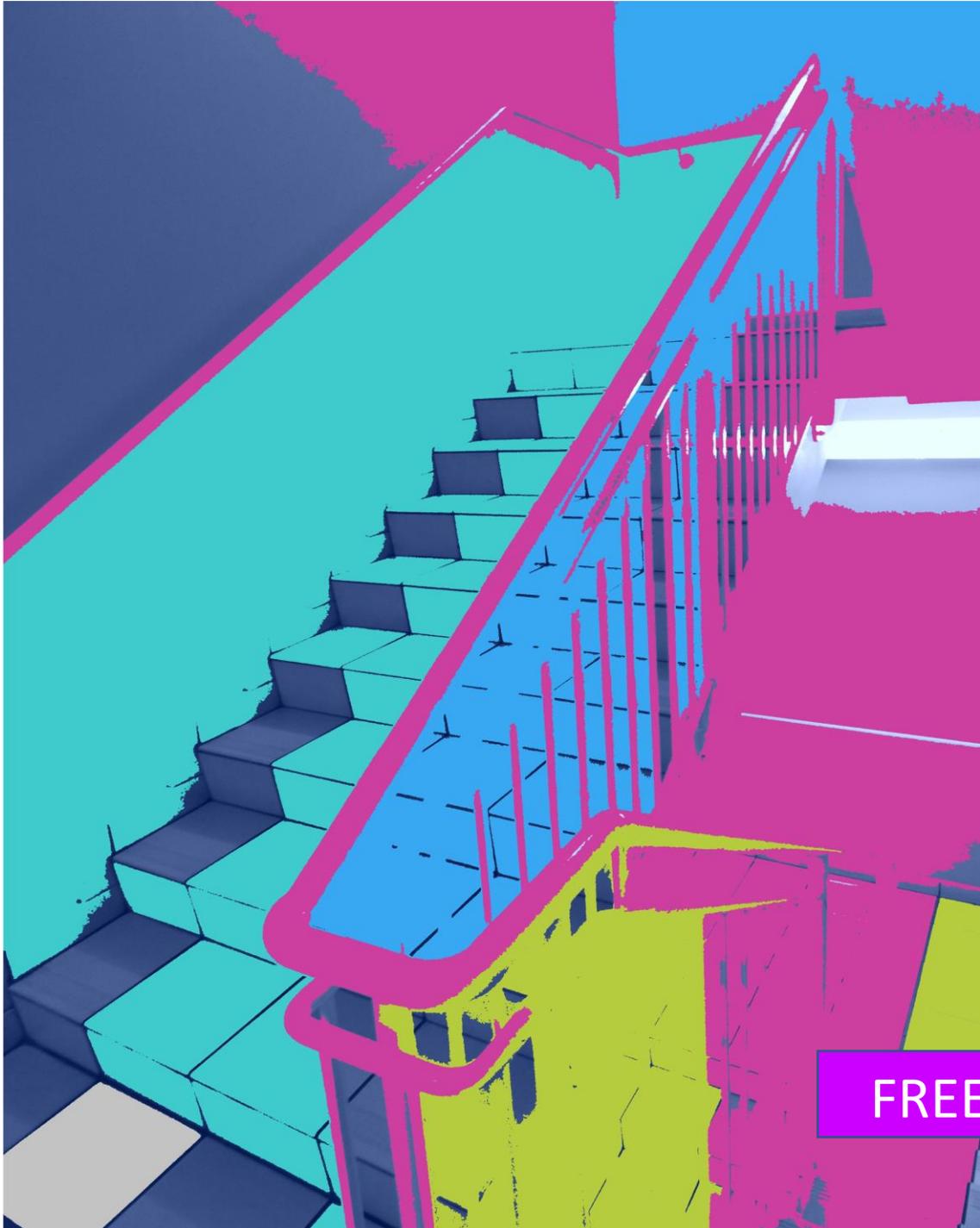


BULB MAGAZINE

AUGUST 2022 ISSUE # 5



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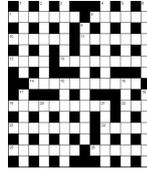
ART, CULTURE, SCIENCE & MORE

Welcome to issue # 5 of **BULB** Magazine, we continue to showcase original writing and artwork and hope that you find it interesting. We would like to thank all our contributors and sponsors for their continued support. If you would like to, please contact us at – mylastboard@outlook.com See **BULB** online – www.mylastboard.com

Cathy Bell (Editor)



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FEATURES

ALBERTINE EST MORTE

Relationships between characters in novels are often as not at the heart of the narrative and, it is with such relationships, that the reader is able to experience the real complexities of each character as they take on a more multi-dimensional aspect. This is certainly the case with Marcel Proust's main character, Marcel, and his mistress Albertine throughout four of the six volumes of *In Search of Lost Times (A La Reserche du Temps Perdue)*. Here, how Marcel, in particular, behaves towards Albertine is key to the reader understanding Marcel's real personality; after all Marcel, who is also the narrator, doesn't really interact in the same way with the other main characters in the novel as he does with Albertine; almost as if, at other times, he is simply an observer, rarely speaking in scenes when Albertine is not present.

Marcel first encounters Albertine Simonet in the second volume of the six volume series whilst on holiday at Balbec on the Normandy coast. At first, Marcel sees her almost as a fantasy, someone he will never know. However, and despite some early awkwardness, they meet and embark on an affair which eventually leads, in volume five, *The Captive and The Fugitive*, to them living together in Marcel's Paris home. It is during this part of the narrative that the relationship seems most intense, as Marcel tries to work out what Albertine means to him and if they have any future together. One moment, she is the love of his life, possibly a future wife and the next, she is the reason that he cannot pursue his dreams and ambitions, as if she is holding him back, preventing a long held desire to visit Venice or else to have affairs with young servant girls who Marcel sees whilst out driving. Another problem, in marrying Albertine, is that she does not occupy the same social rank as Marcel so that certain existing friendships, in particular between Marcel and Robert St. Loup, may not be able to continue as they had done before. Marcel also believes he is intellectually superior to Albertine, and although determined to educate her as best as he can, at times, this becomes yet another reason for doubt.

That Proust has called volume five, *The Captive and The Fugitive*, is a clue to Albertine's fate at this time. Marcel appears determined to control her every movement, preferring for her to be close at hand at all times where he can be sure that she is not being unfaithful to him. When she is allowed to go out alone, Marcel spies on her with the help of his chauffeur or

else phones her friend Andree in order to get a detailed account of where she went, with who and if she met anyone. On the surface at least, Albertine seems to accept all of this, in-part helped by Marcel's ability, due to a recent large inheritance, to buy her everything she wants. As a result, Albertine perhaps feels a sense of security with Marcel that she would not otherwise have; having lost both parents, an only child and with little money of her own.

So why does Marcel need to control Albertine's every movement and why is he so convinced of her unfaithfulness? The reason is that he suspects that what Albertine really needs is the close companionship of other women. From the early days in Balbec, when Albertine was part of a group of young girls, to periods of time when her movements were unknown, her sideways glances at attractive young girls and her habit of lying and then contradicting accounts of past events, all of this had left Marcel convinced that she has been unfaithful and that continuing their relationship was futile; or maybe not. Eventually, and at the behest of Marcel, and to his surprise, often not really meaning what he says, Albertine leaves him. Marcel immediately believes this to be only temporary as Albertine will soon return: only she does not. Marcel's confidence is now shaken and he comes up with various complicated ways to get her to return. In his mind, saying I don't want you to return, clearly means I do want you to return; the fact is Marcel's character is incapable of saying what he really wants. So, Albertine doesn't return and soon Marcel receives the news of a horse riding accident. Albertine is dead.

Grief stricken, Marcel now seems to go into overdrive to find out about Albertine's life and especially her relationships with other women. His chauffeur, Aime, is sent off to Balbec to make enquiries about her. Soon, he phones to confirm Marcel's greatest fears, that Albertine had indeed been with other women. The accounts surround Albertine's visits to the baths in Balbec, when a tall, older women would meet her. At other times, young girls would come along and, on each occasion, they would disappear into a cabin which they always locked. Despite such damning evidence, Marcel begins to convince himself that what was said was either untrue or exaggerated and simply represented what the witnesses considered 'value-for-money'; to say 'nothing happened' possibly resulting in not being paid. Touraine, where Albertine went after

(continued)

leaving Paris, was also, for Marcel, a part of Albertine's life that he knew nothing about and was, predictably, another source of great anxiety to him.



As time passed since the news of Albertine's death, long, hot summer days eventually turned to darkness, only for Marcel to be reminded of after dinner trips with Albertine in the artificial light of Paris. A recurring thought, that helped him endure his grief, was that he had forgotten Gilberte, who he thought he loved, and he had also forgotten his infatuation with Mme de Guermantes. So maybe, given time, he would forget Albertine. But not enough time had passed and his memories were still fresh and as he re-called images of her, she seemed to be alive again, and yet nothing was clear; there were too many unknowns for that and why was he still jealous even when she was dead. Another thought that struck him was that his longed-for visit to Venice had now lost its attraction entirely. Did this mean that he really did love her?

Days passed without Marcel being able to make sense of his feelings for Albertine. Affectionate memories of their time together fought with odious suspicions as to the true nature of Albertine's character. One moment, he felt her sweetness in inanimate objects in his room and in the room that she had occupied next to his. He also felt ashamed at surviving her and of knowing that she would never know just how much he had found out about her. But still he wasn't yet fully prepared to believe those things that he had long since been suspicious about. Aime's report about an affair with a laundry girl at Chatellerault was still not enough and Albertine's friend's insistence that, "She detested that sort of thing. They are lying," only made matters worse for him. In a way, the relationship between Marcel and Albertine has the same echoes as others, in that, it is only with the death of one of the partners that the surviving partner looks so closely at what is lost.

