binding unless clearly wrong or overtaken.

sub rosa

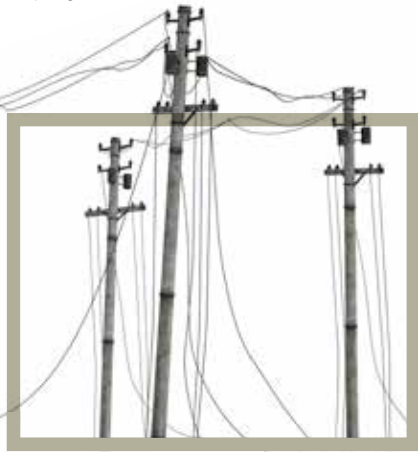
Under the rose. A Roman symbol of secrecy. The annual government budget speech is kept *sub rosa* until the minister introduces it in parliament.

This is issue 16 of *RE*., a magazine for everyone in Norton Rose Fulbright around the world and for our friends, among them our clients and alumni. In this issue, Peter Martyr invites us to listen to Aretha Franklin's rendition of 'Natural Woman' and one of our Polish readers, Izabela Duda, takes a close look at the writings of Olga Tokarczuk, while Alexandra Howe, now back in London but still missing her New York life, finds solace in the poems of Hannah Sullivan. Music, poetry and novels flood the world with light. Where can one go to find the edge of the world? Seven writers take us there. And where can one go to find a little kindness in the world? That's not for me to say. But the idea of slow fashion seems to be linked in some way. And Paul Keller might have an opinion. Or Mark Heathcote, if you look long enough at his photograph from Ireland. I know that Keira Brennan in Brisbane has experienced kindness: it's there in the listings in the jobs section. Finally, we welcome Chaim Wachsberger as our new U.S. stringer and ask you to be kind to him in his first day on the job.

The next issue will appear in the summer of 2020. See you then.

The Editor





Stringers

Reports filed by correspondents across the world

BLEEDING COLORS

Chaim Wachsberger | United States

Autumn is amazing. The trees pass in my train window like fireworks—connected by soft grasslands interrupted by shocks of seawater—as we speed down the coastline from Boston to New York. I’m a little colorblind, so the fine points in this firestorm of color escape me. I am great with the primary colors, but not the muddled ones. But the changes this season register so sharply on the eye—the way your finger would feel on frozen metal—that they might even be a consolation for the loss of Summer. People often say they like the change of seasons. I don’t. I only like the change to Spring, and that’s because it foretells the change to Summer, which really is the only change I like.

My daughter is moving to LA, which eons ago changed to Summer and got stuck there—which is just fine, thank you very much. The other weekend in LA, we passed by a big glass box of an office building in bold bright blue and I had never before seen a building that blue. I couldn’t remember seeing that blue on any New York City building or, for that matter, in any city view (and here, it’s just splashed across the landscape). So my eye locked in on that blue, hunting for it, and I finally saw it, in New York, as I approached the Henry Hudson Bridge from the

Bronx: three blue traffic signs, one for traffic information, one for attractions nearby, and one for group therapy.

The next time I take this train, the countryside may be blanketed white. I learned I was colorblind when I was in my twenties, taking a test for the military (so I couldn’t be a pilot, maybe because I would confuse the green house with the brown depot). Immediately, I felt a sense of loss. Not for the colors I wasn’t seeing, because I could never see them anyway. But for the twenty years of not missing that I was missing them.

A couple of days later, driving through desert country with friends, I told them I had just found out I was colorblind. One of them asked, what colors? I said, black and white. She nodded understandingly. So I added, I have trouble reading a newspaper. To this day, I have yet to settle whether I should have done that. (There’s no way she remembers it.) Maybe the physiology between these things is related, or one thing bleeds into another. Maybe not being able to tell some colors from others is akin to not being able to tell right from wrong.

Hard for me to tell.

CW is a partner, based in New York, and an adjunct professor at NYU law school.

STEADY, SOAKING RAIN

Noni Shannon | Australia

Saturday morning brings the ritual of following a black line through cool clear water. Sunlight hits my skin, dances through the water and bounces off the blue tiles. My rhythmic glide—breathe—glide—breathe is both calming and invigorating. With each turn of my head, I see the sun in the blue sky and then the sun in the water, creating magic. I am mindful of the joy this swim in the Sydney sunshine usually brings come December.

But not today. There is no sun today. There has been no sun this week. The sky is grey, a dirty, eerie grey. The Emerald City has lost its sparkle as it has become steadily clouded in ash: ash from bushfires on the doorstep of Sydney and reaching out into bushland and farmland. Now mega-fires have joined up, burning more than a million hectares, burning homes and stock and habitat and irreplaceable wildlife. The koala may now be functionally extinct. Our ‘sweeping plains’ are burning and as I write we are only one week into summer, with heatwaves already forecast for Christmas.

Today, my swim is not soothing or invigorating. The water is cool and plentiful but there is no magic. At this time of drought, my Saturday ritual reminds me that I am lucky to be swimming in this water. I feel grateful that I don’t live on the land, as my

parents and their ancestors did, and that I don't suffer this endless drought with the pain of the farmers. But today feels different. The consequences of our worst drought in history have come to Sydney and cannot be ignored. Our country is burning and there is no water—in the dams, rivers, soil or trees—to stop it. There is no rain. Our exhausted firefighters warn of a bushfire emergency, and demand a rethink to manage the bush in our changed environment and in the new norm of extreme temperatures.

Today, I am not calm or invigorated, I am sad. I cannot fix this. I cannot reverse the damage or the heartache of the last month of fires or the last year of drought. I am mindful of my anger that I cannot stop the bushfires by myself and the irony that in Madrid our Prime Minister avoided all connection between drought, bushfire and climate change.

As my anger increases, so does my pace in the water. I wonder, is this what drives change? Do we all just need to be angrier—at the drought, the bushfires and our ever-soaring temperatures—to get this sorted? I find myself praying for rain, Mackellar's 'steady, soaking rain'. Today, I will take rain over magical sunshine.

NS is an environment and climate lawyer, based in Sydney.

PEOPLE ACTING LIKE PEOPLE

Natalia Mushinska | Russia

You may already know this story—the story of a fat cat called Viktor and its owner Mikhail. Mikhail was famously punished by Aeroflot after he cheated the airline by taking his overweight companion on board a Moscow–Vladivostok flight. When the flight was over the owner shared his story on Facebook, revealing how he supplied a friend's less weighty cat when it came to the weighing (his own Viktor weighed two kilos above the limit). After the story went public, Aeroflot cancelled Mikhail's membership of the loyalty programme and took away his bonus miles.

Within one week there were 2,854 media references and numerous cat-memes on the Russian internet making fun of Aeroflot and expressing sympathy to Mikhail, the caring cat-owner. New slogans for airlines were offered up: 'Weight discounts for Siberian cats' (Siberian Airlines); 'VIP flights for cats and their people' (Emirates); 'All cats welcome since 1926' (Lufthansa). Most people supported Mikhail and not the stick-to-the-rules Aeroflot. Russia is ranked #1 internationally by number of home cats. This also could have something to do with it.

Is this a typical Russian story? Probably not. But doesn't it show how some simple human values have become so rare? More often, we come across people acting like robots, following rules at the expense of common sense and compassion.

In Russia, the main value we lost with the collapse of the Soviet Union was the value of a human person regardless of social standing and assets. This value was rooted in the way of life notable to the majority of the Soviet people when there were no personal assets and when even people at the very top pursued a modest style of life, especially under the prism of modern standards. All had a more or less equal level of income, with salaries publicly disclosed. The major credit in promoting simple human values belonged to the Soviet educational system. Perestroika and the succeeding era of wild capitalism did away with 'un-freedom' and the Iron Curtain but also got rid of ideals and values nurtured by the Soviet system. In their place came shameless greed for profit and unprincipled conduct.

Nowadays, with a new generation, I see evidence of a gradual return to human values in everyday life. A man in the Underground prevents the door from closing when he sees someone rushing at the last moment. A repairman inflates the tire for free in the morning rush hour. A youngster buys a whole pile of newspapers from an old lady who is selling them in the Underground. Even Aeroflot-cat is evidence. The future is promising. I, like so many Russians, want to believe that.

NM is RE's Moscow correspondent.

Crossword

A CRYPTIC CROSSWORD COMPILED BY CRUCILEX

HELP

Each clue contains a definition of the answer; and wordplay in which the answer is described, cryptically.

