

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, DECEMBER 04-06, 2009

# WEEKEND JOURNAL.

EUROPE



## In the lab with Heston

A chemistry and holiday-cooking  
lesson from the experimental chef

Wine: Affordable Champagne? | Childhood immortalized in art

# Contents

## 3 | Interview

Bondy's next move

## 6 | Books



### Food books of the year

'The Vegetarian Option' by Simon Hopkinson (Quadrille), photography by Jason Lowe

## 7 | Wine

La Tour D'Argent's big pour

Wine: Champagne prices

## 12 | Wealth

Philanthropy gets a makeover

Collecting: Selling style

## 13 | Art

Under artists' gaze: a model childhood

## 4-5 | Cover story Food

# The chemistry of Christmas cooking:

Heston Blumenthal teaches some tricks



Fat Duck-owner Heston Blumenthal

COVER, photograph by Robert Leslie.

## 14 | Top Picks

Identity matters at the Wellcome  
'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof' in London  
A new Old Master in Madrid

## 15 | Taste

A biography unlike any other

## 16 | Time Off

Our arts and culture calendar ▼

From Katharina Fritsch exhibition in Hamburg



## WEEKEND JOURNAL.

EUROPE

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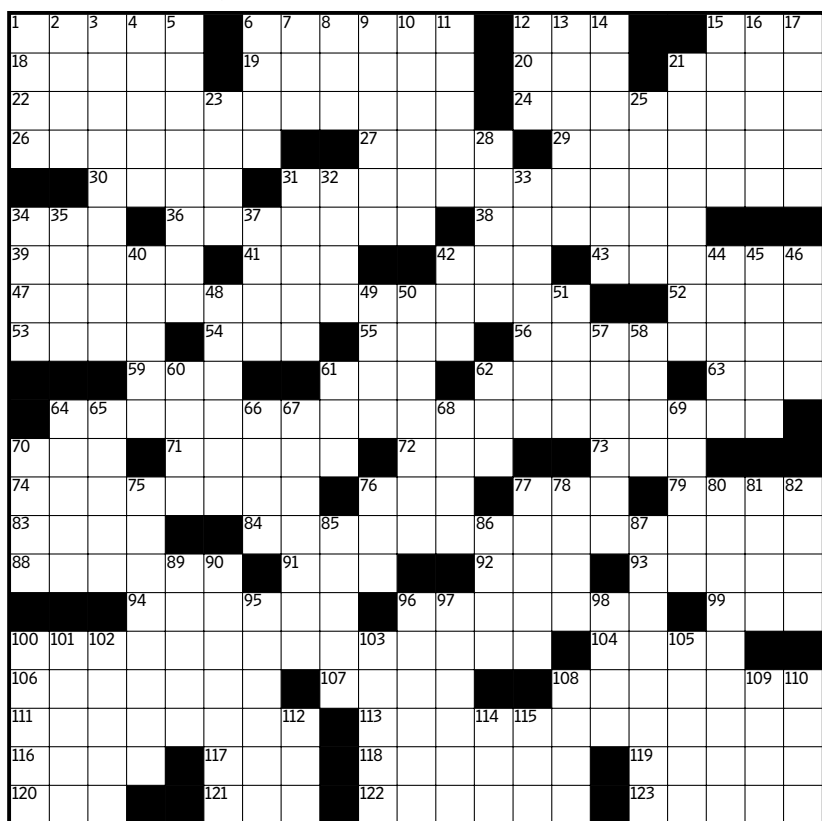
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## THE JOURNAL CROSSWORD / Edited by Mike Shenk

### Across

- |                                 |  |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
| 1 Sound                         | 21 Curtain inserts                           | 31 TV show about some CB users? | 47 TV show set in a bunker?                |
| 6 Infamous noble house of Italy | 22 TV show about someone who examines seeds? | 34 Bud                          | 52 Bean variety, from the Latin for "bean" |
| 12 Pipe material, for short     | 24 Allergy medicine brand                    | 36 Toss back some Stoli, say    | 53 Half of quatorze                        |
| 15 Goat's cry                   | 26 Vacillates                                | 38 Come up with                 | 54 Trio running around a classroom, maybe  |
| 18 Waikiki welcome              | 27 Huffly state                              | 39 Site of current events       | 55 Ambulance letters                       |
| 19 Very, often                  | 29 Conscript                                 | 41 Rolodex abbr.                | 56 Exhausted                               |
| 20 Migratory swimmer            | 30 Spotted                                   | 42 Ball-bearing item            | 59 Grandpa Simpson                         |