Proust was, after all, himself homosexual and the reader is left wondering if Proust's own attempts at finding love and companionship were also as

complicated and, ultimately, doomed to failure. It is also the case that you get a sense of Proust gaining knowledge about homosexuality from volume to volume; the inclusion of the homosexual Baron Charlus as the main character in volume four and the increasing evidence of Albertine's lesbianism from volume two onwards the result. The fact that both characters, Albertine and Charlus, end up suffering most also suggests that Proust is not comfortable about his own homosexuality.

A final thought is: who is The Captive and who is The Fugitive? It is tempting to think that the captive is Albertine. After all, she does appear to be held captive by Marcel, who keeps her in his house as much as possible and attempts to control her every movement when she is allowed to leave, however, in my opinion it is Marcel who is captive. Why? He rarely goes out, confining himself to his own small world, even visiting places without leaving his motor car. He appears reluctant to be part of the real world; possibly the same can be said of Proust after the death of his mother and when these volumes were written. Albertine's character is the opposite. Her personality is alive and free with a zest for life that makes her want to experience as much as possible. Maybe, Marcel is really jealous of this? Maybe so is Proust. Maybe, that's why he killed her off because he is simply jealous of all people who are like Albertine. And The Fugitive? For me this is, and always has been, Albertine. By dying, Albertine has accomplished the ultimate escape. Marcel, as with any escaped possession, wants her back and so he attempts to bring her back to life by learning about her life that he was never to be part of. In this way, he is able to conjure up new and different ideas of Albertine. Almost as if their life together continues.

White Privilege: The Distorted Representation of America in *On The Road* and *American Psycho*

Jack Kerouac's *On The Road* and Bret Easton Ellis's *American Psycho* are contrasting in many ways, however one element of each novel remains the same - the representation of America through the eyes of white privilege. The Beats of the 1950's and the Wall Street Bankers of the 1980's are groups extremely opposing in their values however consisting of mainly white people, they face a disillusionment with the reality of America for those

(continued)

not in their privileged social positions. In each novel we see an overwhelming blurring between reality and fantasy due to this warped outlook in America, portrayed through narrative elements, motifs, and allegory.



In *On The Road* we are presented with the protagonist Sal Paradise, who seeks to escape conformity into the white-picket fence society of post-war America. In doing so, he embarks on a journey with his best friend Dean Moriarty whereby he chooses to live on the road,

giving up all his possessions and essentially becoming homeless. In a country slowly becoming consumed by capitalism and conformity, many of the Beats wanted to retreat to an 'innocent' America which they felt could be sourced through this choice. However, this choice is problematic for various reasons, one being simply that this journey is a decision, one which indicates a privilege. This choice is completely infeasible for the non-white workers the pair meet on their journeys who do not have family to financially support them like Sal does. Dean at one point mentions 'We know America, we're at home; I can go anywhere in America and get what I want because it's the same in every corner, I know the people, I know what they do.' The sheer naivety Dean displays in this quotation is laughable considering how vast and culturally diverse America is. Yet this mindset is dangerous as it portrays the assumed dominance and superiority Dean as a white privileged male has. Clearly there is a disillusionment with the reality of America which stems from their societal position.

Secondly, the innocent America which the characters wish to rediscover is a fantasy. America is a country built upon oppression, violence and suffering by white settlers displacing and killing native Americans. Once again this portrays the hypocrisy and disillusionment of reality. They chose to position themselves as outsiders, through associating with people who have forcefully been marginalised in order to chase an America which never existed. Jon Panish calls this 'primitivism' and explains 'in times when people are discontented with the progress of their society, these so-called civilised people look to the "other"- usually a Noble Savage- as a remedy for their dissatisfaction.' Primitivism is an inescapable element of *On The Road* and becomes clear in the scene where Sal works picking cotton with

an elderly Black couple. 'There was an old Negro couple in the field with us. They picked cotton with the same God-blessed patience their grandfathers had practised in ante-bellum Alabama [...] it was beautiful kneeling and hiding in that earth.' Sal's experience here is extremely problematic as he fails to understand, even register the roots of slavery and oppression this work has. Moreover he finds it 'beautiful,' highlighting his disillusionment with what America is built upon and his white privilege in romanticising and choosing this work.

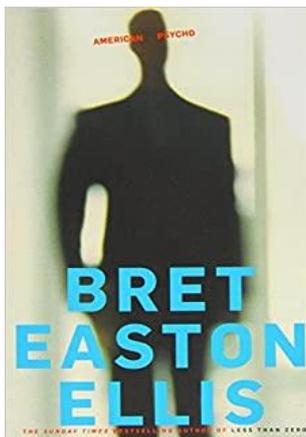
Throughout the novel we see Sal and Dean romanticise the life of hardship many non-white people live, to the extent that they wish to identify as non-white. Sal explicitly mentions 'At lilac evening I walked with every muscle aching among the lights of 27th and Welton in the Denver colored section, wishing I were a Negro, feeling that the best the white world had offered was not enough ecstasy for me, not enough life, joy, kicks, darkness, music, not enough night.' This quotation highlights a main critique of the Beats or The 'Hipster', a term coined by Norman Mailer. In his 1957 essay, 'The White Negro', Mailer explains how the white Hipster appropriates black culture feeling it is superior to whiteness, and through this tries to create a connection between them as outsiders. This is specifically shown through the obsession with Jazz music in *On The Road*. Kerouac's prose style has been connected to the Jazz genre due to its spontaneous, beat-like rhythm, comparable to the stream-of-consciousness narrative. You would potentially think that employing this would diminish the segregation between black and white people to embrace togetherness. However as Thomas Fiehrer notes 'Early jazz is a product of the colonial racial division of labour.' In other words, this genre is a result of intense suffering, born from white oppression and slavery which Sal and Dean have never experienced. They romanticise the Jazz musician and the genre, creating an assumed parallel between them as outsiders despite the unbalanced power dynamics. Mailer argues 'any Negro who wishes to live must live with danger from his first day, and no experience can ever be casual to him.' Here Mailer demonstrates white privilege; you cannot appropriate elements of Black culture when you have not personally faced the daily marginalisation and hardships of race which they experience every day.

Mailer goes as far to compare the Hipster to a violent 'psychopath' claiming they 'may indeed be the perverted and dangerous front-runner of a new kind

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of personality which could become the central expression of human nature before the twentieth century.' Whilst I would disagree with the physical violence of the hipster, I do see how some actions, such as Sal's complete disregard for slavery and his unawareness of his privilege could be violent and detrimental to a society. Moreover, there is an unsettling connection to Ellis's *American Psycho* here in terms of Sal and Bateman's similar behaviours which I will explore later in the essay.

Justin Trudeau offers a different argument for the way in which the Beat generation appropriates Black culture. He bases his argument on Freud's definition of the uncanny, whereby reality becomes changed and is unsettling - 'a result of the blurring between fantasy and reality[...] the familiar made strange.' This uneasiness was felt by the Beats as capitalism took over America. Freud argues that two types of performance may manifest as a result of the uncanny, one being 'the experience of the double, where a person may identify himself with another and so become unsure of his true self; or he may substitute the other's self for his own.' Sal potentially wants to identify as Black because of this uneasiness to cope with modern-day America, so he fantasises an innocent America which he believes lies within Black culture. However the reality is that Sal and Dean are not black and never will be, despite appropriating Black culture. Once again highlighting how their view of America is distorted by fantasy.



American Psycho presents us with a protagonist who, like Sal, has a distorted view of America due to his privileged societal position. Patrick Bateman is a Wall Street Banker, placed at the top of society in terms of wealth and status, and is detached from

Reality in many ways. We see this in the way that he treats anyone below him on the societal hierarchy. For example, he has an encounter with a homeless man where Bateman taunts the man with money and questions why he is unemployed, then asks 'Listen. Do you think it's fair to take money from people who *do* have jobs? Who *do* work?' Firstly, due to the recession in 1980's America, unemployment was paramount and the policies at the time were designed to make the rich richer and the poor poorer. As a Wall Street Banker,

Bateman should be incredibly aware of the financial status of America, yet he clearly is not in his taunting of this man. Moreover throughout the novel, Bateman neglects his work choosing to socialise and spend money instead. This portrays the hypocrisy and disillusionment with reality as a result of his social class. He fails to acknowledge that his own career and status is much to blame for the severe financial issues of America at the time.

Victor Hugo's 1862 *Les Misérables* is mentioned many times in *American Psycho*. 'Outside he sees a bum sitting beneath a "Les Misérables" poster, and tells him he needs a shave.' Hugo's novel was written to criticise the life of privilege and excess the rich lived in France whilst the poor suffered greatly. Yet in *American Psycho*, this play has become a spectacle for the rich to attend, meaning the actual messages of inequality permeating the text are dismissed. I believe there are connections between this motif and Sal's poverty tourism in *On The Road* as in both cases we have privileged characters who are so disillusioned that they simply cannot comprehend realities beyond their own - In *American Psycho* poverty is one's own fault and in *On The Road* it is romanticised.