The clue: Best energy drink (4)

The definition: Wine is a drink

The wordplay: Best = WIN and energy = E

The answer: WINE

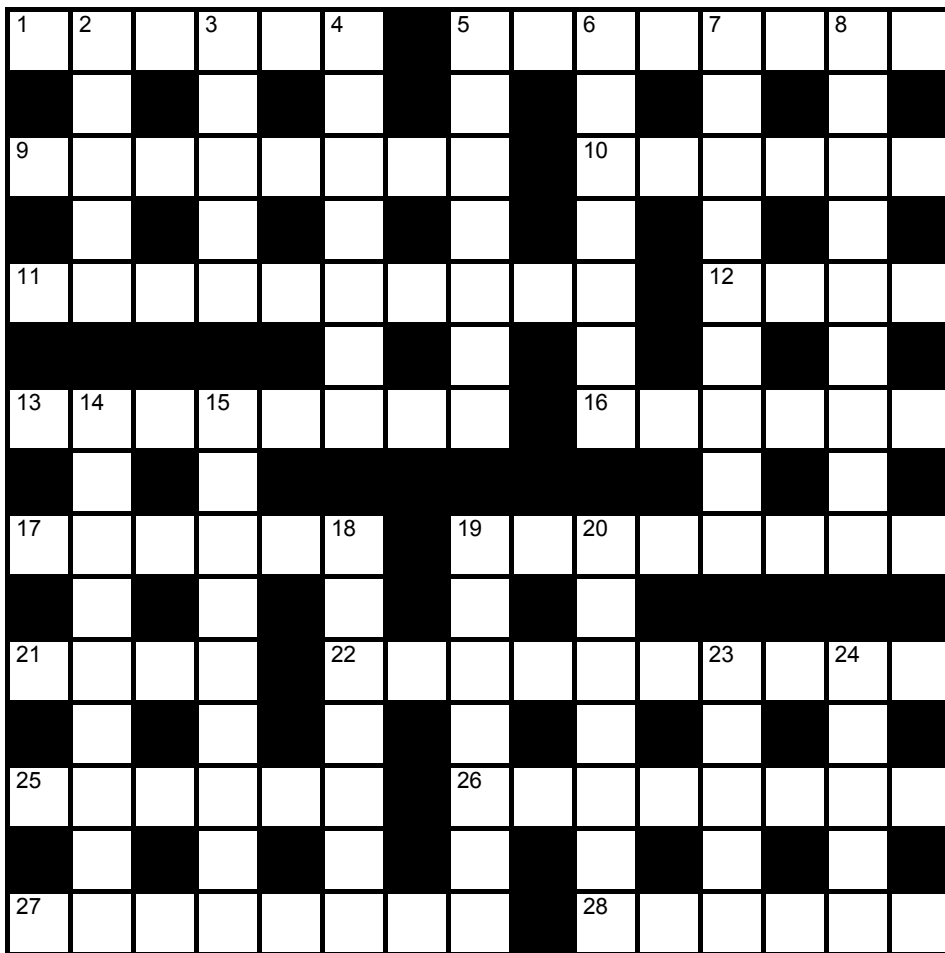
CLUES

Across

- 1 Bring about in France return of Napoleon's exile (6)
- 5 Close shave for miserly woman (4,4)
- 9 A bra is on, is backwards, and is chafing (8)
- 10 Cupid, for one, shows curve of a girl (6)
- 11 Tie up or go away (3,7)
- 12 Stare at own goal by the French (4)
- 13 Start to play when industrial action is over (6,2)
- 16 LA lord floating currency (6)
- 17 We lark about for pedestrian (6)
- 19 Mean to be more waspish? (8)
- 21 Notes soup (4)
- 22 New weapons lead to quick disasters (5,5)
- 25 Tungsten put in ground for the season (6)
- 26 Knight or the navy from the Arctic (8)
- 27 It helps achieve balance in secret hearing (5,3)
- 28 Railway car reverses into masochist (6)

Down

- 2 Count gold coin (5)
- 3 Ebony in the answer is profitable (5)
- 4 Pen odes, dreadful chapter (7)
- 5 No bridge partners win all the time (3-4)
- 6 Bestowed a charge on editor (7)
- 7 Brief message: tailless mice steal record (9)
- 8 Perhaps items of cutlery were slate in composition (9)
- 14 In India, tort reform is the custom (9)
- 15 Using this, draw black magnum, perhaps (3-6)
- 18 Substitute to start play again? (7)
- 19 Tool stops work when in the works (7)
- 20 Acting fit, swallowing drug (7)
- 23 Additional trouble has no beginning (5)
- 24 Be merry without me or fruit (5)



ANSWERS

Across: 1 ENABLE, 5 NEAR MISS, 9 ABRASION, 10 ARCHER, 11 GET KNOTTED, 12 OGLE, 13 STRIKE UP, 16 DOLLAR, 17 WALKER, 19 STINGIER, 21 MISO, 22 SMART BOMBS, 25 WINTER, 26 NORTHERN, 27 INNER EAR, 28 MARTYR
 Down: 2 COUNT, 3 BLACK, 4 EPISODE, 5 NON-STOP, 6 AWARD, 7 MICROBLOG, 8 STEELWARE, 14 TRADITION, 15 INK BOTTLE, 18 RESERVE, 19 SPANNER, 20 INTERIM, 21 OTHER, 24 BERRY

RE: Work

Wide angle

SAN FRANCISCO BY STEFAN HAGNER, DALLAS



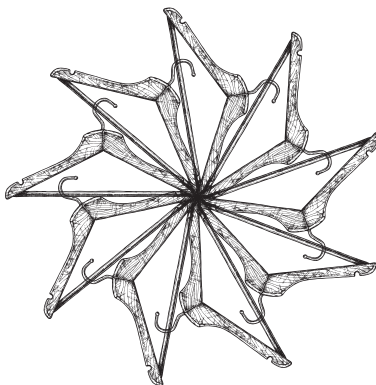
I took this photograph on a Saturday morning end of August, just before the Labor Day weekend in 2019. I was staying with friends in the Lincoln Park neighbourhood. The view is from Lincoln Park down the streets to downtown San Francisco, and I used a 400 mm setting on my Canon EOS 7D. It was early in the morning, and quite a surreal scene.

I like how pictures look naturally, without enhancements; all of my photographs are taken without using the RAW mode. I enjoy capturing moments and emotions.





Words by Lucy Reid



Can you be a totally vegan, wholly recycling, solely sustainable-food-sourcing, electric-car-driving, self-proclaimed eco-warrior and not have the vehemence of this moral stance extend to your wardrobe? I'm going to go with No.

Equally, can you exercise none of the highly commendable principles and commitment outlined above but still care about where your clothes come from? Yes. Because I do.

It's interesting. With an ever brighter light being shone on the way in which we treat our planet and indeed our fellow humans, even I—someone who ticks only one of the boxes above (I am a novice recycler)—have felt a palpable shift in buying preferences.

This is no longer the era of fast fashion.

Knowing where your belongings come from and the chain of events that led them to their new life in your wardrobe is kind of cool. It has become cool to care and, in fact, if you'll forgive the pun, it's in fashion.

I live in the UK in south-east London with two flatmates, one of whom is into this sustainable thing. Unlike me, she always knows about the latest eco-friendly brands and pop-ups. She has nigh-on memorised the opening times of the plastic-free shop in nearby Peckham and gets genuinely excited about buying sustainably sourced or locally grown products. She is also one of my best friends.

Every now and again, when we buy new clothes—and, truthfully, it's not that often—there is an inevitable mini fashion show across the landing. An item's fit, fabric, value, longevity and wardrobe permanence are weighed up in the space of about ninety seconds before it is formally adopted into the outfit roster. It's

pretty ruthless. The winners of these fashion gladiatorial games, however, do tend to end up as go-to favourites in the wardrobe, so it is a worthwhile practice.

Over the last few months, I have noticed that the clothing brand itself, and what it stands for, has also inadvertently found its way into the judging criteria. Votes for 'keeping' have started to include whether the item comes from a new line with ethical principles, or sustainably sourced materials, or local creators, or whether the purchase in some way gives back to something or someone.

Maybe this acknowledgment is us growing up. Maybe we are finally listening to our mothers chastising us for buying flimsy clothes cobbled together for next to nothing. Maybe it is nothing more than the ramblings of privileged buyers who can afford to consider such things. That and, quite simply, that our tastes and budgets have changed.

I would argue that all are true but that our buying is also underpinned by an increased awareness of the human and environmental impact that goes into what we wear. I think we know too much about what goes into fast fashion to buy something cheap and cheerful and not have it weigh a little too heavy on our conscience.

Designers, brands and other purchasers seem to buy into that. Enter slow fashion.