### Scrambled TV Signals / by Patrick Blindauer



- |                       |                             |   |  |         |                   |                       |  |                        |              |                         |                            |             |   |               |          |                  |       |         |                       |                                |   |                                 |                         |                        |            |                                 |   |   |               |                   |   |  |                                      |                       |           |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|---------|-------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---|---------------|----------|------------------|-------|---------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---------------|-------------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 61 Sen. Byrd, for one | 62 Its brand is on its band | 63 Ability tested with Zener cards, for short | 64 TV show about a breakthrough in knife research? | 70 Hor. | 71 Building block | 72 Pin place, perhaps | 73 Possible reading of a Brannock Device | 74 Tree surgeon's tool | 76 Commanded | 77 Moldova, e.g.: Abbr. | 79 Super Bowl XXXIV champs | 83 Cel body | 84 TV show about junk food repercussions? | 88 Completely | 91 Lodge | 92 Pillbox, e.g. | 93 Ax | 94 Must | 96 Taco Bell offering | 99 It was dropped in the 1960s | 100 TV show about a period of depression? | 104 Coin that debuted on 1/1/02 | 106 Gospel singer Adams | 107 Homes for poissons | 108 Reveal | 111 Subtly persuasive technique | 113 TV show about a filling station choice? | 116 Merle Haggard's "___ From Muskogee" | 117 Easy mark | 118 Atoll feature | 119 "How Are Things in Glocca ___?" ("Finian's Rainbow" song) | 120 Daughter of Richard and Mary Bobbsey | 121 Home of George Lopez's talk show | 122 Arboreal sleepers | 123 Orgs. |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|---------|-------------------|-----------------------|--|------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------|---|---------------|----------|------------------|-------|---------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------|---------------------------------|---|---|---------------|-------------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|

### Down

- |                   |                   |         |                                    |                                   |                      |                 |                           |           |                    |                                 |                 |                            |                   |                                   |                     |               |                       |                      |                 |                                       |                      |                              |                 |                 |                   |                      |                  |                      |                       |                   |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
| 1 Like the Sahara | 2 One way to turn | 3 Worry | 4 "___ Men" ("Kiss Me, Kate" song) | 5 Barry Humphries comic character | 6 Fly-by-night group | 7 Exalted lines | 8 Park parkers, for short | 9 Prepare | 10 Cara and Castle | 11 Month between marzo and mayo | 12 Chest muscle | 13 Spots for gnus to graze | 14 Some red wines | 15 License plate feature, perhaps | 16 Foreign farewell | 17 "Up" actor | 21 The great unwashed | 23 Composer Dohnányi | 25 Bombay royal | 28 Rourke's co-star in "The Wrestler" | 31 It may be cracked | 32 Ian of "Chariots of Fire" | 33 Heating need | 34 Poker prizes | 35 Massage target | 37 EPA output: Abbr. | 40 "___ Is Born" | 42 Corp. identifiers | 44 Golf legend Walter | 45 Salt's "Halt!" |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|

- |                     |                   |              |                   |                                      |                 |                   |                     |                  |                       |                             |                      |              |                           |                             |                                 |                            |              |                         |                           |                     |                                  |                |                 |                     |            |                   |                     |                 |                  |                     |                     |                        |                  |                                       |                         |                                |                     |                      |               |                     |                        |                           |                             |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 46 Shocked reaction | 48 Marley's locks | 49 Flow into | 50 Current gadget | 51 Much-mocked car of the late 1980s | 57 Narrows down | 58 "It's you ___" | 60 Whole grain part | 61 34th C. in C. | 62 Semicircular shape | 64 Word heard after "danke" | 65 ___ Good Feelings | 66 Perfectly | 67 "Stuart Little" author | 68 Middle of a famous boast | 69 Like the sound of a theremin | 70 When Romeo meets Juliet | 75 Overwhelm | 76 Clinic worker: Abbr. | 77 Ball-bearing creatures | 78 In ___ (unmoved) | 80 They often end up in a museum | 81 Cal. appts. | 82 Not barefoot | 85 Poetically large | 86 Blacken | 87 Eyesight issue | 89 Trotsky and Edle | 90 Most satyric | 95 Typing center | 96 Some like it hot | 97 Takes one's turn | 98 Home of the Quakers | 100 Perdue rival | 101 "___ Tooka" (Chubby Checker song) | 102 Small and sprightly | 103 Makes a long-distance call | 105 Caramel candies | 108 Beverage brewers | 109 Pull down | 110 Suggested amts. | 112 Forerunners of CDs | 114 Part of a Web address | 115 "Isn't that beautiful?" |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------------|------------|-------------------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|

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❖ Interview

# From scandal to self-reflection

Unfazed by controversial 'Tosca' opening at the Met, Swiss director Luc Bondy moves on

BY J. S. MARCUS

**T**HANKS TO SWISS director Luc Bondy, the fall season at New York's Metropolitan Opera began with a whimper and a bang. The whimper came in the form of Mr. Bondy's stripped-down staging of Puccini's grandiose opera, "Tosca," and the bang came when Mr. Bondy and his production team took their curtain call after the September premier—to the sound of raucous boos.

"I tell the story without putting so much gold into it," says Mr. Bondy, who, in his words, "shocked the Met public" with his Soviet-inspired take on the classic, otherwise set in early-19th-century Rome.

The controversial "Tosca" staging, which was Mr. Bondy's debut at the Met, was an unlikely introduction to American audiences for one of Europe's best-known directors, celebrated for his work in both theater and opera, and a familiar face everywhere from London's Young Vic to Milan's La Scala. With the September scandal behind him, Mr. Bondy is back home in Europe, and embarking on a book tour following the publication of his first novel, "Am Fenster" (At the Window), released in German this fall.

A relatively short, loosely constructed piece, "Am Fenster" tells the story of a Swiss theater professional named Donatey. Like Mr. Bondy, Donatey, the book's narrator, is also in his 60s, but Donatey's life and career are overshadowed by another director, called Gaspard Nock, who in some respects resembles Mr. Bondy. The novel follows the course of Donatey's random reminiscences, as he looks out the window of his Zurich apartment. Recalling a career marked by theatrical controversy, the narrator returns to his relationship with his mother, a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, whose silence about her ordeal overshadows the book.