Much has to be said about the narrative structure of *American Psycho* in relation to the blurring between reality and fantasy. Throughout the novel it remains unclear whether Bateman actually commits these murders due to his unreliable narration. We are given graphic images of Bateman literally dragging a body through a lobby without being witnessed as well as him explicitly declaring his identity as a murderer and not being listened to. There is also a moment where he 'keeps thinking there should be music' as if he is in a film. Not only does this raise questions about if the murders actually take place, but it questions the entire identity of Patrick Bateman. He could be read as not one person but an allegory for the entire group of upper-class white, Wall Street bankers he belongs to. This is even hinted at in the novel - 'There is an idea of a Patrick Bateman, some kind of abstraction, but there is no real me[...] my personality is sketchy and unformed, my heartlessness goes deep and is persistent.' If this is the case, does it even matter if he literally carries out the killings? In his Wall Street position, he is indirectly responsible for countless deaths and destruction of lives.

Matt Graham comments further on Bateman's narration, suggesting 'Unreliable narration only partly explains Bateman's evasion of retribution: his

(continued)

privileged social position as an affluent White male emphasizes the role his social capital plays in the reader's suspension of disbelief, resulting in his murders not being immediately dismissed as fantasy.' In other words, perhaps if Bateman was a poor, unemployed man we as the reader would be quicker to accept his murders as delusions. We are conditioned in society to believe that people of higher social positions are more respectable and trustworthy which is far from the case in *American Psycho*. This is what makes reading *American Psycho* as an allegory all the more sinister. Sonia Allue questions 'What happens when the monster is not an "other" but a leading member of society, the American dream made true? When a man who is perfectly integrated in society, who follows all social rules, and is the ultimate consumer in a capitalistic society, becomes a cruel serial killer, the blame cannot be put only on the individual, the blame reaches the whole society.' Statistically, Psychopaths are likely to be in positions of power because of the way in which they can manipulate and distort reality without having empathy for others. These traits are clear in Bateman but also could connect to the obsession with Trump throughout the novel. Patrick Bateman idolises Trump, with his name being mentioned more than twenty times. In many ways Trump's entire persona is constructed on a false reality, from his time on reality TV and his fixation on fake news. What is perhaps most shocking is how a person who explicitly displays questionable behaviour was voted into the most powerful position in America in 2017 - the President. Mailer was perhaps correct in his foretelling of how the psychopath 'could become the central expression of human nature before the twentieth century.' We must then pose the question of why the lines of fiction and reality become blurred in both *On The Road* and *American Psycho*. It cannot simply be down to living a life of excess, as Sal and Dean sacrificed all objects of material value yet still could not comprehend reality. I would therefore argue that it all comes down to how society is constructed through hierarchical positions which dictate how difference is viewed.

Privilege distorts the representation of America in *On The Road* and *American Psycho*. Sal Paradise positions himself as an outsider, endlessly searching for an America which has been constructed by primitivism and appropriation of Black Culture. In his fantasy, he fails to acknowledge the history of forced marginalisation and oppression which built America

and continues to run rampant. Similarly, *American Psycho* satirises Wall Street society to present how people like Bateman continue to cause devastation through a detachment with reality. In many ways these novels present how society is psychotic, as opposed to the psychopath being a stand-alone figure.

LONG WALK TO FREEDOM - PART 2

"May your choices reflect your hopes, not your fears" Nelson Mandela

Displayed on plaques on his former home in Soweto, Nelson Mandela's choices reflected his goals and gave him the courage to change, the hope of things yet unseen, the freedom in his own land and equality for all. Hopes and dreams we share in all our lives.



With the New light shining from the youth of the country, hope and expectations spreading like the ripples of a stone thrown into a pond. That was one inspirational day in Soweto.

Before leaving Johannesburg, the last stop was to visit the house, on 12th Avenue, where Nelson Mandela spent his last years. Looking at the many stones with personal messages to such a great leader, stones placed before he passed and after, expressing such great hope, strong spirit and love for a man who had changed South Africa and abolished the chains of apartheid that strangled the life from the country. He is sadly missed but his legacy lives on.



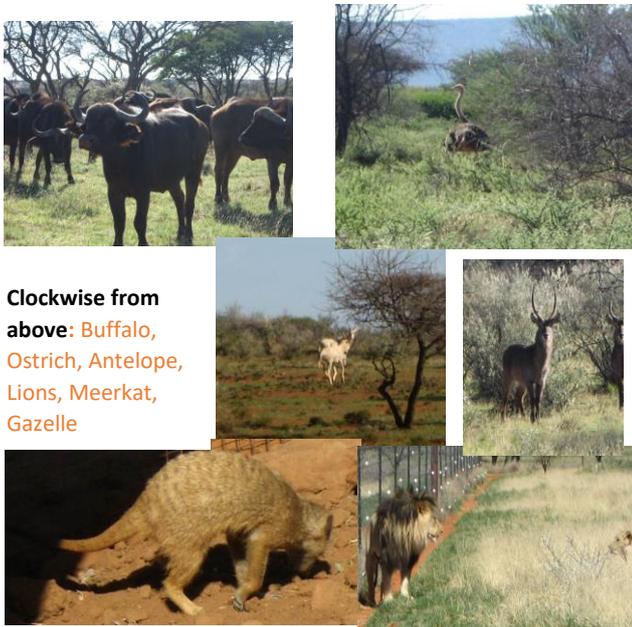
Next Stop – Kimberley - Diamond Country

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Why fly in 1 hour when you can drive in 7. What better way to get a feel for the country than to drive through it. With the comfortable surroundings behind us and the adventure in front, it was not long before we came across the first Shanty town.

Not many visitors would stop here but we did, enjoyed a coke and chat with those living there. So friendly, welcoming and so happy we stopped and they have left an impression in my mind of a proud people. There are several privileges I have enjoyed in life, one is to have had the opportunity to travel and meet so many different and interesting people and learn of their culture and also to see wildlife in its natural habitat and South Africa is no exception, many threatened species but a lot of work to protect them.



Clockwise from above: Buffalo, Ostrich, Antelope, Lions, Meerkat, Gazelle

Breath-taking and you can feel at peace with yourself and the animals although I was certainly glad to be on the right side of the fence with regards the Lion as I am sure he had his eye on me. But absolutely amazing.

Anyway, two thunderstorms later, a quick escape from a giraffe and 7 hours driving we arrived in Kimberley, the Capital and largest city of the Northern Cape Province. Historically significant with Diamond mining

and the siege during the Anglo Boer war.

Cecil Rhodes, a mining magnate and politician served as Prime minister of the Cape from 1890 to 1896 and the roots of the DeBeers diamond company can also be traced to this mining town.



The Big Hole

Kimberley is home to the largest diamond mine in the world. "The Big hole", now a tourist attraction but can you imagine nearly 15 million diamonds were extracted here, in its 43 years operation? The discovery of diamonds in 1871 brought many tradesmen and businessmen to the area and soon the town was built. Mining continued until 1914 but the town still exists and is still a popular place to live and is rich in history.

While staying in Kimberley, I was booked into the Edgerton guest house, frequented by Presidents, diplomats, discerning travellers and now, by me.

Their most notable guest was Nelson Mandela himself and what a great honour to be able to use the room he once slept in. The "Madiba" room. It was like taking a trip back in time.

The style décor and opulence of this grand guest house is reflective of many of the houses built in Kimberley when Diamond mining started, many of the original buildings can still be seen today in their magnificent glory.



Here in Kimberley I had the opportunity to start working with the youth of South Africa to support development of training. What was amazing was over 50% of students at colleges with a thirst to learn the artisan skills and support the development of the country, were women.

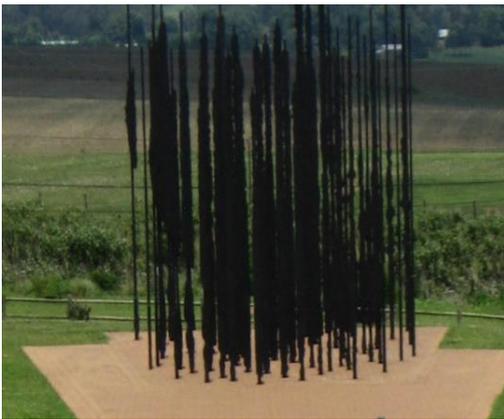
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My journey through South Africa will take us back to the piece of art pictured below, and we will soon release, the guiding hand all along. We don't always see the obvious when we are looking at it but if we make a journey from the heart we can see what is invisible to the eye.

"It is only with the heart that one can see rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye."

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry – Le Petit Prince

All will be revealed on our journey.....



Next, we will meet the youth of South Africa and spend some time learning and teaching from each other for the journey of learning and true understanding is two way.

-----To be continued -----

RENE JOURET (1911 – 2001) A DEDICATED PAINTER

The story of the French artist Rene Jouret is not such an uncommon one. That is, even though he showed exceptional promise as an artist at a young age, he was not supported by his father to pursue this option as a career. Jouret's father was a vet and his low opinion of artists resulted in his son being discouraged to follow his passion for making art.

What perhaps makes Rene's story different is that, although he did not follow the career path of an artist, he continued to make art throughout his entire life despite everything. I learned about Rene Jouret when I visited Alain Ribes in his antique shop in the charming southern French town of Ceret. The town of Ceret has an interesting connection with art, especially the art of the early twentieth-century when many artists made it their home and place of work at various times. Pablo

Picasso, Henri Matisse and Chaim Soutine to name but a few. There were also many local artists such as Manalo Hauge, Frank Burty Haviland and Aristide Maillol living and working in the area. The Scottish architect and designer and his wife Margaret McDonald Mackintosh spent the last years of their life together in this part of France. So, to learn about a dedicated artist such as Jouret in this town was a special honour for me.