Slow; sustainable; ethical. All are current buzzwords in the fashion community. I interpret the concept of slow fashion as a hybrid of both sustainable and ethical: I don't think it can be one without the other. The way I see it, slow fashion is the purposeful creation of long-lasting goods which respect the environment and humanity.







The industry is taking note.

A quick google took me to a show at Berlin Fashion Week, where exhibitors had to meet a host of social and ecological criteria as well as passing the fashion bar in order to display their wares. I found a loungewear brand with designs made from upcycled waste products like ocean plastic and fishing nets, and a shoe start-up that used hay, recycled glass and wine corks in its footwear. If ever there was a reason to have more Rioja...

Beyond Berlin, the upper echelons of fashion are setting the tone. The British Fashion Council's strategy this year focused on sustainability, equality and diversity, craftsmanship, and community. And the rest of fashion's big four have followed suit. The Paris Fashion Week honed in on the 'buy less but better' premise; Milan featured extensive upcycled, recycled materials; and New York convened roundtable discussions on the 'Responsible Revolution'.

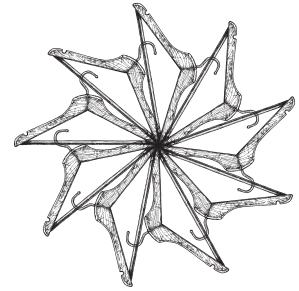
Conventional retailers and brands are also picking up these themes and running with them. Ironically, an email announcing Topshop's new sustainable line pinged to the top of my inbox as I wrote this. An indicator that the shift from fast to slow is more mainstream than you might think.

But is it all just for show, I hear you ask? Maybe. I'm sure, sadly, that there are some brands jumping on the sustainability bandwagon in name alone.

I wonder just how sustainable these new lines are. I don't know. But if there are moves towards crafting and sourcing items meaningfully and consciously, that has to be a good thing or, at the very least, a step in the right direction.

And although fashion ebbs and flows— from flares to skinny jeans and back again—I find it hard to believe that this one will reverse itself.

It may well be slow, but I would argue that it's a trend that is here to stay. Corks and all.



The riding jacket and boots are both secondhand and bought on a prayer from private sellers on the internet; the jodhpurs and stock are ancient. As for the crop, I suspect it's approaching its centenary; it is designed to open gates rather than to spur a horse on and came into my hands via a £10 bid on EBay. I love the idea of secondhand fashion; not just because it gives you a sense of achievement to have hunted for, and bagged, the right gear, in the right size at the right time, but because you have also acquired something with a sense of history. **Laura Shumiloff**

Slow fashion is wonderful: it's a mindset, really, isn't it? The desire to cherish our clothes, take care of them, steer clear of chemicals.

Slow fashion suggests make-do-and-mend, and charity shops. But it's more than that. It's about buying good quality pieces and holding onto them for ever. I love the idea of continuity. This little black dress belonged to my husband's grandmother; it was hers in the late 1940s, I believe. She was a glamorous woman. I love wearing clothes that once belonged to family members. They were made so beautifully in the past, such care for detail, so much of it handmade.

I still wear saris from thirty years ago. My old sari blouses no longer fit me, so this green one is a new old blouse, which I bought to wear at a henna ceremony for my wedding, over one of my old saris. It's old Chinese embroidery with Indian embroidery layered over it. I shall keep it for ever and see it pass down the family. My daughters already have their eyes on it. **Bina Shah**

Popping into charity shops is an old habit. I used to wear a dogtooth suit made for a short, stout man and it never failed to attract admirers. I bought this brown wool jacket for a few pounds nine years ago and adapted it to fit me. And I still wear expensive clothes that, twenty years ago, I had the money to buy. Some people tell you to throw out clothes you haven't worn in the last year; I don't agree. But I'm not sure about slow fashion: my guess is that retailers will just use it to hike their prices. **Dawn Hayes**

Clothing courtesy of Bina Shah, Laura Shumiloff and Dawn Hayes; props supplied by the Unicorn Theatre; photography by Ivan Maslarov; art direction by Robbie Pattemore. Our thanks to Lucy Reid.



Olga

the Polish writer Olga Tokarczuk

Words by Izabela Duda

When Olga Tokarczuk won the Man Booker International Prize in 2018 I was pleased, and not at all surprised, that she was receiving more international recognition. When she was later awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature I was overjoyed, for her books have had a special place on my bookshelf for over twenty years.

Tokarczuk published her debut novel *Podróż ludzi księgi* ('The Journey of the People of the Book', not yet available in English translation) in 1993. I first read it not long after publication. I devoured it in one evening and was amazed by it. Set in the seventeenth century, it describes a journey from Paris to the Pyrenees undertaken by four unconventional and ostensibly ill-matched people: they are in search of a book in which God explains the meaning of everything. It seemed utterly strange and exotic. On the surface, it was an exciting adventure in which you really cared about the protagonists, but it was also a metaphysical journey, a fairy tale with audaciously big ideas. It did not matter that at times (rarely) I found the prose unpolished and incoherent, the metaphors a little heavy-handed and the sudden switches in tense disruptive to the narrative pace. I had to read more.

In contrast to the first novel, the setting of *Primeval and Other Times* is a tiny fictitious village somewhere in Poland. The minutiae of the lives of several generations of its inhabitants are depicted against a backdrop of major historical events of the twentieth century. Reality is interwoven with magical and religious elements in a poignant exploration of the passing of time. I admire how skilfully Tokarczuk manages to tell whole life stories within a short paragraph, and does so with great sensitivity and compassion. Some of those stories and some of the images she conjures up are almost unbearably moving, yet never mawkish. For me this is one of her most affecting novels.

These two books contain many of the motifs and qualities I find most enjoyable in Tokarczuk's writing; and also those I find most exasperating. Oddly enough,

they are sometimes one and the same. For instance, I am interested in the recurrent notion that everything in the universe is interconnected but weary of the related preoccupation with astrology. I may be struck by an elegant and outwardly profound statement and be disappointed when it does not stand up to scrutiny. I approach the philosophical musings sceptically; sometimes they seem insightful, sometimes pretentious. They could be simply impenetrable to me, of course. In general, there is a certain dichotomy between my emotional and intellectual response to Tokarczuk's works, which is not to say that I am not a great admirer of hers.

I admire her creative imagination. Whether she sends her characters on grand journeys or places them in more intimate settings, and whatever century she chooses, the stories are always compelling. They are also universal, regardless of any historical or geopolitical complications, because they focus on individual human experiences. She is equally good at writing about ordinary people and at introducing the reader to obscure, sometimes half-mythical, figures from the past. The mixture of myth, mystery, magic and reality is very appealing. The range of themes and ideas is immense with the complexities of the human condition at the centre. I think some of the stylistic choices do not work but, when they do, the prose has clarity and panache at the same time and the images are powerful and evocative. She still has the ability to surprise, for example with unexpected laugh-out-loud moments in an otherwise dark *Drive Your Plow Over the Bones of the Dead*. She is not attached to one literary form. Her 'constellation novels' (as she herself calls them) are collections of seemingly disparate stories, essays and notes that require from the reader more effort than a traditional narrative and make the reading experience even more gratifying.

Essentially, not only does Tokarczuk have one of the most distinctive voices in contemporary Polish fiction, she also has something important to say.

THE LONG LIFE OF DOROTHY BOHM

A photo essay



Self portrait, age 18

Words by Ingeborg Alexander

The photographer Dorothy Bohm is ninety-five now and has over seventy-five years' of work to draw on. I had tea with her at her home in London and we talked about photography and about her life.

She said goodbye to her parents at fourteen and only saw them again twenty years later when she was married with two children. During that time, her father had spent many years in a labour camp in Siberia.

Bohm was born in 1924 in Königsberg, in east Prussia—now Kaliningrad, Russia. Her family were Jewish-Lithuanian. In 1939, she was put on a train to England to escape the Nazis. Her father handed her a Leica camera just before the train pulled out. In England, Bohm told me, 'I was the first Jew certainly and the first foreigner they had ever had in the school. They were wonderful to me. It made all the difference. I was cut off from my family completely.'

There was no money. Bohm trained and then worked in photographic studios in Manchester before, in 1946, opening Studio Alexander. She had just married the scientist Louis Bohm. 'He was the love of my life. Always so gentle. He didn't speak German, I didn't speak Polish. We could only speak English. It's because of him that we have manmade fibres.'

There followed a life of travel and taking photographs and raising a family, with exhibitions and books and films along the way. Bohm knew the great photographers and was closely associated for fifteen years with the Photographers' Gallery in London. Photography became an art form under her watch.

'I am sure it helps not to belong anywhere. If you are part of it, you don't notice things. It's been an advantage, strangely enough, considering how it started.'

'I think we're all very complicated, aren't we?'