"I was writing every day and had no contact with the outside world," says Mr. Bondy, 61 years old, speaking by telephone from his Paris apartment. He enjoyed the solitude of writing compared with the crowded, collaborative work of directing. "It was great for me," he says. "I was excited about writing, but also very calm."

"I prepared for two years with notes," he says of his work on the novel, which was written between May and August of 2008. The early period of note taking coincided with a year's work on one of his greatest successes, the 2007 staging of "King Lear" at Vienna's Burgtheater, a production for which he also worked on

the translation. "The way Lear behaves with his age," says Mr. Bondy, may have affected "Am Fenster," whose ironical tone makes it anything but a tragedy, but he is quite experienced at keeping projects separate. "I have a controlled schizophrenia," he says.

A year of preparation for a single production is nothing new for Mr. Bondy, who was closely associated with the legendary Schaubühne, the Berlin repertory theater known for its deliberative approach. Since 2001, he has been director of the Vienna Festival and divides his time between France and Austria.

Mr. Bondy, who was born in Zurich, grew up in France, studied in Paris, but began his theatrical career in Germany in the 1960s, admittedly speaks every language with an accent. He wrote his novel in German, although some critics detect a French influence in his prose style.

His broad range of interests is what may have gotten him into trouble at the Met. Not content to present the opera house's standard fare of what he calls "Sacher Torte"—lavish productions, with little or no theatrical ambition—Mr. Bondy was drawn back to the opera's source, "La Tosca," the 1887 play by French writer Victorien Sardou. He was also inspired by reading a biography of Joseph Stalin, and based his interpretation of Scarpia, the opera's legendary villain, on Lavrenti Beria, the head of the Soviet secret police.

One of opera's great baritone roles, Scarpia is always portrayed as a Lothario, but Mr. Bondy went a step further and turned Scarpia into an "erotomane" in the company of prostitutes, which, says Mr. Bondy, upset the Met's opening night audience. They were disturbed, he says, to find "that Scarpia was not as elegant as they are."

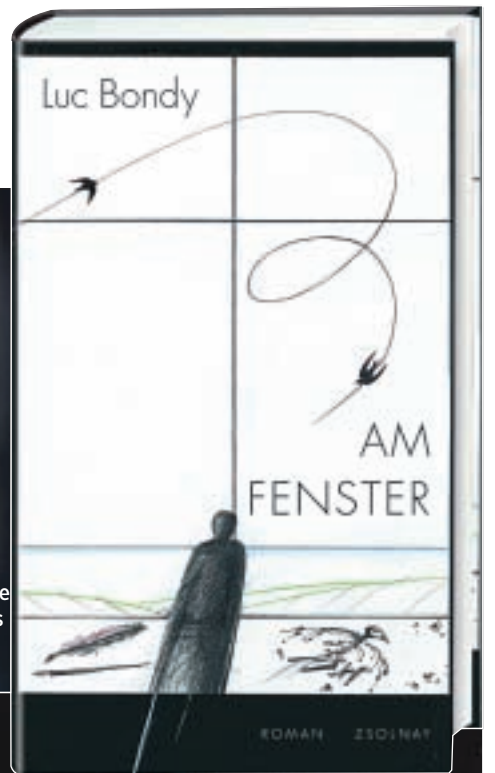
"It's an ugly story," says Mr. Bondy of "Tosca," emphasizing that Scarpia is "not a smart politician" as he is sometimes played, but "a policeman," who is torturing suspects in one room while getting ready to rape a woman in the next.

"At the Met, the word 'old-fashioned' is too weak for what you [usually] see," says Mr. Bondy, who believes Met audiences prefer "closing their eyes and listening to the music." He said he was "surprised" that "audiences were so shocked" by frank depictions of Scarpia's venality. "If people would realize what's happening" in the story, he says, "they're the ones who would really be shocked."

—J.S. Marcus is a writer based in Berlin.



Left, Swiss director Luc Bondy. Right, Mr. Bondy's new novel, 'Am Fenster.' Below, the opening of his interpretation of Puccini's 'Tosca' at the Met in New York was shown on screens in Times Square.



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# Christmas cooking as chemistry

Jemima Sissons learns how to cook with Heston Blumenthal, and hears about the chef's toughest year



**W**HEN I ARRIVE at Heston Blumenthal's creative headquarters, a laboratory located in a white house a stone's throw from the chef's famous Fat Duck restaurant, his elves are busy at work. Lab technician Otto Romer is putting the finishing touches on a prototype Hansel and Gretel house that will appear virtually life-sized and covered in edible delights on "Feast," a TV series to be aired in the New Year on Channel 4 in the U.K. Packets of sweets are about to be melted down in the oven to make multicolored "stained glass" for the windows.

Heston arrives, fit and glowing, and joins in the debate with his team about how they are going to make convincing enough edible "bricks" and "timber" for the outside of the house—mere gingerbread is deemed too run-of-the-mill. "How do we make a breeze block taste good?" he asks, rhetorically.