Rene Jouret was born in 1911 in Opoul in the Catalan region of Corbieres. As mentioned, he was a talented artist, as a teenager he was even chosen to exhibit at the Salon Rhodanien in Avignon in 1928 when he was only seventeen years old. Even though he was not given encouragement, he was determined to follow his artistic dream so in his late teens he took himself off to Paris where he lived for two years. Life was hard for him and, although he had work painting buildings, he was living in poverty which resulted in bad health. Consequently, he returned home to Opoul and, on the advice of his father, joined the army in 1931 where he became a draughtsman. Jouret had a distinguished career in the army, however, he continued to paint. He painted more than 200 watercolours at this time; one of these paintings was acquired by the city of Perpignan in 1970. While serving in the army he was asked to design the decoration for the officer's mess and the regimental logo and he also painted portraits of his colleagues.



A move that changed his life significantly was when he was recruited in 1945 by the Geographic Institute to work in North Africa, his job was to work with a team to draw up the first map of southern Morocco. Rene ended up living in Morocco for twenty years where he continued to paint scenes inspired by the landscape, people and colours of Morocco. Looking at the paintings of north Africa in Alain's shop it is clear that living there was a great inspiration to him,

(continued)

they shine like jewels in the sun.

Jouret continued to be an artist when he returned to France from Africa. He won many prizes and exhibited a large part of his works in Opoul in 1987 then again in 1991 when the extent of his talent was discovered for possibly the first time. Even so, he was not market-driven and, as a rather single-minded character with a taste for solitude, he resisted following the artistic twentieth-century trends of the time such as cubism and new figuration. However, his later landscapes did veer towards abstraction when he painted with dark tones of grey, black and dull blues with some bursts of almost fluorescent colour.



Rene Jouret declared at the age of ninety that “no matter how hard I try, I don’t evolve anymore”, this was when he stopped painting, the year was 2001 and Rene Jouret passed away. And now his daughter Rose Marie is keeping his legacy alive by making sure her father’s lifelong dedication to creativity is not forgotten.



FRANCK VILLA – CERET 2022

Franck Villa was born in Nimes, France. He is a self-taught artist who has been painting for more than thirty years. He recently moved to the Pyrenees Orientals region where he lives in the town of Saint Andres. In June he held an exhibition in Ceret.



He admires and is inspired by surrealist art notably paintings by Salvador Dali and Rene Magritte and Giorgio de Chirico. The later artist reflects the part of his work that introduces the presence of faceless heads. Although there is a serious element to his paintings, there is a fun aspect which comes across in his exuberant bursts of colour and subjects such as Sumo wrestlers.



PUZZLE PAGE

Identify each of countries below by their shape.



A



B



C



D



E



F



G

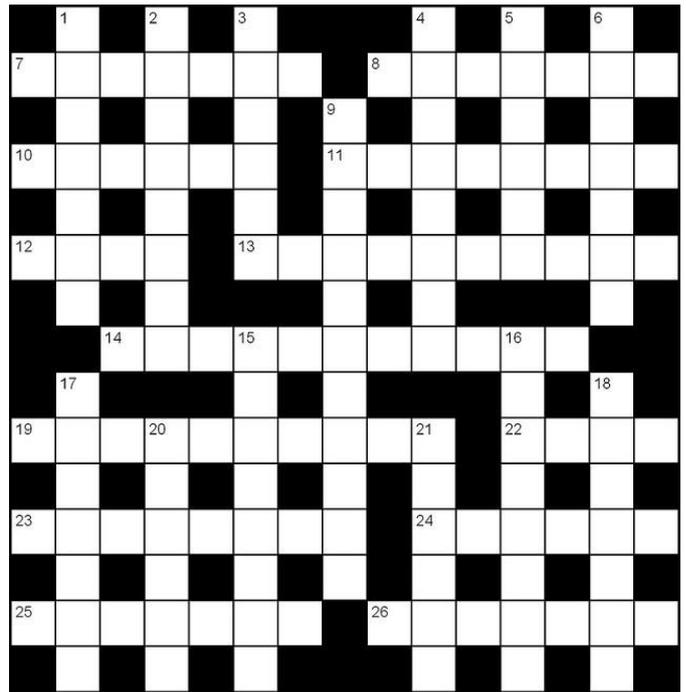


H



I

BULB CROSSWORD NO. 5



Clues across:

- 7. Brings into existence (7) 8. Skilled worker (7)
- 10. Bookworm (6) 11. In a rough manner (8)
- 12. Top motoring TV programme (4) 13. Priority in importance (10)
- 14. Not now (7,4)
- 19. In advance (10) 22. Structure built by animal (4)
- 23. Engage in conflict (8)
- 24. Dried grape (6) 25. Entangled (7) 26. Converted to a digital image (7)

Clues down:

- 1. Instructed in readiness for task (7) 2. Chinese dialect (8) 3. Destroy by ripping apart (4,2)
- 4. Weapon and equipment of military vehicle (8)
- 5. Soft, absorbent paper (6)
- 6. Unsound argument (7) 9. Increased velocity (11)
- 15. Entertainment venues (8)
- 16. Speaks about in the passing (8) 17. Undergo chemical change (7)
- 18. Focussed one's ambitions towards achieving something (7)
- 20. Colour between red and yellow on visible spectrum (6) 21. From A to B in a straight line (6)

Puzzle solutions - page 22

ARTISTS IN FOCUS

I never imagined that when I started work on the “Artist’s Way” by Julia Cameron, that I would suddenly have understood what my art was about! But at the grand age of 79 that is what happened! It was in preparing this book to reprise what I had done in the past forty years that the revelation occurred. The Artist’s Way is a twelve week course about “Discovering and Recovering Your Creative Self” and by week eight I had made good progress, or so I thought! But suddenly this week I took a huge leap forward. I understood what I had been searching for over the past forty years.

All of this time I have felt driven to produce more and more but didn’t know what some of it really meant. My wife Ann, who is my muse, was leafing through some discarded images when she pointed to one and put a mount around it. Suddenly it gripped me; empty clothing in a concrete cloth boat about to set sail? I knew then that, in searching for self-understanding, I had also been searching to understand who the person my father really was behind his powerful, charismatic persona which I had always really admired and, at a deeper level, feared. I now know that I have been searching ever since to understand and accept myself and him; in sculpture; in paintings about alchemy; in faces which hide emotion. (December 2021)



Finding Myself: My creative journey



Above – A sculpture that shocked and scared the artist **Andy McClintock** when it forced him to look back at his solitary childhood. The sculpture still scares him but he is proud of making it and believes it is probably his best work.

THE ARTIST’S DILEMMA

I want to paint.....

What? A giant-sized picture of Andy Warhol hidden under a mound of Coca-Cola cans?

No. I want to paint.....

Lady Gaga as Picasso would have painted her in his blue period?

No.....

A life-sized portrait of the little mermaid in the bay at Copenhagen?

No.....

With red painted fingernails....

No.....

And with ships in full sail behind her?

No..... I want to paint.....

The Mona Lisa in a thunderstorm with shutters of The Louvre flapping in the breeze behind her?

Or a thousand matadors charging into the bullring of a Spanish city – capes flying and picadors ready to hold up the ears of the bull to cheering and calling – OLE! OLE! OLE!

No.

Well what do you want to paint then?

I want to paint.....

Yes.....?

I want to paint.....

I don’t know what I want to paint

But I want to paint.....

Poem taken from.....

‘WHEN I WAS A CHILD’ STORIES AND POEMS

BY ANN MCCLINTOCK



NAUGHTY CATS AT NUMBER 10

A Pounce of Meat

NARRATOR: Cats LARRY and PALMERSTON are exploring the garden of 10 and 11 Downing St. Larry finds electronic bathroom scales under a bush.

PALMERSTON: What's that doing here?

LARRY: Probably left over from a 'Guess My Weight ' party.

NARRATOR: Larry sits on the scales

ELECTRONIC VOICE: You weigh thirteen pounds.

FX: SWANY WHISTLE

LARRY: I'll need to cut down on the treats.

NARRATOR: Larry comes off the scales. Palmerston adjusts the scales and sits on them.

ELECTRONIC VOICE: You weigh five kilos.

LARRY: Shh! Don't let Boris hear you. It's back to pounds and ounces now.

PALMERSTON: That reminds me, when I was a kitten my mother used to deal me a pounce of meat.

LARRY: A pounce of meat. Is that some imperial measure?

PALMERSTON: No. We'd sit on the kitchen table...

LARRY: Kitchen table? I was never allowed to.. never mind sorry.

PALMERSTON: We'd sit on the kitchen table and my mother would nudge a sachet of meat off it. I had to pounce and catch it before it hit the floor.

LARRY: Why'd she make you do that?

PALMERSTON: Extreme hunting skills. You know in case we were in the jungle and had to fend for ourselves.

LARRY: Wasn't she just a housecat?

PALMERSTON: Yes, but she had dreams.



Cats

Go

Bananas!

FICTION

HYDROTHERAPY

She was going under, but at the same time she seemed to be floating.

“You are going under” said a persuasive voice from somewhere just marginally out of reach.

“The sky is the most glorious shade of blue and you are lying on your back looking up at it, You can hear the calming sound of the waves lapping around you and you can feel a warm soothing breeze caress your body”

She sank further under but now she was sure she was floating. She was floating on the sea. She was lying on a white yacht. Connie looked up at the sky. It was a glorious shade of blue as the voice had told her but the word glorious did not do it justice. It was unbelievably glorious, exquisite, beguiling. It was azure, navy, kingfisher, it wasn't even just blue, it had streaks of green in it. Emerald and seaweed green. And the sea. It was even more beguiling. She squinted through the orange-tinted sunlight at the water which completely surrounded her, a vast ocean of blue green water with sparkling silvery splashes.