I AM VERY MUCH A WOMAN. AND IN MY LIFE THE WOMEN HAVE COME UP MUCH MORE. I AM AMAZED TO SEE HOW MUCH WOMEN ACHIEVE NOW. IT IS INCREDIBLE.

I SAID TO MY HUSBAND THAT I WOULD GET MARRIED ONLY IF HE CARRIED ON WITH HIS PHD AND HE SAID, BUT I HAVE TO EARN A LIVING, AND I SAID, I'LL DO IT! AT TWENTY-ONE I WAS A BREAD-WINNER. I'M SO PROUD OF THAT.



1940s, Studio Alexander, Manchester: (left) Female portrait; (right) Knitwear model; (bottom left) Bride



1948, Locarno, Switzerland

THEY SAY THAT MY WORK HAS STRUCTURE. THAT'S
QUITE TRUE. I WASN'T AWARE OF THAT AT THE TIME.



1950s, Córdoba, Spain

SHE STOOD THERE, IN THE MARKET STREET, HOLDING THE
DOLL, BEAUTIFUL HANDS. I TOOK ONE SHOT.



1960s, Market stall, Islington, London



I WOULDN'T WEAR EXPENSIVE CLOTHES. I WANT NOT TO BE NOTICED. I AM SMALL AND NOT PARTICULARLY EXCITING TO LOOK AT, SO I GOT AWAY WITH IT.

1974, Cape Town, South Africa

1976, Greek Orthodox priests, Jerusalem, Israel

I TOOK POLAROIDS. I LEARNED
HOW TO LOOK AT COLOUR.

1982, Provence, polaroid



1982, Italy, polaroid



1980-82, Italy, polaroid



1994, Lake Lugano, Switzerland

I HAVE BEEN TAKING PHOTOGRAPHS ALL
MY LIFE. I DON'T ANALYSE AT ALL.

1996, Newspaper stand, Lisbon



I HAVE HAD AN INTERESTING LIFE. A
LITTLE BIT TOO LONG, BUT THERE IT IS.



2009, Scheveningen, Holland



Self portrait, Tel Aviv (1993)

THERE IS SOMETHING BEAUTIFUL IN
EVERY PERSON. THAT'S MY BELIEF.

Life

Read „Primeval and Other Times” = one of the best books written by Polish Nobel lit laureate Olga Tokarczuk. Jacek Smardzewski, Warsaw. Cut back on time binge-watching TV : bump up time reading for pleasure. Bryan Millman, Vancouver. Teach my four-year-old daughter Mia to ride a bicycle. Putra Adhitama, Melbourne. Swim from Asia to Europe in the Bosphorus Cross-Continental Race. Ecem Naz Boyacıoğlu, Istanbul. Travel to Shikoku, Japan. Kittie Chui, Hong Kong. Plan a tenth wedding anniversary trip with my wife. Argentina? Or Ireland? Brandon Crisp, Austin. Complete my concrete course and redo my kitchen counter-tops. Arlene Hennessy, Johannesburg. Dig my trumpet out of its case (for the first time in nineteen years). Juliette King, Brisbane. Jump off a cornice and float down through deep untracked powder. Neel Lane, San Antonio. Shoot par (72) at Canyon Gate Country Club in Las Vegas, NV! Ashley Moretto, Minneapolis. Create my own art online shop! (I make jewellery.) (Still a beginner.) Miwa Tsukui, Tokyo. Read two books for fun. Go to a concert for sheer pleasure. Shana Gilman, Washington D.C. Sit down to dinner with my pagan lord, Uhtred of Bebbanburg. Suchitr Suesawad, Bangkok. Play airport roulette: 1. go to airport 2. get on next outbound flight. Nicki Van't Riet, Cape Town. Rush order passports—it's more exciting to wait until the last minute. Elizabeth Vecseri, Colorado. Join a circus. In-between times, read John Grisham in the original. Alyona Kozyreva, Moscow. Hug my grandchildren. Gregory Bordan, Montréal.

To
do



The guide

THE EDGE OF THE WORLD

Where is it to be found?

ASMARA

The descent from Asmara—a city with a high concentration of modernist architecture that sits atop a vast plateau over 7,500 feet above sea level—takes you dropping down to the Red Sea coast and into the mouth of the Great Rift Valley, where some of the oldest human remains on Earth have been discovered—and down again to the lava flows in the depths of the Danakil depression. A descent that is as striking a convergence of tectonic plates as it is of people—people who speak Semitic, Nilotic and Cushitic languages. Eritrea is a country whose people are as complex as its geology. *Rahwa Gebretnsaie, New York*

ABIDJAN

I was in Côte d'Ivoire. The country was tense, with armed soldiers everywhere, and I and my companions were on high alert, we were anxious. The city was in lockdown. On this particular day, we went outside the city to a place to eat, which turned out to be almost in someone's backyard, and I stayed for hours, sitting there, watching the ocean move, watching the fishermen bringing in fresh lobsters. So beautiful; but I knew that if I were to look behind me I would see soldiers and AK47s, and chaos. I still recall that feeling of time being out of kilter. *Ketlhotse Sekoko, Johannesburg*

CHUKCHI

We were high above the Arctic Circle. The overwhelming impression was one of a lonely, stony silence. Even the water streaming toward Kotzebue Sound was silent. For days we paddled the Noatak river and in all that time saw no other human being—but, as we carved a path through a spectacular landscape of canyons, tundra, and spruce forests, we spotted grizzly bears, big-horn sheep, musk ox, and peregrine falcons. At the end of our journey, we feasted on caribou and beluga whale-meat with Inuit Indians. We were at the edge of the world and just a little closer to heaven. *Cecil Kuhne, Dallas*

MASHPI

Quito is the capital city of Ecuador and a hugely energetic Latin American metropolis. The city, perched high in the Andes, 9,350 feet above sea level, stretches along mountain valleys and is surrounded by volcanos. Take a bumpy trip down the road and you enter another world: a hidden place. This is where cloud forest meets rain forest. The Mashpi Reserve is one of the most bio-diverse areas in the world. There are over a thousand species of plants, four hundred species of birds, and two hundred species of mammals. Every day becomes a day of quite out-of-this-world discovery. *Louisa Lynch, Dubai*

DAFNI

Early morning, arriving at the harbour of Dafni. What strikes you is silence, no crowds, no signs of modern life: another world. A huge, beautiful, untouched territory between sea and mountains,





isolated, never invaded, not for over a thousand years. A world with virtually no rules nor authority. Only twenty monasteries and an unknown number of hermits leading a medieval life. No hotels, bars or shops, no use of money, incidentally the only territory on earth women are not allowed to access. Mount Athos is a holy land, its spirituality bearing its few visitors away beyond the edge of the world. **Roberto Cristofolino, Paris**

ROTTO

We are fortunate here in remote, little Perth to have the edge of the world on our doorstep. At its most western point, Rottnest Island is separated from Madagascar by seven thousand kilometres of unrestrained Indian Ocean. This evokes a profound sense of isolated wonder. Rotto is a sparse sliver of beach and saltbush scrub. Holidaying in its utilitarian brick cottages is a rite of passage for West Australians, the island's shameful past as an Aboriginal prison muted by the roar of endless swells thumping its shores, the squeals of children on bicycles and the scratch, scratching of the quokkas. **Alen Pazin, Perth**

NGARI

I like mountains, not ocean. I have been to the deserts of Xinjiang and the high plateau of Tibet. I have gone to Golmud to see the salt lake of Qinghai. I have walked through the steep valleys of Sichuan. I have set foot in the Taklamakan. I have climbed through rain and snow to walk across the roof of the world. I think I know now where the edge of the world is. It's in Ngari, a place in Tibet where the dragon meets the sky. **Rosalie Luo, Beijing**

The kitchen table

THE ANCIENT CUISINE OF IRAN

Seya Rahnema

Iranian (or Persian) cuisine is ancient, cosmopolitan and rich in flavour. A visit to Iran yields a breathtaking variety of culinary delights. Between the familiar kebab and the undoubtedly outré grilled lamb's testicles, there is a whole spectrum of foods: caviar, pickle, and smoked fish in the north; samosas, falafel and hot and sour shrimp in the south; and noodles, flatbread and rosewater-scented ice cream across the country. It is a coming together of eating habits and raw produce from ancient Greece, Rome and other Asian and Mediterranean cultures.

Take a look at Iran's place on the map and you can understand its wide range of native foods. Once the centre of the Persian Empire, Iran neighbours the former Soviet states of Turkmenistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as Afghanistan, Pakistan, the Arab states and Turkey. Owing to its central place on the Silk Road trade route, combined with incursions and invasions by Alexander the Great, the Arabs, Turks, Mongols and Uzbeks, Iran—whilst already having a well-developed food identity—assimilated all that was good that the outsiders introduced.