Everyone seems jolly and calm—it is a far cry from the hot-headed histrionics that we have come to associate with other television chefs and their kitchens—more Willy Wonka factory here than Dantean Third Circle of Hell. Perhaps it is the country air—Bray is a pretty village a civilized hour away from London—or maybe because it is a Monday and the restaurant is closed, so Heston and his team can dedicate their time to figuring out how to make chickens' testicles look like jelly beans (also for "Feast") or how to create water that can be both fizzy and still at the same time.

Heston, who is virtually self-taught, fell in love with good food after a family trip to France aged 16. It wasn't until 1995—after working as a credit controller and a bailiff to fund his foodie trips across the Channel—that he finally realized his dream and opened the Fat Duck, which has won numerous awards.

I have come here to learn from the three-Michelin-starred chef how to cook some Christmas recipes that are, in theory, easy to make at home. One look around his high-tech lab and I realize that baked ham or

sherry trifle are unlikely contenders for my tutorial. A whiteboard by the window has the latest culinary experiment (literally) drawn up—a towering venison, beet foam and marron glacés dish. Inside a cupboard, alongside the more familiar jars of yeast, cumin and dried thyme are glass beakers full of malic acid, isomalt and calcium chloride.

There are dehydrating machines, vacuums and convection heaters too—all things one might associate with what has come to be known as "molecular gastronomy." The term was coined in the early '90s by Hungarian physicist Nicholas Kurti as a way of exploring the science behind traditional cooking methods. However, Heston and the two other chefs most famous for their gastronomic alchemy—Ferran Adrià of El Bulli in Spain, and Thomas

Uncle's study when poured over the dry ice. He has also consulted a magician, so that he can learn how to light four diners' flaming sorbets at exactly the same time, at the table. "Many of my dishes are about nostalgia" he says. "But I am also trying to bring a multisensory element—sound, smell, sight and touch. There is theater involved." With sound and light technicians, scientists, synesthetes, DJs and artists also on his speed-dial, you get the impression that he is either a polymath, Peter Pan, or maybe just slightly bonkers.

Expecting a few theatrics myself, I pick up an ominous looking potion in a white beaker and shake it around. "What's this?" I ask.

"Er, water," says Heston.

Perhaps it's these doses of childish fun and nostalgia that make a break from the monotony of having to think about grown-up problems. Such as a dodgy batch of oysters.

In February, diners started falling ill after eating at the Fat Duck. By the time the restaurant was actually closed, there were more than 500 complaints of food poisoning—hugely damaging for the reputation of a chef whose restaurant has been voted the second best in the world (after El Bulli) for the last three years by Restaurant Maga-

zine. In the end and after numerous tests, the report by the U.K. Health Protection Agency concluded that a batch of Colchester oysters was infected with a strain of norovirus (or stomach flu) from the sewage from their Essex oyster beds. "It has been a pretty rough time," says Heston. "The report intimated all these things such as bad hygiene in the kitchens, but the only thing they actually found was the infected oysters. We have a fastidious approach to cleanliness and a 48-hour back-to-work policy, which means that you may only return to work 48 hours after you have completely recovered from illness. We take these matters very seriously."

With the restaurant more a "labor of love," which according to Heston doesn't actually make money—there are 46 chefs for 44 diners and he says that the other areas of the business (TV, books etc) serve "as a marketing tool for the restaurant"—it has evidently come as a big financial blow. "The business has lost around £400,000," Heston says. "We are waiting to hear back from our insurers on how much we are going to get back. The insurance company are considering taking criminal proceedings against both the oyster company and the Essex water board, as the water should have been tested for viruses."

Despite the furore, his business, and popularity, do not seem to have been damaged too badly. "Luckily we are still completely booked up, and a Tuesday in mid-winter is still going to be as busy as a Saturday night," he tells me.

When I try to call and book as an experiment—you have to book exactly two months in advance to the day—I can't get through, let alone get a table. Heston tells me that people will go to every extreme to get their name on the list, sending the reservations team flowers, chocolates and bottles of vintage Krug.

To keep his mind off the unfortunate recent events he is busying himself with various new ventures. In a separate lab down the road—quite the mad scientist's complex in Bray—he is working with a researcher on a menu for the Mandarin Oriental hotel in London that will be very much based on his

**'It's important that people coming to the restaurant are as relaxed as possible. It should be about having fun.'**

Keller of The French Laundry and Per Se in the U.S.—have rejected it as an inaccurate description of their cuisine, and Heston prefers to call it "modern cooking." Whatever the terminology, it's not exactly the kind of stuff you're likely to see in your local corner café.

And indeed, first up in Bray is a dish worthy of a place in the Turner Prize competition (in both aesthetics and incomprehensibility)—a "Flaming Sorbet": apple sorbet on a bed of caramelized apples, which in turn sits on a bed of dry ice. Oh yes, and when whisky is poured over the dish and set alight, the sorbet burns without melting. This dish is based around Heston's memory of his uncle's drawing room—all red leather, whisky smells and pipe smoke. The creative bit came about when Heston was introduced by a scientist to a material called gellan that actually sets when it's heated and melts when it cools down.

Donning Heston's chef whites I stir, whizz and taste—Heston offers me test

other obsession, historic English dishes (such as a bizarre sounding “toast sandwich”). Although expect to see the odd flourish of dry ice as well—it is Heston, after all. He is also adapting his impossible Fat Duck recipes for a more user-friendly cook book.