“I don't think this is real”, she thought.

She was glad it wasn't. The voice was still there somewhere in the distance. The voice was real.

A fleeting thought came into her mind as she lay on the boat with the sky above and the sea below. Someone with the same name as herself once swam the English Channel. Constance Smith swam the Channel the same year as Connie was born. She discovered this information by accident in the school library one day and had carried it around inside her brain for all these years.

“Ironic” she thought.

She knew she was never going to be a swimmer. All those wasted days spent flapping around aimlessly in the public baths hating the stench of chlorine and the confident swimmers breast-stroking and butterflying by. And other days splashing around in the North Sea with aquatic, sea-side dwelling cousins almost getting there but floundering at the last minute. Even then she knew she would never conquer her fear of water. Now the water was all around her. She would not swim in it though. If she believed for one second that it was reality she was experiencing she would start to feel uneasy. Yet she could smell the salt. She could hear the faint cry of

sea birds from far away.

She could so easily go under the water and into the sea. It was all around her with nothing in between except the boat. Another thought crossed her mind, this time it was visual. All she could see was the sea, white, opaque nothingness. It was terrible, she felt like she couldn't breathe. Connie was gasping for air. She was in the sea, she was under the water. It wasn't real though it was only a memory. The Italian afternoon had been hot. She was sunbathing on the beach with her eyes closed. Although she was wearing a pair of trendy sunglasses it was better with her eyes shut. She liked to listen to the low murmur of the beach-life going on around her. It was relaxing. While at school she would lie on the grass on sunny days staring up at the sun with her eyes firmly shut. She found that, by doing this, she could create a kaleidoscope of intense coloured patterns inside her head. She didn't know how it worked she just enjoyed doing it. The Italian sun made an even better kaleidoscope.

“Funny the things you learn at school” she thought, running her hand across the warm sand.

Voices interrupted her internal light-show.

“Come into the water. Come on its lovely and cool”

Connie didn't want to, she wanted to stay where she was.

“Okay just for a little while” she said deciding that a paddle could be refreshing.

She was up to her waist in water and it was nice, not too cold, just right.

“Come and lie on this it's fun”.

She shook her head and wondered why people became so determined to enjoy themselves on holiday while glancing at the flimsy inflatable air-bed being floated towards her.

Her instinct screamed “no” but somehow she found herself perched precariously on top of the object. And, before she had time to worry, she was in the Adriatic.

It was all white, opaque nothingness under there but the sound was worse. For that eternal second she was under the water there was no sound only whiteness and silence. Connie freaked out. She had never been so scared, so out of her depth.

Even though they were only yards from the shoreline, going under the saline H₂O made her panic. And, when she submerged, her fabulous mirrored sunglasses were gone. She imagined them journeying the length and breadth of the Adriatic Sea reflecting all they saw in the shiny mirrored lenses. A pair of sightless eyes exploring

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the alien depths of an underwater world where murderous-looking creatures of every size, colour and configuration devoured each other. Fighting for survival. The sightless eyes would see amazingly strange plants and weird, pickily sea shells and molluscs and slimy things that Connie didn't like. They would discover shipwrecks and old bones and mortified objects. She was terrified of the underwater world. It was another planet. And now it was all around and beneath her. She wasn't sure if she was coping.

The sound of a sea bird made her jump. A piercing noise louder than all the others as if it were demanding special attention.

"Hear me, listen to me" it seemed to be squawking.

She could not understand why it made her think of her grandfather a man called Tom whom she had never met. Tom had run away to sea when he was only sixteen and remained a salty dog all his life. A life that was cut short when he drowned in a harbour. He had never learned to swim which was something Connie had found surprising. The voice was still there somewhere beyond consciousness, she could hear it droning on. But she was not listening. She was thinking about Tom the grandfather she had never met. They said the sea was in his blood. She wondered why it was not in hers. Maybe it was? Her mother told her stories about her sea-faring grandfather and now Connie wished she had paid more attention. He must have had an exciting life during all these years at sea. The places he must have seen like Shanghai, Cairo and Istanbul. Exotic places alive with sights and sounds and smells and their own unique atmosphere. And the sea had been there all the time, yet, like her, Tom could not swim in it. Maybe the sea was in her blood after all, maybe you can have the sea in your blood and just not be a swimmer. But it had been dangerous. They said he was probably drunk at the time. She wondered if he had made it to the open sea for a proper nautical burial, Connie didn't know the details. Whether his body had been fished out of the harbour or if he had simply gone overboard and disappeared, swept out to sea with the tide. She imagined it might have been the second option because her mother would talk of how she would search the inter-war streets for him as a child not believing he was gone. Her mother would run up to strange men who looked like her absent father but, of course, she never found him. It was very sad. All the same, she was proud of her salty

dog grandfather who sailed the seven seas. He was her flesh and blood and the sea was part of both of them. It must be. And, if Tom had been swept away by the tide he truly had become part of the sea.

Although she was paying no attention to the voice it became more audible, more interesting somehow.

"Connie" it was saying. "Can you hear me. I want to talk to you"

She was listening. The voice was not familiar but, strangely, she felt she knew it anyway. The noisy sea bird made a circle above her looking beautiful, mother-of-pearl against an ultramarine sky.

"The sea is a wonderful place" said the voice.

Connie's face twitched, she was listening intently. She wanted to smile and nod her head, she wanted to agree.

"If you come with me now you will see how wonderful it is. Don't be afraid"

She wanted to hear more about the sea before she made up her mind.

"Tell me more" she said inside her head.

"I will tell you how enchanting it is beneath the waves" the voice answered. "If you come with me you will see mermaids swim elegantly in endless electric blue lagoons. You will see porpoise leap and play and tiny fish in their millions form multi-coloured mosaics making psychedelic blankets of such perfection they will make you want to weep. And your little tears of joy will drop into the vast ocean and part of you will become part of the sea".

Connie lay on the white yacht and thought about the nature of the sea. It was not undulating menacingly anymore but rippling and inviting. She watched the sea bird soar high into the sky, as if carried along by the breeze, sail effortlessly out of sight. An overwhelming sense of calm washed over her entire being as she stood up and walked to the edge of the boat and, with as much ease as the bird in flight, she raised her arms high and dived in.

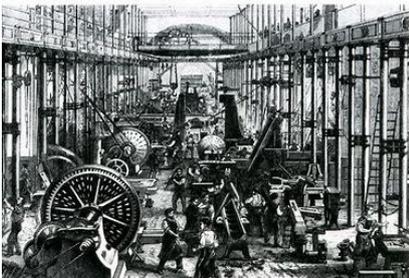


BOOK REVIEWS

EINSTEIN'S FRIDGE THE SCIENCE OF FIRE, ICE AND THE UNIVERSE

Einstein's Fridge by Paul Sen charts the history of a branch of physics called thermodynamics; moreover its second law, which states that: *Heat does not spontaneously flow from a colder body to a hotter.* The second law also introduces the concept of *entropy* which is often defined as a system's state of disorder. As an example, when ice melts, it loses the extent to which its molecules are in some sort of order, here say a cube like structure, as it goes from a nice neat shape to a puddle of water. Lowering the temperature and re-freezing will not result in it returning to its original shape, in other words the process is irreversible. Heating the water further so that it turns to steam, increases the system's disorder further. So introducing heat has increased the systems disorder and therefore its entropy. As long as heat is available, entropy will continue to increase.

Beginning with a tour of Britain in the early part of the nineteenth century, the book describes how the use of steam-powered machines had succeeded in pushing Britain's economy and wealth far ahead of all other countries. Naturally, other countries, such as France, were determined to follow Britain's lead; enter the first main participant, Frenchman and ex-soldier Sadi Carnot.



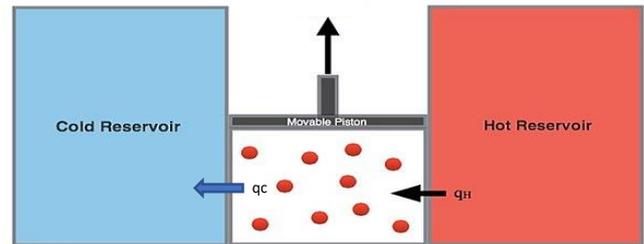
The Industrial Revolution circa. 1800

Carnot's aim was to understand the role of heat in an engine and how engines that used heat, such as steam engines, could achieve maximum efficiency. Carnot, often described as the 'father of thermodynamics,' expressed his theories in his book, *Reflections on the Motive Power of Fire*. Among Carnot's theories, was that heat must flow from hot to cold in order to create work and that air, being more combustible than steam, due to its oxygen content, could be raised to a higher temperature than steam with the same amount of heat, in effect creating more efficient engines. Carnot also suggested that the air could burn inside the cylinder thus without the need for an external boiler, an idea that would inspire Rudolf Diesel, over 150 years later, to invent the internal combustion engine. Carnot died at only thirty-six in 1832.

Carnot Cycle – Ideal thermodynamic cycle, providing upper limit of efficiency for conversion of heat to work. Note that direction of heat to produce work is hot to cold



Sadi Carnot



Stage 1 – Heat from hot reservoir released into gas. Gas heats up, increased pressure, piston rises.
Stage 2 – Piston continues to rise (valve to hot reservoir now closed) gas cools as chamber expands.
Stage 3 – Outside / external pressure pushes piston down. Gas compresses and temperature rises.
Stage 4 – Heat passes to cold reservoir and piston returns to start position.