The range of spices typically found in an Iranian dish is a direct influence of the Indian subcontinent, although Iranian dishes are almost never piquant or hot. Today, Iranian cuisine is shared amongst many cultures including present-day Azerbaijan, Iraq, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, Baluchistan and the Kurds.

The quintessential Iranian recipe is *Ghormeh sabzi*. *Ghormeh* is the Azeri word for 'fried'; *sabzi* is the Farsi word for 'herbs'. This meat stew is packed with citrus flavours and cooked with fresh herbs. It is eaten everywhere in Iran, Azerbaijan and Iraq. The ingredient that gives this dish its special taste is the black lime. Dried limes—also called *limu amani* or Persian lime—originated in the Persian Gulf and are found in most dishes emanating from the Middle East. They have been left for weeks under the sun to dry and are smaller than all other limes.

Iranian stews are always served with Persian rice, chiefly grown in the province of Mazandaran, the far northern part of Iran bordering the Caspian Sea.

THE RESTAURANTS

DIVAN, Tehran | One of the best Iranian restaurants, situated in a luxurious mall in northern Tehran. Great ambience with a mix of characterful and modern architecture. The exclusive menu changes every week. It includes authentic dishes creatively fused with Western elements, such as lamb shank with saffron and bone marrow. You can sit with your dessert and tea on the outdoor balcony and listen to Iranian jazz.

USTAD SPECIAL KEBAB, Dubai | Situated in old Dubai (in a pretty average setting), this place offers one of the most authentic Iranian kebabs outside of Iran. Their *koobideh* (minced ground meat) or *barg* (fillet of lamb) is exceptional.

GALLERIA, London | My favourite Iranian restaurant outside of Iran. Five minutes' walk from Oxford Street, the place is ordinary but the food is fantastic. Their *tahdig* appetiser with *fesenjoon* is exceptional.

TAKHT-E TAVOOS, Toronto | Another favourite. Great ambience and high quality food in downtown Toronto.



THE COOK BOOK

GHORMEH SABZI

Ghormeh sabzi, qormeh sabzi

قورمه سبزی

Ingredients (for 4)

Herbs (1 kg in all): parsley, coriander, leeks, cilantro, spinach, fenugreek leaves (shanbalileh); 2 black limes; 100g fresh red beans; 1 red onion; 500g lamb; salt, pepper (1.5 tsp each); turmeric (3 tsp); canola (or sunflower) oil; water.

Method

The day before, soak the red beans in a basket of water for twelve hours.

On the cooking day, clean the herbs with water, mix and shred them together (using a shredder or a knife). Fry the shredded herbs using a touch of canola (or sunflower) oil for ten to fifteen minutes over average heat.

Cut the lamb into cubes and shred the red onion. Place the lamb and onions in a medium-sized pot, add salt, pepper and turmeric and fry until the lamb is cooked from the outside and the onion is a crispy golden colour. Add the fried herbs and the soaked red beans and fry together for another five minutes.

Add three cups of water to the pot and throw in the two black limes. Let it cook (boil/simmer) for four to five hours over average heat.

The result

A dark, concentrated, crumbled bowl of food rich in citrus flavours. Serve with Persian saffron rice (or over *tahdig*, a magnificently crunchy rice formed at the bottom of the rice pot).

YOGHURT CUCUMBER

ماست و خیار

Ingredients

Cucumbers; red onion; spinach, dried; walnut, crushed; salt, pepper; yoghurt.

This side dish is found on every table whilst feasting on Iranian food. Peel and shred two cucumbers. Mix with a small diced red onion. Add dried spinach (1 tsp), crushed walnut (1 tbs), salt and pepper (half a teaspoon of each). Pour plain or Greek yogurt into the bowl (about 800g) and stir well. Serve alongside any dish.

PERSIAN CREAM OF BARLEY

آش جو

Ingredients

2 chicken stock cubes; 1 onion; 1 cup uncooked pearl barley; turmeric; lime juice; tomato paste; salt, pepper; oil; carrots; sour cream; limes.

Heat some chicken stock to a gentle simmer. In a separate pot, fry a diced onion in vegetable oil (2 tbs) until translucent. Add a cup of uncooked pearl barley and stir for one minute. Add the chicken stock, some turmeric and lime juice (1 tsp), tomato paste (1/4 cup) and salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat, simmer for an hour. Add shredded carrots (1 cup) and simmer for another thirty minutes or until the soup has thickened.

Put some sour cream in a small bowl (1/2 cup). Slowly pour some of the hot soup (1/2 cup) into the sour cream bowl, whisking constantly. Add sour cream or water to add/thin texture. Stir in fresh parsley. Serve with lime wedges.



Eating out

THE TRADITIONAL FOOD OF MILAN, LONDON AND PARIS



MILAN

Attilio Pavone

The two most traditional dishes from the repertoire of classic Milanese food are without a doubt *risotto alla milanese* and *cotoletta*; these are, simply put, saffron rice and breaded veal chop.

If you happen to be in the centre of Milan, finding a place that serves classic Milanese cuisine is easy, but avoiding a mediocre tourist trap can be tricky.

Though a bit pricey, I would recommend either Boeucc, near the building where the Italian poet and novelist Alessandro Manzoni was born, or Il Salumaio di Montenapoleone, just across the street from the museum Bagatti Valsecchi and only a few steps away from the shoppers' heaven that is Via Montenapoleone.

For those of you with time to spare who are not afraid to venture outside the city centre for a less formal and really authentic foodie experience, I would recommend the very traditional Trattoria Masuelli San Marco or a bistrot experience at the Osteria del binari on the navigli canals. My final real foodie suggestion is Trattoria del Nuovo Macello, which offers an elegant, modern menu of Milanese classics.

LONDON



Jamie Cooke

London would be blander, with more brown and beige food, if it were not for the Vietnamese places on Kingsland Road and tapas stalwarts like Brindisa. Londoners owe Chinatown and the curry houses on Brick Lane for bringing culinary vibrancy, even as they look a little dated, and more modern Chinese and Indian restaurants open (hello, A. Wong; hello, Cricket). Sometimes brown food is the right food. Every pub in London serves a roast dinner covered in gravy; few do it half so well as Hawksmoor (bone marrow gravy, pink meat). And British food, pepped up with a shot of internationalism, isn't so dull after all: see Noble Rot, serving their Cornish monkfish with puy lentils and salsa verde.

Rebecca Lander

'British' food goes back a long way. In London's East End, Tayyabs and Lahore Kebab House provide far superior



PARIS

fare to their Brick Lane counterparts. For a more ‘old school’ experience, the Guinea Grill in Mayfair runs the gamut from pint to pie. But the crown of them all has to be a sausage roll (vegan or other) from Greggs, the baker’s.

Sophie Cassidy

I give you, the London Food Tour extraordinaire:

Saturday: A full English breakfast at Hawksmoor, Guildhall

Sunday: A traditional roast at The Spaniards Inn, Hampstead Heath

Wednesday: The tasting menu at The Clove Club, Shoreditch

Thursday: A quiet pint in a quintessential East End pub, The Pride of Spitalfields

Saturday: Afternoon tea in Claridges, Mayfair

Charles Billiard

Every French village has its culinary specialty—an exaggerated truth, maybe, but a delightful one. Paris is the heart and soul of France, and in Paris you will find all of France’s gastronomic delights.

La Fontaine de Mars, close to the Eiffel Tower, is a bistrot offering our most traditional dishes—no wonder the Obamas ate there on their first official visit.

For *crêpes bretonnes*, go to one of the four Breizh Cafés—and if it’s your first time, start with a *galette complète*, only in France could you find such a dish...

In Saint-Germain, the three Avant Comptoirs serve very special ‘small plates’ and the finest of wines. Don’t ask for menus: look up. And don’t ask for somewhere to sit or something to eat off, just hang on to your place at the counter.

For anyone out late at night, La Maison de l’Aubrac stays open until seven in the morning, Wednesday through to Saturday. L’Aubrac is known for the quality of its meat, served with *Aligot* (an Aubrac regional speciality made from cheese blended into mashed potatoes, often with garlic). It’s right by the Champs Elysées.

In your face

THE STATIONS

Being married to an Irish woman, I get dragged to her aunt's 'Stations of the Cross'—a Mass at her house every couple of years near Blarney in Ireland. Neighbours and friends turn up from all over and separate into little huddles of conversation after the formal meal and Mass.
MARK HEATHCOTE





Why?

What music would you take to your desert island? Why?