Up next is mincemeat ice cream, specially devised for *The Wall Street Journal*. Although it starts easily enough—sour cream, milk, egg yolks and sugar are infused with crushed mince pies and then strained—I soon get to play the alchemist. After the mixture has gone into the Magimix food processor I am handed some dry ice in a jar (available to buy online, but evaporates after a few days) and then start mixing it all together. Huge billows of smoke escape from the bowl, like something out of *Macbeth* and soon, as if by magic, ice cream starts to form before my eyes. It's the most entertaining Monday I've had in years.

To finish off we make a delectable—and really quite manageable—home-cured salmon. It is one of the dishes from his pub, the Golden Hind, located just across the road from the Fat Duck. The smell of hickory chips and lapsang souchong fills the air as I place the salmon in the heated-up smoking tin and leave it to infuse.

For someone so into the magical art of cooking, Heston admits that “you wouldn't want to know what I eat at home. Occasionally I test a dry-ice dish out, but mostly because the children love it.” When his friend Ferran Adrià of *El Bulli* is in town, they'll eat at *Roka* or *Zuma* in London and “put the world to rights”; otherwise it's a curry from the local Indian near Bray, “once a week, without fail.”

This year for Christmas Heston will be taking his wife Zanna and their three children skiing in Courmayeur, Italy. The last few years they have all been to Whistler in Canada. He admits he is “not easy to buy presents for.” However, over the last year he has got into golf, so “my wife at last has some silly accessories she can buy me.”

Although he claims he can't sing, dance or tell jokes “to save my life,” on Christmas day the family will settle down to a game of charades. His favorite clue? “Potholing up Barry Manilow's nostril—that's quite fun to act out.”

As for his dream Christmas dinner, “nothing can beat a Goose d'Or or failing that a Bresse capon [castrated rooster], with some perfect roast potatoes and all the trimmings.” Except, that is, for one thing: Brussels sprouts. “They are the only food I don't like,” Heston confides.

In the end, maybe the man who likes to serve his ice-cream fizzy and his tea half hot and half cold (in the same cup) isn't so very different from us after all.

—Jemima Sissons is a writer based in London.

► Find recipes of Heston Blumenthal's creations at [WSJ.com/Lifestyle](http://WSJ.com/Lifestyle)



## mixing molecules, drinks

Dandyish barman Tony Conigliaro is standing in his stylishly decked-out bar, 69 Colebrooke Row, in north London, putting the finishing touches to his latest creation—the Japanese Serve. Based on a Pink Gin cocktail, the drink infuses Beefeater 24 gin with green tea, which is mixed with homemade gunpowder tea bitters, before being served on a tray in a sake cup, with a side of green-tea bean curd. Not your average Friday night tippie.



Mr. Conigliaro is at the forefront of the recent vogue for alcoholic alchemy—drinks with a clever twist. Some are calling this “molecular mixology,” but Mr. Conigliaro prefers the term “future-retro.” He cut his teeth in London bars *Isola* and *Shochu Lounge* and thinks the term “molecular” is a misnomer, as “it implies everything is scientific—but it's not.” “I also like to devise drinks around rituals and themes as well as around science,” he says.

His creations include his aforementioned Japanese Serve drink, which is based on the ritual of the Japanese tea ceremony. He has also invented a “Dry Martini,” which is made “dry” by adding home-made tannins (made from macerating grape pips, leaving them for a month, then distilling). His ingenious “The Night Before the Morning After” is a clarified Gin Fizz, into which you pour your own Alka-Seltzer-looking mixture (bicarbonate of soda), making it erupt like an alcoholic volcano. His final drink, the Silver Phantom, alludes to the Rolls Royce car; it's a Martini mixed with silver leaf, served on a coaster infused with the smell of leather.

Although there are obvious comparisons to the Heston Blumenthals and Ferran Adrià of this world, Mr. Conigliaro feels that his is a different art.

“I think this interest [in experimenting with drinks] came from the food science movement in cuisine,” he says. “However, what bartenders like myself are doing now is based around what we do with liquid. For a long while we were taking pure inspiration from chefs and trying to make it work for bartenders, and now we are thinking about how science can work solely for drinks.”

Yet Mr. Conigliaro is keen to point out that he and his molecularly minded contemporaries—such as Eben Freeman in New York and Philip Duff in Amsterdam—can't all be piled into the same bracket: “If you compare *El Bulli* to the Fat Duck, there are a lot of overlaps, but what the chefs do as individuals is very unique, and that's what's happening in the bar world as well.”

*Tony Conigliaro will be holding Beefeater 24 Masterclasses in the new year, teaching the art of future-retro cocktails.*

—Jemima Sissons

Clockwise from top left page: Heston rustles up a quick glass of ‘fizzy’ water for his thirsty student; Heston explains the recipe very slowly to a flummoxed tutee; Is that Mars? No, it's just Heston measuring the density of the liquid for the sorbet; Now we're going to set this whisky alight, and the sorbet's not going to melt; Abracadabra, I give you... mincemeat ice cream; Apple sorbet, but not as you know it.