The next participant is Lancastrian James Joule. Joule disagreed with Carnot's proposition that heat could be neither created or destroyed, demonstrating that this was not the case by producing heat from an electrical current. He also tried to define heat by its mechanical equivalent, showing how a certain amount of heat is able to raise a certain amount of weight. The reality was, that at this time, exactly what heat was, was still a bit of a mystery; Carnot's belief that it was something that flowed, called caloric, in the same way that water flows through a pipe, was the dominant theory.

Scotsman, William Thomson (later to become Lord Kelvin), was mainly in favour of Carnot's ideas but combined these with some of Joule's work to show that water's transition into steam or ice was not always only dependent on temperature but that pressure also had a role to play. Thomson did, however, soon begin to have misgiving on the caloric definition of heat.

The next person to take up the reins, was Herman Helmholtz, a German physicist, physician and philosopher born in 1821. Possibly better known for his work in other fields, such as physiology and philosophy, his early work in the field of thermodynamics often included the study of heat in animals, in particular, how animals seem to produce heat more efficiently than an equivalent mechanical system. In agreement with Joule and Thomson, he agreed that energy must be conserved (neither created or destroyed) and that mechanical work and electricity both create heat and, further stated,

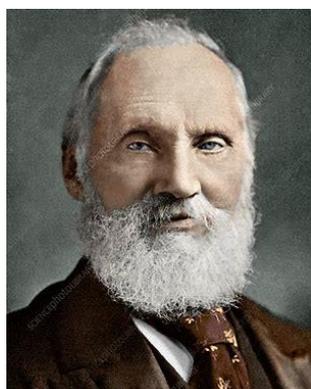
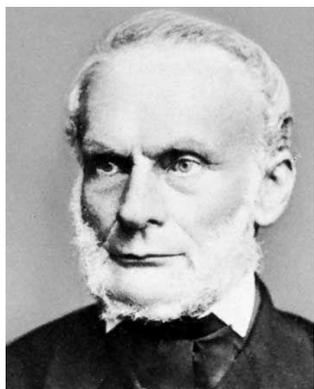
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that other forms of energy could turn into heat but that heat could not turn into anything else.

Rudolf Clausius was also German and born a year after Helmholtz. Clausius was also a supporter of Carnot's work and it was he who was responsible for stating the first two laws of thermodynamics (a name given to the subject by Thomson). Clausius' first two laws are:

1. *Though heat and work can be converted into each other at the fixed rate that Joule had discovered, the total amount of work and heat remains the same.*
2. *Heat never spontaneously flows from cold to hot.*

The first law is, in effect, saying that energy conservation applies to work plus heat. Thomson, on reading Clausius' conclusions now reasoned that heat was indeed irreversible, for example when a wheel creates friction with the surface of a road the heat produced simply dissipates, it does not, even when the wheel has stopped, return to the wheel. Thomson saw an analogy with time. As time is irreversible so is heat dissipation – from less dissipation to more. A further thought, by Thomson, was that such a process would eventually have an end, when all heat has dissipated; was this when the universe would end?



Clausius and Thomson

Thomson then set out to outline, what it is that he is best known for today; that temperature must a lowest point. His thought process was back to steam engines. He knew that the best engine is one that can turn all its heat into work. Thomson also knew that for this to happen the sink (the lowest temperature point (typically a condenser where steam returns to water) – the hottest being the furnace) has to be at the lowest possible temperature. Scientists, at the time, had already succeeded in reaching temperatures below -100 degrees Celsius so data, involving both temperature and pressure, on which to make his

estimate, was already there. Thomson estimated that the limit to which temperature could go to was around -273 degrees Celsius. At this temperature, he reasoned, no heat would be lost and that the pressure inside the cylinder would be zero, therefore offering no resistance to the moving piston. Meantime, Clausius had re-defined the second law and added a simple equation and new word to describe heat dispersal. The second law now states:

2. The entropy of the universe tends to a maximum.

$\Delta S \geq 0$ (The change in entropy is equal or greater than zero).

It was then down to Daniel Bernoulli to give us a definition of what was happening that seems most familiar today. Bernoulli started by defining pressure as the combined effect of small particles pushing against a surface. He also explained that volume and pressure were disproportionate to one another, i.e. as volume increased, pressure decreased and that the combined effects of pressure and volume in a confined space was always the same, as shown below.

$$P_1/V_1 = P_2/V_2$$

Bernoulli reasoned that heating would increase pressure since as the particles gained energy they would then move quicker resulting in more collisions with the surface. Going further, heat was due to molecules moving quickly and cold was due to molecules moving slowly. Bernoulli wrote his theory in his Kinetic Theory of Gases; the Royal Society describing the paper as nonsense. Clausius, ever open to modifying his own thoughts, now added a caveat to his own paper, stating that what differentiates heat and temperature is that temperature is only produced by particles moving in a straight line, whereas heat is the result of all particles motions. Clausius used the same line of thought to describe that heat spreads so slowly in a room (imagine opening the door of a hot oven in a cold room) due to the particles constantly colliding with other particles.

James Clerk Maxwell had shown a passing interest in the subject, showing that the viscosity of air was unchanged by pressure and had declared the work of Clausius flawed. Clausius stated that temperature was proportional to the average speed of the molecules. Maxwell's response was that this meant some must move slower and some must move faster – an observation that would later throw the second law into doubt.

Austrian, Ludwig Boltzman, a fan of Maxwell, continued with much of Maxwell's thinking, eventually arriving at the conclusion that an increase

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in entropy was caused by an increase in the kinetic energy of particles. Particles effectively swap kinetic energy, causing their distribution to become more uneven and therefore increasing the number of ways a system may be arranged. Consider a pack of cards. There is only one way to arrange them so that the cards are in order; the suits ordered alphabetically. Now mix them. The likelihood from now on is that that they be in a state of disorder from now on. This is entropy, the evolution into more likely distributions.

As the years progressed other participants contributed to the subject, including Josiah Gibbs who considered if refrigeration was an example of entropy decreasing, only to conclude that the heat from the condenser meant that overall entropy did in fact increase. By 1900, believe in the existence of atoms was still not widespread, causing Ludwig Boltzman, who's work depended on their existence, to hang himself and, in 1905, Einstein had shown by his famous equation that the first law now included mass and energy.

The final part of the story (so far) considers information. Information is contained in every object in the universe. Here, within the text but it may also be a colour, a shape, a size, a smell or anything else which helps describe the object. As we store, or erase, information we produce heat that then dissipates into the universe, increasing its entropy. This is true if we paint a picture or store the information in a computer in the form of binary digits (bits) using millions of transistors to do so. Claude Shannon, an American mathematician and encryption specialist, came up with the following equation for the amount of information that may be stored.

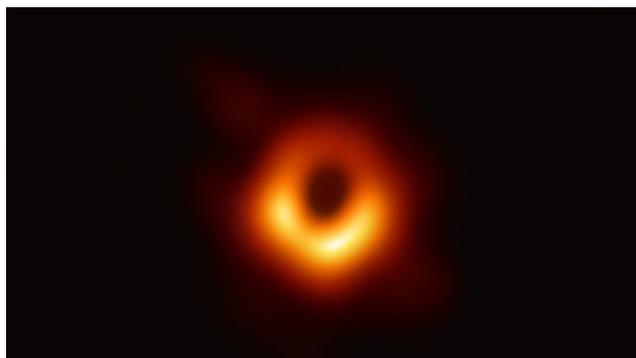
$$H = - \sum_i p_i \log_b p_i$$

This turns out to be look very much like the equation that Boltzman and Gibbs had formulated for entropy, so much so that some suggested Shannon's equation should be called the information entropy equation.

$$S = - k_B \sum_i p_i \ln p_i$$

The conclusion of the information / entropy story is deep in space with black holes. Black holes result from the collapse of large stars which are unable to counteract their own enormous gravitational forces. Black holes presented both an entropy and information dilemma, as, by this time, entropy should always increase and information should be conserved, however, this did not seem to be the case with black holes. The solution for entropy was in the black holes event horizon. As an object passes the event horizon

(the point of no return) and disappears into the black hole, entropy decreases. This would violate the second law if it were not for the fact that as mass falls in the event horizon itself grows, thereby restoring to the universe the correct amount of entropy. In a way, nothing is lost, instead the entropy and information of the object simply appears on the event horizon. Stephen Hawking and Jacob Bechenstein came up with an equation that suggests a single bit of data, describing a gases entropy, as it falls into a black hole, takes up 4×10^{66} square centimetres of the event horizon. So all is well with the first two laws and information theory due to an increase in the black holes event horizon (see below).



Why was the book called Einstein's Fridge? Turns out Einstein invented a fridge that didn't work very well and never made it into production. Certainly a fridge is an interesting object when discussing thermodynamic theory. Or, maybe rather cynically, was it that the publisher said to the author to mention Einstein or better still include his name in the title of the book. Personally, I found the bit about Einstein and his fridge boring and contrived. Did it spoil the book? Maybe a little. I also suspected that this was a Wikipedia book, where the author gets a laptop, opens up Wikipedia and gets going. The reason? When I opened up Wikipedia to check on things there seemed to be links to just about everything else in the book. I also wondered why the 3rd law of thermodynamics wasn't mentioned (did I miss it?) in the main body of the book as it brings together two of the main players – Thomson and Boltzman. *The third law states that at a temperature of absolute zero entropy is zero.* I will say, however, that the author has done well in simplifying some of the more complex issues. Is it a good popular science read? On balance, probably yes.