PAUL KELLER NEW YORK

I will undoubtedly experience the ten stages of grief as a castaway on my remote island, but I'm choosing *Ten Summoner's Tales* to make sure I have one song per grief stage. I want to smuggle in the whole of this 1993 album by Sting because each song is a story—so I get an opportunity to escape to another place and another time. Sting tells his tales of triumph, love, and woe through a host of historical and personal references, much like a medieval minstrel.

The title, by the way, harks back to the fourteenth-century poet and great storyteller Chaucer (his *Canterbury Tales* included a character called the Summoner) and it plays on Sting's own birth-name, Sumner.

More importantly, these tales bring back memories. Lots and lots of memories. 'It's Probably Me' is my personal favorite. The original version—with Eric Clapton, Michael

Kamen, and David Sanborn, and of course Sting—is unbelievable, with Clapton's Zippo lighter serving as the initial drumbeat. The song was also used on the *Lethal Weapon 3* soundtrack, so that's going to allow me to replay that movie in my head over and over on my island. It's a short walk from that to the mesmerising version of Dante's *Inferno* with 'Saint Augustine In Hell' and its offbeat three-quarter time. Hell "has all types, even music critics," the song goes. A few years on an island and I'm sure I'll be able to add to the list. Each of these stories wrapped into song reveals something new each time they are played. Long after the music stops, I'm going to sit there imagining how the story might have continued, a useful escape during the long, lonely nights.

The last track, 'Epilogue', borrows from the Beatles and their string arrangement on 'A Day In The Life', so I get opened up to the sound of the Beatles as well. *Ten Summoner's Tales*. That's it. That's all I need.

'Dark Star' (Grateful Dead, Live *Dead* album)

23 minutes and 18 seconds of haunting, soaring, and majestic late 1960s improvisational jazz and acid rock that I could never grow tired of.

Jeff Marguiles, LA and San Francisco

James Brown's 'I Feel Good'

As a child, I spent all my summers on a Greek island. Next door to us there was a jazz club, where every night some musician would play this song. Listening to it reminds me of the sun, the sea, the breezes and my carefree childhood.

Irini Proukaki, Athens

Any ABBA music

I can't stand it. I would play it incessantly and soon find a way to get off the island.

Patrick Bracher, Johannesburg

Definitely Mahler 2, the *Resurrection*

My wife Betsy performed it with the New York Philharmonic under Zubin Mehta in 1982 (back when we were dating). That was at the New York Phil's invitation-only 10,000th concert and she was in the chorus. The final movement inspires all who hear it.

Fredric (Rick) Weber, Houston

AARTI THADANI DUBAI

I was washed up on a desert island more than ten years ago. I had only a bag containing old cassette tapes (yes, cassettes, the ones you cannot listen to without a cassette player). I had held on tight to this bag because it had been a gift from a dear friend who was dying. She was in her seventies, about forty years senior to me, but we shared a bond involving Indian classical music, poetry and Vedic philosophy. At that time, I was her student.

And now I was alone on an island: no one, no friend, no family. Nothing looked familiar to me. All I could see were grey skies and rain, sliding down.

This desert island was not slow: it was fast. It was not

empty: it was crowded. I didn't know where to turn. But when I opened my bag of cassettes, I found peace. They were all songs written, sung and produced by Professor Hari Shankar Adesh, my teacher and guru. The songs are the kind that express love for your country and your family and the whole of humanity. My favorite was 'Aasmaan Vale', a song which sees beauty and divinity in everything, everywhere and everyone—the trees, the clouds, the rain.

During those years that I spent on the island, I grew in myself. Strangers became friends and, later, friends became family.

You can find this island on the map. All you need know is that I graduated from the London School of Economics and Political Science in 2008.

NOLEEN JOHN LONDON

I always listen to *Desert Island Discs*. I like to know which eight pieces of music someone will take when they are put ashore on a desert island. I recently listened to Mary Berry (she is a cookery writer, is eighty-four and presents *The Great British Bake Off* on TV). Her choice of music included 'Wish Me Luck (As You Wave Me Goodbye)' by Gracie Fields and then, a bit surprisingly, 'Mamma Mia'. A couple of her other songs took me back in time, one of them to a memory I had almost completely forgotten. Music really does transport you back in time.

The song was Cliff Richard's 'Summer Holiday'. When I was at school (in central London) there was a classic red Routemaster bus which lived on the road

by the school; this was our school bus, painted with the school's colours and logo. The sixth formers used it when they went on their summer trip. That year, they were going to Morocco and Turkey, and at their farewell disco (legend had it) they sang 'Summer Holiday'. They sang it when they came back as well.

By the time it came to our turn, the Routemaster bus sat—not going anywhere—in the school playground, strictly ornamental despite the woodwork teacher's intermittent tinkering. Our sixth form trip was on a normal coach. We went to the Peak District.

Never mind. For me, 'Summer Holiday' holds all the promise of a trip that may yet happen. I shall take it with me to imagine the stop that comes after the desert island!

The pentatonic scale: the basis of all rock music

I'm assuming it's a 'tropical' island? I plan to scavenge coconut shells and husks to make a stringed instrument and, with all that time to practice, finally learn to play a tune correctly from start to finish.

Sam Inohara, Tokyo

Tchaikovsky's *Manfred* Symphony

Each movement reflects a different mood, which on a desert island will be perfect. And as I sit on the shore, listening, I shall remember the times I performed it with my orchestra.

India Furse, London

Ed Sheeran/Khalid— 'Beautiful people'

It's a perfect indictment of the type of society we have become: narcissistic, materialistic, superficial and disassociated. And their video on YouTube is brilliant, very funny!

Claudine Salameh, Sydney

Playlist

PETER MARTYR LONDON

Peter Martyr is Norton Rose Fulbright's global chief executive. He listens to music all the time, any kind, at any given moment. It's never easy to choose five tracks for Playlist—not when you could just as easily write a hundred versions of your top five, so we have allowed a bit of licence and introduced a 00.

SCHEHERAZADE

Rimsky-Korsakov

This symphonic suite was composed in the late 1800s by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, a Russian composer of the Cinq Group (or, The Five). The story of Scheherazade is taken from the Arabian tales, *One Thousand and One Nights*. It is an unusual and charming piece and I am sure that most people will be familiar with at least parts of it, because many elements have been pinched for films and other purposes. It has four movements, but not in the form of a normal symphony. The themes follow the various episodes of the story: The Sea and Sinbad's Ship; The Story of the Kalendar Prince; The Young Prince and the Young Princess; and the Festival of Baghdad. If you are new to classical music or want to teach your children, this is a wonderfully colourful piece with evocative imagery.

COMFORTABLY NUMB

Pink Floyd

My preferred version is the more recent live version by Dave Gilmour (without the rest of Pink Floyd). This was an iconic song from the 1970s *The Wall* album. Gilmour's solo was once declared by *Melody Maker* the best guitar solo of all time. Disputable, I would say, but unmistakable—turn the volume up.

GIMME SOME TRUTH

John Lennon

At this time of political upheaval and diminished status of our political leaders, who other than John Lennon could write a lyric which goes,

"I've had enough of reading things by neurotic, psychotic, pig-headed politicians | All I want is the truth, just gimme some truth."

Great song of a type which no one writes now. It's on the *Imagine* album (1971).

BRANDENBURG CONCERTO NO. 3

J S Bach i

If you want to hear one of the most perfect pieces of music ever written (and by that I mean mathematically as well as musically) listen to the Allegro, the third movement of the Brandenburg Concerto No. 3. It is basically an intricate, interwoven pattern of four themes, passed continuously around the strings section. It has incredible motion and fluidity and is quite mesmerising.

The Brandenburg Concertos in their entirety are a fabulous body of work, by the greatest composer ever (my view, but shared by many). All six concertos are a must listen.





John Lennon

NATURAL WOMAN

Carole King

04

Carole King wrote and performed 'Natural Woman', but it is better known as the Aretha Franklin version. Listen to the original version Aretha recorded in the 1970s and compare it to the (preferred) live version performed by her, a couple of years before she died, at a tribute concert for the Obamas with Carole King present. You can find it on YouTube. It is an astonishing performance from the Queen of Soul in her latter years.

O MAGNUM MYSTERIUM

Morten Lauridsen

05

Morten Lauridsen is an American composer now in his mid seventies. This unaccompanied choral work is well suited to its title. If you like choral work and don't know this particular motet, I am pretty sure you will like it. If you don't listen to choral work, give this piece a try: it's a haunting piece of music.