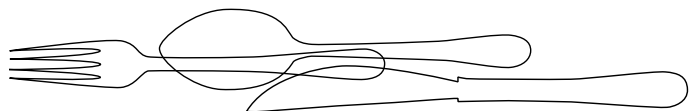
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT LESLIE

# Home-cooking for the holidays

With the gift-giving season approaching, Paul Levy picks the best food books of the year

There are some agreeable trends apparent in the food books published this year. We're seeing the near-disappearance of books by chefs telling you how to cook dishes approximating those they serve in their restaurants—nearly all the titles by professional chefs are geared to home cooking. Another welcome tendency is that even the straight cookbooks give you something to read besides formulaic recipes—and several of this year's writers are graceful prose stylists. The big swing in 2009, though, is to books that emphasize vegetables or thrift, and sometimes both. Though there were only a few food books of the sort I particularly relish—meaty narratives spiced up by a

few, carefully chosen recipes—there are several satisfyingly eccentric ones. Tom Parker Bowles's "Full English: A Journey through the British and their food" (Ebury £12.99), for example, is a set of tales about the writer and his foodie friends trying to discover decent nosh, from the eel and pie shops of London's East End to the Ideal Tripe Works of Dewsbury. The new edition of "Ma Gastronomie" by Fernand Point (Duckworth £25) is the classic by the chef who mentored many of the masters of the nouvelle cuisine, a set of texts by Thomas Keller and Joseph Wechsberg, with Mr. Point's wonderfully dotty aphorisms and his recipes for which he rarely gives quantities. Here is a look at some of my other top choices.



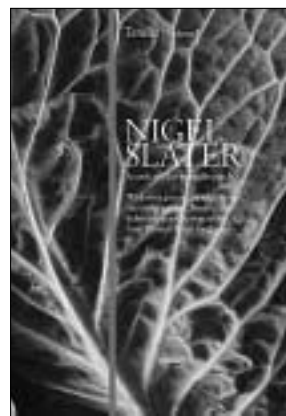
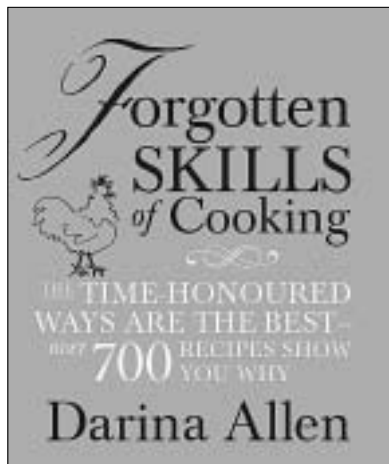
"EEL" BY RICHARD SCHWEID (Reaktion £9.99) has no recipes at all, and is part of the publisher's "Animal" series—which features relatively few animals that are actually used for food. But this pretty little book tells you all you could wish to know about the natural history and the culinary history of this delicious, disappearing fish.

IN "FEED ME NOW" (Quadrille £20) Sydneysider Bill Granger is another top chef cooking home fare. His book makes me the hungriest of the lot, but I think that's because of the fabulous photography by John Kernick. There's a little Aussie-ingenuity at work here, but everything from his pair of chicken soups (one with Asian-spiced dumplings, the other with pasta) to his "roast chicken curry" shouts "eat me."



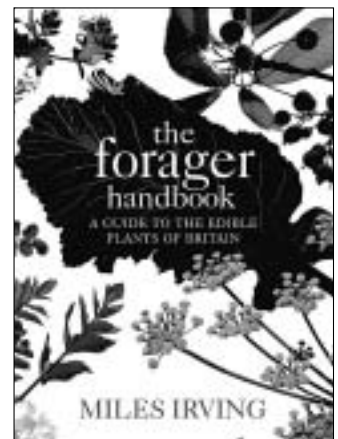
SIMON HOPKINSON is a chef-wordsmith, and "The Vegetarian Option" (Quadrille £20) has numerous attractive recipes, and appetizing photographs by Jason Lowe—with one exception. The brown, sludgy illustration of *soupe au pistou* is to me as unattractive as the ingredients of celery, aubergine, cabbage and spinach are wrong. Tomatoes are canonical in this provençal dish, and necessary for its appearance. But Mr. Hopkinson has done the near-impossible, and made vegetarianism cheerful.

DARINA ALLEN'S "Forgotten Skills of Cooking" (Kyle Cathie £30) has a mouthful of a subtitle "The time-honoured ways are the best—over 700 recipes show you why." Ms. Allen runs the great cookery school at Ballymaloe, Ireland, near Cork, and this whopper of a book includes foraging among its "forgottens," along with how to draw and pluck birds, make butter and cheese, and tend hens. It doesn't tell how to milk a cow, though.



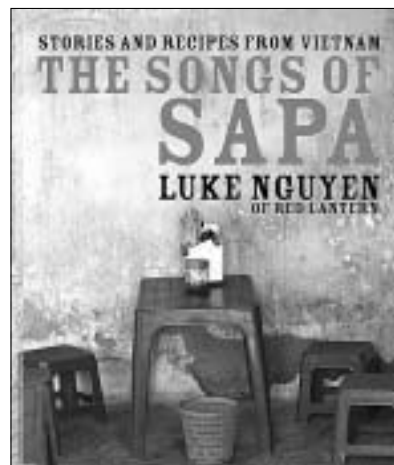
NIGEL SLATER'S WEIGHTY "Tender, Volume 1: A cook and his vegetable patch" (Fourth Estate £30—volume two will cover fruit) deals with the kitchen garden that more and more Brits have—or aspire to if they don't. Planting tips complement the recipes, but the splendid photographs of Mr. Slater's box-hedged London veg patch (by Jonathan Lovekin) will make most gardeners sick with aesthetic envy, so I'd just like to crow that I can grow successfully the globe artichokes and sweetcorn that elude him.