Einstein's Fridge – The Science of Fire, Ice and The Universe by Paul Sen. William Collins 2021. £9.99 pp.305

THEY

On the shelf in the bookshop Kay Dick sits next to Philip K Dick in the science-fiction section, this is perhaps one of the reasons why I picked up this novella. There, however, the comparison ends. THEY is described on the front cover as a masterpiece, I didn't get that. Glowing comments from others on the back page seem over the top, for example, it is described by Margaret Atwood as "a creepily prescient tale" and by Edna O'Brien as having "the signature of an enchantress". I didn't get that either. Anyway, as the story goes, THEY was first published in 1977 and, although it won the South East Arts Literature prize, it was essentially a flop. The Forward to the book by Carmen Maria Machado reveals that it sold so badly that the publisher Penguin refused her request to have paperback editions printed. Dick was peeved by this rejection and suggested that Penguin should push harder to sell more copies. Nevertheless, the book was out of print by 1979 and only saw the light of day again after being rediscovered recently by a literary agent in a charity shop.

THEY is described by Machado as a fix-up novel (this means it is made up of previously published short stories newly connected by the author). The premise of these connected stories is that a group of intellectuals and artists are being hounded by a mysterious group of philistines – these are the "They" referred to in the title of the book. The philistines are violent and the artists suffer violent acts upon themselves if they resist giving up their particular artform. They are also taken away to be "cured" on some occasions, which results in them being returned to their friends and families in a zombified condition. On paper this sounds like an okay idea for a storyline, however, this is not the problem, or should I say problems?

The first troublesome issue is that the narrative and the writing of it comes across as an attempt to divide society in a class-based way. That is, the artists and intellectuals are portrayed as upper-middle-class types, some of them even have servants. It seems a given that they have a superiority about them, whereas the philistines are an unidentified, homogenous "other" who seem to be divided into two distinct groups. The first of these is the violent stalkers who roam around the idyllic countryside invading the homes of artists, stealing and/or destroying work and now and again maiming them or killing them outright. The second group who belong to the philistine camp are known as the "sightseers" who relieve their apathy by chucking litter about the streets and stare at "all whom they meet with malicious intent" And, it gets worse. Dick writes "physically they presented a

uniformity of ugliness, their movements suggested the grotesque". This is in stark contrast to the artists. (At this point, although there is no indication of the narrator's gender, I will refer to them as "she" to save confusion). The narrator's friends bask in a world of beauty, their heads full of the treasures of nature which it seems is theirs alone to appreciate. In one scene she offers her (non-artist neighbour) some roses from her garden, the neighbour does not seem worthy "just one, she simpered". The narrator gives her a large rose which is received in this way, "Smiling at me, she placed her hand over the bloom, crushed the petals into a pulp and dropped the stem at my feet".

Now, I have no sympathy for the philistines, but the artists don't manage to extract any sympathy either (and to have a plot where two opposing ideologies are at odds with one another there has to be a side to cheer on). In this case it is hard to pick a side because the artists, who I assume Dick wants the reader to support, come across as an annoyingly superior bunch. Particularly telling is Dick's inclusion of the philistine's children in an encounter with five children on a beach, four boys and a girl, who "jabber like savages" and eye them (narrator and artist friend Sebastian) with contempt and who have captured some butterflies in a bottle. Sebastian "heroically" sets the butterflies free by grabbing the bottle from one of the children's hand. Whereupon, Dick writes "Two of the boys kicked his ankles. I hit them as hard as I could". The narrator then lectures the girl, "I began to explain the cruelty and offence to nature's enriching bounty. You sloppy shit, she said and walked away". Again, it is hard not to have sympathy with the so called enemy (the philistine's children in this case). Whilst I don't endorse cruelty to living creatures, it seems unfair to place children in the firing line in this way. The patronising, superior attitude of these two nature loving artists might well induce a reaction of rebellion from children who might possibly have reacted better to being encouraged to think differently rather than being talked down to by self-righteous types who react with reciprocated violence towards them. It's hard not to sympathise with the girl's reaction towards this person who rather than reasoning with her lashes out and tells her off.

The other major problem I detect is that this book, having been published in 1977, would most likely have been lost amongst the social and cultural revolution that was taking place at the time such as, for example, the explosion of Punk. This book seems weak and namby-pamby when compared to the rebellion going on at the time. Education was becoming much more widely available to everyone

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with the advent of the Open University in 1968 (a mere nine years earlier). Much of the social changes were class-based, this was manifest in the Punk movement when working-class groups of young people rejected the status quo seeking to create their own environment. Youngsters from council estates were no longer content to be excluded from the rarefied art world, they created their own art scene which might have seemed to such a sensitive soul as Kay Dick a rather unpleasant affair – philistine perhaps? It might be true to say the rebellious youngsters from housing estates were the model for the philistine children encountered on the beach?

The punk singer Polystyrene summed up the age more accurately than Dick in the songs she sang with her band X-Ray Spex, when she sang “1977 and we’re all going mad, 1977 and we’ve seen too many ads, 1977 and were gonna show them all – apathy’s a drag”. This interestingly compares to Dick’s vision of philistine homes of concrete blocks where television is the only form of entertainment. Television, in this novella, is truly the enemy – it is the companion of the philistine. Yet, these young philistines (Punks) were reshaping society and Dick saw it coming and feared it – it was all down to class. There is a telling scene where the narrator invites her neighbours (not her actual friends – except Tim) to a party and she describes them thus. “They all talked at the same time. No one listened to anyone else. No one laughed. Only Tim and I smiled at each other. They felt uneasy because there was no television set”. This is blatant snobbery by any standard, these people whom she invited into her home were just ordinary people who enjoyed watching telly. And why not, as well as being entertaining television was becoming a source of knowledge (remember that in the early days Open University educational tutorials were broadcast on television) But education is something Dick seemed reluctant to let the proletariat have access to which is why television with its ability to impart knowledge might come across as a source of anxiety for her and her artist friends in the book?

It is probably clear by now that I did not like this book. This is because it seems like an assault on those not blessed with the superior ability to create artwork (their artwork, by the way, does not sound like anything special). Also, it does not deserve the description of being prescient as Margaret Atwood suggests since Dick’s predictions were way off the mark in terms of the eradication of artistic freedom (this is obviously true in some countries but western society does not suffer this in the main, indeed I would say artistic freedom is more evident today). It is also

weak and lacking in ideas that are original and new. Worst of all though, it is a poorly disguised put down of ordinary people at the time who were not privileged enough to have been given the chance of an education equivalent to people like her. Therefore, I believe it would have been best if the literary agent who found it in a charity shop recently had just put it back on the shelf. This is not a masterpiece.

THEY by Kay Dick. Faber Editions 2022. £8.99. pp.107

PLATFORM

PLATFORM is an arena where issues are discussed and debated. These can be scientific, cultural, historical and/ or arts related among other ideas. We are looking at these issues from local, national and international perspectives alike.

A NEWCOMER’S VIEW ON CULTURE IN WEST LOTHIAN

We moved to Linlithgow from Dunoon three years ago to be close to our family. I have no regrets from leaving our house on the Holy Loch as Linlithgow and West Lothian are excellent places to live. I have been very impressed by the services offered by both the local council and the hospital and local medical services. Also by the abundance of green spaces, walks and facilities like the Linlithgow Burgh Halls and the Howden Centre in Livingston. West Lothian has an abundance of cultural history which is evidenced in the present day in the local festivals, marching bands and house decoration. It has an unrivalled industrial history in the shale oil industry which was a world first in its time. It is interesting to contrast two local earth works. The artist designed late twentieth century Pyramids and the huge “sleeping woman” (Niddrie Woman – see BULB # 1) shale bing as recognized and named by the late John Latham. Unfortunately, while the Pyramids have been seen as art the sleeping woman still awaits this status! It could and should be a cultural icon as it not only celebrates the proud history of shale working but also makes it a work of art. It is fitting that the new town of Winchburgh is overlooked by it. If the late Charles Jencks had created this it would be greatly celebrated and yet it just is with no further creation required!

This seems to me to aptly illustrate the strange blind spot that West Lothian Council has to its culture. For example in its bid for city status for

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Livingston, cultural inheritance should have been central and yet there was little to no mention of it. No wonder it failed to get on to the short list! Paisley got to the final two exactly because its celebration of culture included thread and the Paisley Pattern. Why this and not Shale?! And of course there is Linlithgow and it's wonderful Palace and Loch and the proud winner of Britain in Bloom in its category in 2018 and again bidding for it this year. Historically nothing can top being the birthplace of Mary Queen of Scots, the founding royal dynasty of Great Britain! So, it would be wonderful if West Lothian Council fully embraced what we already have, particularly shale heritage, Linlithgow as the Jewel in the Crown, world class musicians such as Susan Boyle and Lewis Capaldi and world class art such as the Niddrie Woman.

A.M.

SNP – NOT THE ONLY OPTION

One of the main arguments against the idea of Scotland becoming an independent country is to call out the record of the Scottish government – that is, the SNP. However, while it is important to have a government that functions well and serves the populace, the way the current government operates is not a reason to declare that Scotland cannot be independent. I would challenge anyone to name one country on the globe where the presiding government is on top of the game. Admittedly, some function better than others but none are perfect. Consider the UK government, it is far from perfect and most people are aware of the failings it has demonstrated over the years. Yet, detractors in support of the union find it is okay to ignore what the Conservative and Unionist Party have been engaged in whilst at the same time taking a swipe at Nicola Sturgeon and the SNP.