The moving image

PAUL RYE IN MELBOURNE TALKS ABOUT VIDEO GAMES

Paul Rye is thirty-five. Now a senior systems engineer, he has been playing video games since he was at least thirteen. At the age of twenty-three he did a full 360-degree turn, dropped games and started living the outdoor life, but two years ago he picked up the gaming habit again, mainly as a result of the possibilities for car-racing across an Australian landscape.

AN ARTHOUSE GAME

There's no sign of an arthouse video game that I can see. Not unless you count some of the more cartoon-like games, the ones that look like they've come out of a Pixar movie. But no, it's too soon for arthouse.

A GAME FOR ALL THE FAMILY

My wife doesn't like violence so she and I play a lot of car-racing games, like racing simulators. They are great for three or four people playing together.

Forza Horizon

Playground Games / Microsoft Studios for Xbox

This is a series set all over the world. No. 3 was set in Australia. No. 4 was set in the UK. You drive real cars, any sort of car (you choose) and you drive in real places, on the road, off road, on the beach, up hills, through towns, wherever. You're not allowed to hit anything, not allowed to run the animals over.

They also released special bundles, like a set of James Bond cars; and Hot Wheels. A lot of fun.

DON'T WASTE YOUR TIME ON THIS ONE

You know an hour in if a game's worth it. But by then you'll have bought it, so people generally check the reviews pretty carefully first. Games can be expensive.

Sometimes the critics pan a game that is actually quite good, like the new Terminator game. The company that produced it didn't have much of a budget but they put a lot of effort into making it. If you like the Terminator movies, you'll enjoy this game. It's a standalone story but it's strongly led by Terminator 1 and 2. The same music, same characters, and the storyline is good. Yeah, the dialogue's not great.

The latest Terminator movie bombed at the box office, despite having a huge budget. It cost US\$185 million and they needed to make US\$400 million to break even; they're nowhere near that. Now look at video games; take Call of Duty, that made US\$600 million. The budgets on video games are massive.

A great storyline is as important in a game as it is in a movie.

MY GUILTY PLEASURE

The shooters. I don't advertise this. My father-in-law came round one time and saw me through the window playing a shooter. "Oh, what's that?" he said. Attitudes have changed. I was playing GoldenEye in 1995 and I was about ten then. Parents wouldn't allow it now.

But shooters have got a bad rap.

I like Wolfenstein. That's been around since 1981; it's an alternative universe where the Nazis won the war, so, yes, you are shooting Nazis. There are different themes now, it's not all set in the past.

Call of Duty

Activision

And I like Call of Duty. They put out a different game every few years, set at different times in history; sometimes it's covert ops in Afghanistan, another time it's World War Two. They tried spinning it off into the future, like setting it in space, but that didn't go down very well. People liked it more when they kept it authentic.

It's all about what you feel like doing at the time.

OUT OF MY COMFORT ZONE BUT BRILLIANT

There are so many categories: racing games; shooters; adventure; sports; puzzle games; open world; and space.

Some of the Nintendo games are set in pretty weird worlds—think *Bladerunner*, that level of bleakness. You are a character and you have to create a whole world and live a life. Grand Theft Auto is a good example. Of course, across the whole series, there are some that are bright, colourful, sunny; the last one certainly is.





Far Cry Ubisoft

Far Cry is an island. It has been located all over the place—in South Africa and in Montana; and there was the Himalayas; and back in prehistoric times when you had to craft weapons; and they tried a post Apocalyptic game after some kind of nuclear fallout.

A ROMCOM

It's not entirely true that there are no romcoms in video games. A lot of games now have 'cut scenes': these are mini videos that help to tell the story or flesh out the characters, and some of those could qualify as romcom scenes.

You can definitely see an increasing emphasis on character development in games, and better storylines. So, now, with Grand Theft Auto, you keep playing because you want to see what's going to happen.

JUST GREAT FUN (WITH MY MATES)

If it's a rainy day, we hunker down and play the driving games. They're all good.

A CLASSIC

GoldenEye 007 is up there as a classic, that's a definite. And Half-Life.

Half-Life
Valve / Sierra Studios

The sequel to Half-Life didn't appear until 2004 and then a few shorter episodes were released in 2006 and 2007 but we never got to see the end of the story: they just didn't release a full-blown No. 3 and no one had any idea why. Twelve years of silence. Out of the blue, in 2019, they announced a prequel game set in the same world: that's due out in 2020. There's a lot of excitement about that.

A SIGN OF THE TIMES

Google has a new service which has just come into play: no box, the games are streamed direct from the internet, and you pay per game. Of course, that does depend on the strength of your internet connection. Ours in Australia is not very good, so people are going to struggle. But the beauty of not having to play on a box is that you can play on your phone, which means—you can play anywhere. Wherever you go, you can play a game. With your mates.

And there are subscription services coming online. Microsoft does a monthly game pass through Xbox which is quite good, and PlayStation is doing something similar. Microsoft's version is similar to Netflix, where over four or five months you can access a hundred games, and then they change them. Games are becoming more realistic. Consoles are increasingly

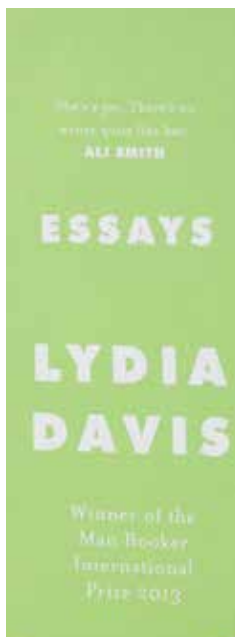
powerful. In 2020 there's a new flight simulator coming out from Microsoft; you'll be able to fly any aircraft pretty much any place in the world. It's using satellite imagery like on Google Earth. Real water, real towns, real streets. That's just you on your own flying this aircraft; it's not a contest. You can just get out there and explore.

It's all going to be VR with headsets and gloves. That's the future. It's with us already. I was in a tent in Darwin wearing a headset, me and ten other people all walking around together. The whole experience is becoming much more communal. People in go-karting places and in escape rooms all wearing headsets, everyone in the game. The new Half-Life game is kitted out for VR, not for a console.

People playing video games are not monsters, whatever anyone says.

Bookshelf

NICOLA LIU IN LONDON ON THE BOOKS THAT TRACK HER LIFE



ESSAYS

LYDIA DAVIS

For a few years now, I have given myself permission to buy books, and I have just bought this one. I am studying creative writing and *Can't and Won't* by Davis is on the reading list. She is an American writer of near immaculate precision. Her voice is like salt in water. She writes very short stories. I am trying to work out how she does it and have got as far as my own small collection of micro fiction, 'Channelling Lydia Davis'. *Essays* is about writing and literary forms. I'm looking forward to reading it.



LINCOLN IN THE BARDO

GEORGE SAUNDERS

In 1862, during the American Civil War, President Lincoln's son died of fever. This book relates all the comings and goings that later crowd out the graveyard. I don't want to say too much, because there is a lot to be said for not knowing what will happen or why it is unfolding in the way it does. 'What are you reading now?' they asked in my Cambridge interview. One of them had also read it; we agreed how intensely moving it was—and structurally innovative.



MEMORIAL

ALICE OSWALD

I sat waiting to be interviewed for a place on the Master's degree at Cambridge, holding this book in front of me, as though reading it. That was in 2018, I was sixty and I was shaking with nerves. Alice Oswald was my talisman. My mentor had said she was good; I had never heard of her. Well, now I have read *Memorial*. It is a poem and it concerns war and the deaths of fighting men; a recreation of the *Iliad*, not by rote but by spirit. It is startling, wonderful writing. Of all the books, read this one.



BLUE AT THE MIZZEN

PATRICK O'BRIAN

This is the last of the twenty books in the *Master and Commander* series; I have them all. It's not just adventures on the high seas in the eighteenth century; it's also men's hearts, conflicted, foolish. I love Jack Aubrey and Stephen Maturin so much that I cannot bear to let them go. No ending; there they are, still climbing the rigging, or in the doldrums, not yet within sight of land. And, yes, I have seen the film. I have the music. I am listening to it now.



JERUSALEM

JEZ BUTTERWORTH

I love theatre. I saw *Jerusalem* at the Royal Court, with Mark Rylance as Rooster Byron. Then I read the play-text. This is a play about something old at the heart of England, as old as giants; it's rebellious and it's life-affirming. It tears you apart. I love everything to do with drama and will climb up onto the stage at a minute's notice.



STRONG WORDS

A BLOODAXE BOOK

In my kitchen, I have a bookcase entirely given over to poets. This book, subtitled 'Modern poets on modern poetry', is full of my underlinings. Two years ago I took it to a study week, led by the poet Tiffany Atkinson. There were just seven of us in the room. That's the week I became a poet.