STUNNINGLY HANDSOME, Miles Irving's "The Forager Handbook: A guide to the edible plants of Britain" (Ebury £30) takes this as far as it will go—food for free (and it's relevant to much of continental Europe, as well). Arranged by botanical families (excluding fungi), this has the feel of authority that reassures timid weedpickers like me. The nastiest weed in the garden, ground elder turns out to have been introduced by the Romans for culinary use as a lemony herb. Incredible.



VEGETABLES ARE NO LONGER CHEAP, and green beans flown in from Egypt and Kenya have environmental as well as retail costs. Still, even luxury plant foods—such as asparagus, artichokes and wild mushrooms—are generally less expensive than poultry, meat, fish and game, and that is probably the reason for this year's crop of vegetable-heavy books. Tamasin Day-Lewis's "Supper for a Song" (Quadrille £20) is the best of the crunch-inspired cookbooks. Her "Parmesan potato cake with mozzarella and prosciutto" vies with Mr. Hopkinson's "Potato pie with Beaufort cheese" for the most opulent use of potatoes of 2009.

MAYBE IT'S THE FERRAN ADRIÀ-EFFECT, but I use more Spanish ingredients than ever before, and am tempted to put smoky *pimentón de la vera* in every meat dish and cook every vegetable with chorizo. José Pizarro's "Seasonal Spanish Food" (Kyle Cathie £19.99) has helped me apply the culinary brakes, and appreciate the subtlety you can achieve with "pan-fried pimentón chicken" served with olive-oil mashed spuds. There's a recipe using the same spice for the (very tasty) American signal crayfish that are menacing Mr. Pizarro's Spanish inland waterways as much as our own in Oxfordshire.



MY FOOD BOOK OF THE YEAR, "The Songs of Sapa: Stories and recipes from Vietnam" by Luke Ngyuen (Murdoch Books £25), has not only given me pleasure to read, but has made me long to return to Vietnam to eat these exquisitely described and illustrated dishes (photographs by Alan Benson and Suzanna Boyd). The beauty of this gorgeous book reminds me of the elegant simplicity of the Hanoi beef noodle soup (*pho*), the same northern city's crisp rolled pork and shellfish *nem ran*, and the ubiquitous spicy, chargrilled skewers of meat and poultry with their dipping sauces.

FINALLY, THE BARGAIN OF THE YEAR. Generations of French housewives have grown up on Ginette Mathiot's "Je sais cuisiner" with its 1,400 recipes for near everything the French eat at home. This first-ever English edition, "I Know How to Cook" (Phaidon £24.95), weighs 2.4 kilos and tells you how to cook what you've only read about in "Larousse Gastronomique." It has the added value of recipes by a few celebrated contemporary French chefs.



Paul Levy is a writer based in Oxfordshire and the co-author with Ann Barr of "The Official Foodie Handbook" (1984)



## Paris's big pour

A world-class restaurant auctions off bottles from its prestigious cellar

BY MATTHEW ROSE

**P**aris **OUR WINES LIVE** in total darkness," said David Ridgway. The head sommelier of the fabled Left Bank restaurant La Tour d'Argent was half gliding, half trotting, like a well-heeled hobbit, through a maze of chilly, damp and dimmed alleys buried two stories below the Quai de Tournelle. Pointing to the high wooden racks holding thousands of bottles of precious French vintages, he added, "Watch your step."

One of the world's top wine specialists, Mr. Ridgway has been carefully creating this world-class cellar of 420,000 bottles for nearly three decades, handpicking bottles directly from producers and maintaining the cellar at a constant 12 degrees Celsius and 85% humidity. "Each bears a small tower—the crest of La Tour d'Argent—indicating they arrived as two-year-olds," Mr. Ridgway explains proudly. "And they stay for the rest of their lives."

Well, not all of them. On Dec. 7 and 8, some 18,000 bottles, a little more than 4% of La Tour d'Argent's holdings, are slated for auction at Piasa's Salon Hoche in Paris. With expected proceeds of an estimated one million, or about \$1.5 million, the event is one of the most eagerly anticipated Paris wine auctions since Mayor Bertrand Delanoe sold off former Mayor Jacques Chirac's Bordeaux collection in 2006.

Proceeds, Mr. Ridgway says, will go to replenish the cellar with 2009 wines and refurbish the centuries-old restaurant upstairs, restoring luster to its panoramic view of Notre Dame, the Seine and the rooftops of the capital. Founded in 1582, La Tour d'Argent has served kings, queens and presidents.

The auction of high-end Premier Cru (first growth) Bordeaux classics—such as Château Latour, Lafite-Rothschild, Mouton-Rothschild, Ausone, Haut-Brion, Cheval Blanc and Château Margaux—doesn't include very many of the most sought-after vintages, such as 1945s, and just one Pétrus, a magnum from 1983, with an estimate of 900, or about \$1,350. Among the Burgundies, which now make up 60% of the cellar, are Meursault Clos de la Barre Lafon, Puligny

Montrachet Referts Sauzet and Vosne Romanée Mayer, but none of the crowning glories of Pinot Noir like La Tâche and Romanée Conti, which are kept under lock and key in the cave.