Therefore, it is necessary to override the argument that Scottish Independence is not feasible due to the performance of the Scottish government. Democracy is a wonderful thing (if it is working), therefore, in an independent Scotland the electorate could vote the SNP out of office if they so wished. Personally, there are issues endorsed by the SNP that I don't agree with, so, although a supporter of independence, I am not automatically programmed to vote for SNP. The main thing is that I would have a choice. I might vote for the Greens. I might even vote for the Conservatives, Labour or the Liberal Democrats if they were putting forward fair and just policies that I could support.

The Scottish Conservatives (if they weren't unionists), Scottish Labour and the Scottish Liberal Democrats are

all missing a trick since in an independent Scotland they have more of a chance of getting into power. At the moment, however, it is obvious that they have to answer to their Westminster based colleagues so are, therefore, in a weaker position to truly work for Scotland. I realise that this is a divisive subject but, let's not fool ourselves – democracy itself can be divisive. Again, this is given as another argument against independence (or at least a referendum to decide this) because we are told "the people don't want another divisive referendum". Well, how do they know that? I beg to differ, a substantial proportion of Scottish people do want another referendum. What is not democratic is the fact that one person, the Prime Minister of the UK, can refuse to let us, the people of Scotland, decide for ourselves what we want for our future.

C.B.

PLATFORM PLUS

JAMES CLERK MAXWELL – A BRILLIANT SCOTTISH MIND

When teaching engineering, in particular to higher level students, I would at some point extol the great achievements of this small country of ours. Alas, most of the great Scots I named were greeted with a total lack of recognition, and a look of, "what's he on about and why is he wasting our time", and it was only when I began to mention recent sporting stars that a connection was once again made. So, I tried another approach. "Have you heard of Einstein then?" "Yes", they all responded. At last, there was recognition of someone who had a connection to what they were doing. "Do you know then that Einstein had, in his study at Princeton University, a picture of a Scottish physicist on his wall?" Blank looks. "His name was James Clerk Maxwell and he was born about 20 miles from where this class is taking place." I always felt it a little bit sad that this was the outcome every time I tried to inject, not only pride in Scotland, but a sense of believe in what the students sitting in front of me could aspire to.

A modicum of interest was all I needed to proceed with my tale of James Clerk Maxwell and so I begin. Maxwell was born in Edinburgh in 1831, the son of a Scottish advocate and went on to be educated at Edinburgh Academy followed by Edinburgh University and finally Cambridge University. His greatest achievement was his theory entitled,

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'A Dynamical Theory of the Electromagnetic Field', which demonstrated that electricity, magnetism and light were all the same phenomena; that is that electrical currents and electrical charge produces electrical and magnetic fields which travel through space at the speed of light. From this theory, and his accompanying wave equations, he was able to make a very accurate prediction for the speed of light and also postulate the possibility of radio waves. One person who recognised Maxwell's contribution to science was Albert Einstein, who famously said on a visit to Cambridge in the 1920's that it was not so much Newton that he succeeded but instead Maxwell, saying that he 'stood on the shoulders of Maxwell.'

At the heart of Maxwell's work on electromagnetic radiation are four differential equations which describes the production and relationship between electrical and magnetic waves. The first equation (Gauss's Law) describes the relationship between a static electric field and the electric charge that produced the field. The second equation (Gauss's Magnetic Law) states that there are no magnetic quantities analogous to electric charge (no monopoles). Instead magnetic field lines form complete loops or dipoles. The third equation (Faraday's Law) describes how a time varying magnetic field can produce an electric field. The fourth equation (Ampere's Law) states that a magnetic field can be produced by an electrical current or a time varying electric field.

Another of Maxwell's great achievement was in understanding how different colours can be produced by combining different quantities of red, blue and green. He would demonstrate the principle with a three-segment colour wheel - one segment for blue, one for green and one for red - and by spinning the wheel another new colour would be produced. It was an extension of this work on his three-colour principle that led to his invention of colour photography and it is a principle that continues to this day.



Maxwell holding his colour wheel

So, was Einstein right about Maxwell's place in scientific history? Most certainly he was, for the work done by this Scotsman provided the world with the foundation for its communications, such as mobile telephones and the internet, as well as our ever-bigger colour televisions and computer screens. Truly a scientific giant! Maxwell died in 1879 in Cambridge and is buried in Paton in Kirkcudbrightshire in the south-west of Scotland.

And what of the class? I suppose the best I could hope for was at least his name was now known and that a few more people had a rough idea of his impact on our world today. It was important that they also knew of the brilliance of this nation of ours (Maxwell was one of many I would mention in this way) and that they should be more confident in their own abilities because it is too often the case that we, as Scots, are not that confident (an observation from working with College students for over 28 years) and that, from a political standpoint, we are often told that we are not capable of running our own country; what rubbish!



World's first colour photograph - a tartan ribbon - by James Clerk Maxwell 1861.

G.W.

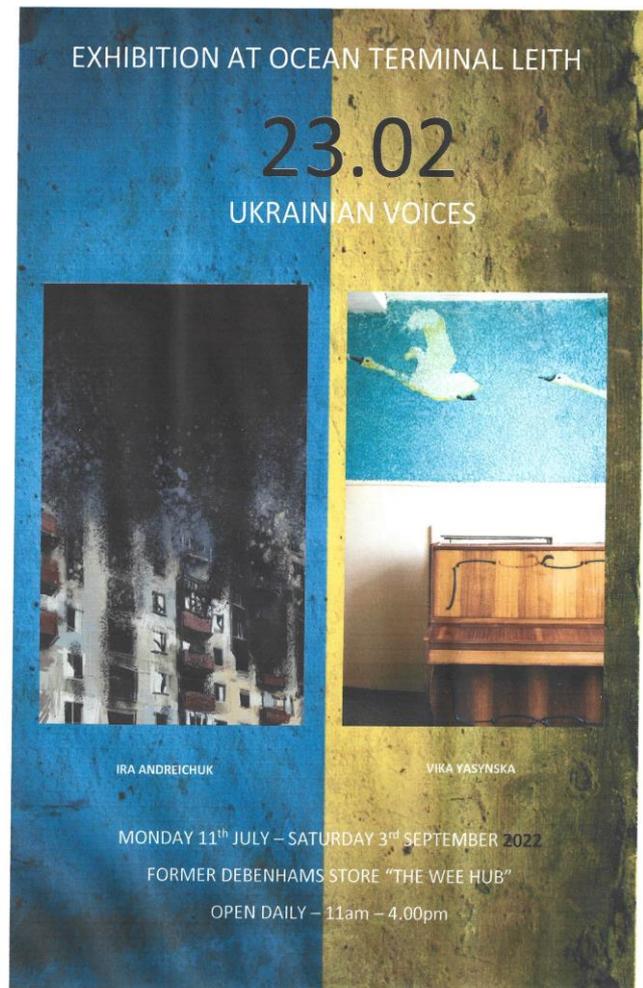
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- Clues across:
7. Creates 8. Artisan 10. Reader 11. Coarsely 12. Gear
 13. Precedence 14. Another time 19. Beforehand 22. Nest
 23. Embattle 24. Raisin 25. Snagged 26. Scanned
- Clues down:
1. Briefed 2. Mandarin 3. Tear Up 4. Armament 5. Tissue 6. Fallacy 9. Accelerated 15. Theatres 16. Mentions 17. Ferment 18. Aspired 20. Orange 21. Direct
 - Country Shapes: A. Chile, B. Denmark, C. Finland, D. Iceland, E. Japan, F. Spain, G. Sweden, H. Ukraine, I. Thailand

SPECIAL FEATURE

23.02 (UKRAINIAN VOICES)

The devastating events since February 2022 when Ukraine became the victim of Russian aggression has both shocked and sickened every decent person on the planet. Earlier this year we were introduced to two young Ukrainian women who came to Scotland to escape the situation in their home country, Vika Yasynska and Ira Andereichuk. They were keen to continue with the creative work they have temporarily left behind in Ukraine, Vika is a photo-journalist who had been covering the hostilities since 2014 and Ira a graphic-designer who had been working in theatre. As a result and after some discussion a group of people came together with the intention of having an exhibition of the work of both Vika and Ira. The first of these is currently being shown at the Ocean Terminal shopping centre in Leith, Edinburgh in the former Debenhams store which is now a community space called The Wee Hub. In the exhibition Vika is showing her series of black & white portrait heads of men who served as volunteer fighters in Ukraine and who have very sadly died in the course of this terrible conflict. This is Vika's project entitled "**The Portrait of a Soldier**" This project has been combined with portraits and stories of **Sons and Mothers** where Vika seeks to show how determined and uncompromising Ukrainians are when it comes to protecting their native land, and how high is the price they pay for the freedom of their families. All of Vika's portraits are accompanied by text which are testimonies from the sitters depicted in the portraits. Ira has produced, while living here in Scotland, a series of powerful digital image paintings which depict her memories of what it has been like living in Ukraine since the invasion began in February. Her images of blackout nights, late night street vigils for fallen soldiers and underground shelters are extremely evocative capturing the feeling of these experiences with chilling accuracy which convey the unsettling nature of the experience. The exhibition will also be shown at the Chaplaincy at Edinburgh University from September 17th. Many thanks go to Vika and Ira for sharing their profoundly sad work which is also crucial in creating a record of this current dreadful situation. Many thanks go also to the team of people who have worked together to put on the exhibition.



Vika Yasynska (left) and Ira Andereichuk (right)

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