A GRIEF OBSERVED

C S LEWIS

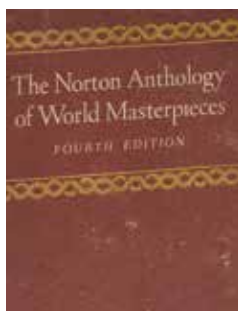
In 1998, twenty-one years ago, my daughter was stillborn. I read this at the time and other books, poems. Listened to music. Nothing helps but also it does help. A bit. I have another book on my shelf, concerning tragedy: *Shakespeare Is Hard, But So Is Life*. That's about the size of it.



OUTLAWS OF THE MARSH

SHI NAIAN

The chapter titles alone remind me why I keep all three volumes of this Chinese classic: 'Unrestrained Mu Chases Timely Rain' and 'Bold Heroes Meet at White Dragon Temple'. Love it. I studied Chinese for years. I lived in China. China is in my blood.



THE NORTON ANTHOLOGY

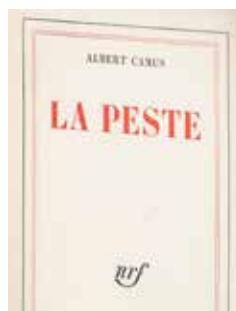
OF WORLD MASTERPIECES
So there I sat, in my room in Xinjiang, in the still-being-built grounds of a teaching university. Outside, white cold. Inside, the few books I could muster. I was in my twenties and it was 1984.



THREE GUINEAS

VIRGINIA WOOLF

I read this at university (at Leeds). More recently, I re-read *A Room of One's Own*. *Three Guineas* is about the prevention of war. Both books—beautifully argued—are about women's independent lives and independent thought.



LA PESTE

ALBERT CAMUS

I was at school when I read this. I still think about it. That has to be one test of a book, whether it continues to speak to you. Camus was an existentialist. I think he made me one too. A Catholic existentialist.



A BOOK OF PRINCESSES

A PUFFIN BOOK

I loved the children's library in Dover. I hope it's still there. I read my way through all the fairy tales and all the folk stories that ever existed. When I was ten, we moved to a council estate on the edge of town—me, my brother and my mother. I took my books with me.

NL is the editor of *RE*:

The poet

Rosy used to say that New York was a fairground.
'You will know when it's time, when the fair is over.'

You, Very Young in New York, 2018

HANNAH SULLIVAN

I thought of these lines, from Sullivan's debut collection *Three Poems*, over and over again as I prepared to leave New York in 2019. I thought of them even as we took off from JFK, looking back through the aeroplane window at the Manhattan skyline, bathed in sandy summer evening light. I felt—I still feel—in love with New York. It's the sort of love that Joan Didion described in a 1967 essay, 'Goodbye To All That': "I do not mean 'love' in any colloquial way, I mean that I was in love with the city, the way you love the first person who ever touches you and never love anyone quite that way again."

I lived in New York for three years, and, when the time came to return to England, I had conflicting feelings about it. As Sullivan says in the second poem of the collection, *Repeat Until Time* (subtitled, 'The Heraclitus Poem'): "There is no stepping twice in same or different rivers. | Nor would

anyone step once if she first hadn't shivered".

It is a particular consolation of poetry to feel able, compelled even, to recognise yourself within its contours. I found Sullivan's images of New York exhilaratingly precise: the "sky / Square at the end of Fifth", the "Lego-maze of offices", the "skip of the Hudson wind". And then, there is the complicity of the second-person pronoun. I do not think I am the only reader to have thought that Sullivan's *you* was, in some way, me.

There is another edge to the use of that pronoun, though, because it is also the poet, or a version of the poet, and it feels autofictive. Remembered scenes are replayed affectionately, but are sharpened by the acidity of age, and experience. Here is Didion's influence. In 'Goodbye To All That', Sullivan told the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, there is "a tender

attachment to a former self that can mingle with something self-mocking and acerbic." Just so in Sullivan's poem, where she deftly weaves together a variety of verse forms, depending on mood. At times, the prosody is slow, and spondaic ("Lying awake in the fat pulse of November rain"); at others, it jumps about in bouncy *terza rima*, like the ice-cubes that "giggle, popping their skins" in a soda glass. The most biting satire is saved for a middle section, written in rhyming couplets worthy of Alexander Pope: "Your friends wear flannel and McDonald's name badges, | They talk about Ben Bernanke and Isabel Marant wedges."

I think, in a way, I read *Three Poems* last summer as a kind of self-help. For me, poetry is a better form of self-help than any other manual to life I have come across.

Alexandra Howe, London

Real science

There is a science to the art of fooling ourselves. Videos, photographs, voice tracks and newspaper articles are all capable of being generated through the use of machine-learning technologies.

DEEPPAKES

To generate deepfake media, you need neural networks trained to encode and decode an image, plus a generator capable of fooling an increasingly discerning discriminator.

Deep learning architectures— from which the term ‘deepfake’ was coined—are based on neural networks. These layers of interconnected nodes take a large set of input values (such as the colour data for every pixel in an image) and propagate them through the nodes to arrive at a set of outputs. As values are passed to nodes, various computations or transformations are performed.

The computations are a function of a set of weights. Each time the neural network makes a mistake, the weights are incrementally adjusted and the process is repeated. In the end, you get an output which can represent a classification (does the image contain a hot dog?) or a transformation.

Deepfake generation uses auto-encoders. These networks can compress and decompress

images to reduce noise, generate training data, or make one person look like someone else.

During compression, an encoder takes an original, full-resolution image and reduces it down to form a ‘latent’ image. It may, for example, encapsulate structural body positions and facial expressions but ignore or minimize eye color or shape. A visual representation of the encoded image may not look like a face or person at all.

During decompression, a decoder takes the latent image and tries to regenerate the original image. The regenerated image will not be identical to the original, because it is created from less information.

To make a video of Daniel Radcliffe (as Harry Potter) acting like Daniel Craig (in the role of James Bond), an encoder trained to encode the likenesses of both Potter and Bond is paired with a decoder trained to generate Potter’s likeness. When a video of Bond is input, the encoder scales the video down into the latent space, essentially generalizing Bond’s face by

ignoring or minimizing the importance of aspects such as Bond’s hair and voice tone and capturing details such as body movements and words. The decoder rebuilds the video from the latent space, generating Potter’s facial features and voice signature on top of Bond’s body movements and words. The result is a video of Harry Potter as Bond—James Bond.

GANs—generative adversarial networks—are now being used to improve the videos generated by the decoder. A discriminator (another type of neural network) evaluates an image to determine error values between a generated image and the discriminator’s understanding of a true image. A generator tries to fool the discriminator by generating images which reduce these error values. As both discriminator and generator cycle through their task, gradually the generated images become more difficult to distinguish from the real thing.

David Ng, BSc MASC JD, Toronto

RE A MAGAZINE OPEN TO NEW PERSPECTIVES

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RE: A magazine for everyone in Norton Rose Fulbright and for our friends, among them our clients and our alumni. **RE:** is published twice a year by Norton Rose Fulbright and is available in print and online.

© Norton Rose Fulbright LLP
2019

Issue 16 published
December 2019

Issues 1–4 of *RE:* were published under the imprint Norton Rose.

19054

Printed in the UK by Geoff Neal Group. Printed on UPM Fine Offset 250gsm (cover). UPM Fine Offset 140gsm (innings).

< £1.00 strictly not for sale.

More than 50 locations, including Houston, London, Toronto, Hong Kong, Singapore, Sydney, Johannesburg, Dubai. Tel+1 866 385 2744

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Back streets

PRIVATE VIEWINGS OF CITIES, AND STREETS, NEAR YOU
CHEFCHAUEN, MOROCCO BY CHRISTOPHER GRIEVES
STOCKHOLM (2011) BY MARELISE VAN DER WESTHUIZEN







Coda

ANON

Keep your hands away from their mouths. They may bite.

Is that what you've heard? Well, now. Yes, we hustle and bustle. No, we do

Not suffer fools gladly. You want to know a few tricks to help you blend in, avoid altercations?

Do not ask questions. Do not appeal for assistance. We are tough. We are mean.

Nine million New Yorkers. What do you want from us? You want us to make

Eye contact? Seriously? Let me tell it straight. Right now, all over this town, NYers are performing

Simple acts of kindness, like this one :

Stopping to take a moment to talk to you and set you right. Can

I take the liberty of offering you, without any fuss, my window

Seat on this surprisingly crowded crosstown bus?

Every day in this city that's how it is. Easy

As pie; and while you're there, pick up an extra portion for the homeless guy on the corner.

So next time you want to burst into song just 'cause you are in NY, go right ahead.

You see : we don't bite. Not in New York City. Not unless provoked.