Three bottles of pre-Revolutionary Vieux Cognac "Clos du Griffier" from 1788 will be offered, with an estimate of 2,500 each. La Tour d'Argent inherited them when its owner, André Terrail, married the daughter of the owner of Paris's famed Café Anglais. He merged the fungus-covered bottles into his restaurant cellars in 1914, and they haven't moved since. "They are very drinkable. The last one I had was perfect," Mr. Ridgway says. "The fungus is actually a good sign and an excellent preservative—on the outside of the bottle, that is."

Provenance and conservation are meaningful to wine collectors, as well as to the restaurants Piasa expects to bid. Yet in some cases, the auction estimate is less than the price for the same bottle on La Tour d'Argent's 400-page wine list. Piasa, not La Tour d'Argent, made the estimates. "We developed the estimates based upon the market, without considering the prestige of La Tour d'Argent," says Alexis Velliet, Piasa director and auctioneer. "It is difficult to say how much provenance adds to the value of the bottle," he adds. "Only the buyers know."

Price inflation and insatiable global demand from buyers including oil-rich Russians and Chinese industrial magnates have made the top French wines unaffordable. The auction's low estimates tell of prices paid for grand cru wines before the market took off in the late 1970s. "In 1982, I bought 15 cases of the 1982 Pétrus," says Mr. Ridgway. "At 142 francs per bottle, I knew I was acquiring an amazing wine. It was a giveaway!"

Some believe the low estimates are meant to whet buyers' interest. "Estimates for many lots are extremely low and will probably go for twice what's marked in the catalog," said Romik Arconian, a Paris rare-wine merchant, who says he intends to bid on a few lots.

One wine enthusiast is less than enthusiastic about the Tour d'Argent auction. Albert Givton, a Canadian wine expert and author



Top, David Ridgway, La Tour d'Argent's head sommelier (left), and owner André Terrail. Above, from left: Château Mouton Rothschild (1970), Pétrus (1983), Vosne-Romanée Henri Mayer (1988), Vieux Cognac 'Clos du Griffier' Café Anglais (1788).

based in Vancouver, British Columbia, calls the auction "an accountant's sale." "The accountants essentially told them to sell just enough to come up with the money required to renovate the restaurant, get rid of stuff they don't want and throw in the odd little treasure—the Vieux Cognac—as an appetizer," he says.

"If it's a '47 Pétrus, great, but if it's a Volnay—who cares? You can buy that in the street," Mr. Givton continues. "If they were serious, they would sell 100,000 bottles and throw in some of the real treasures—their fantastic first growth Bordeaux, La Tâche, old Château d'Yquem...stuff like that."

André Terrail, the third-generation owner of La Tour d'Argent, disagrees. "We have La Tâche and Romanée Conti, but we have very few," he explained. "These aren't difficult to sell. What we're selling is overstock. Not a single bottle that we aren't proud of. All the wines offered in the sale are still on the menu."

One wine expert who will most certainly bid is ... David Ridgway. "I'm not a wine nut, and wine is not my religion," he says. "And yes, I'll probably be bidding—but for the wines no one else wants, because, well, I know they will be good."

—Matthew Rose is a writer and artist based in Paris.

## All that fizzes is gold

**I**N THE MEDIEVAL village of Ambonay, strewn with traces of Gothic and Romanesque architecture, lies a small walled vineyard, no bigger than an average-sized garden. Southeast facing, it sits on the tip of a deep plate of chalk which, when the light is strong, illuminates the topsoil a brilliant shade of white. To the north lies the dark forest of the Montagne de Reims, replete with ancient beech trees and roaming wild boar.

### Wine WILL LYONS

The vineyard is home to Krug's Clos d'Ambonay—a single varietal Champagne released in spring 2008, whose price tag of more than £2,000 a bottle catapulted it to become one of the most valuable wines of the world. It is on par with estates such as Bordeaux's Château Pétrus or Burgundy's Domaine de la Romanée-Conti.

Last April, I was one of a handful of journalists who made the short journey from Reims to Ambonay to taste the release of its first vintage, 1995. My notes at the time showed that the wine itself had a fresh, steely, mineral character.

Rather pretentiously I wrote: "It dances around the tongue with a concentrated energy showing notes of brioche, grilled almonds, red berries and a flickering, intense acidity. This is a precise, concentrated wine." I do recall asking whether the market was prepared to stump up its asking price.

I was told that a few months before it was released 60 friends of Krug from around the world were invited to buy two six-bottle cases of Clos d'Ambonay 1995. Four months later, one of these "friends" sold two cases of six bottles at a Zachys' auction in Las Vegas for just over \$26,000. Today a bottle will set you back more than £3,000.

But the question of Champagne prices is one that will run and run. It was only a few years ago that Champagne houses were promoting their prestige cuvées as an affordable luxury. Now we have a slew of wines only a handful of drinkers can afford. Perrier-Jouët's limited edition case of 2000 Belle Epoque Blanc de Blancs, will set you back a mere £35,000.

Meanwhile, the average price of big brands also has grown steadily in

the last five years. The result is an inevitable fall in consumption at the bottom end of the market. In the U.K., Champagne's largest export market, sales have fallen as much as 15%. As a result, for the first time in many years, there is more Champagne available and prices are starting to go down.

Already we have seen British supermarkets such as Morrisons discount Bollinger from £35.99 to £17.95 a bottle. France, where sales are as high as 180 million bottles a year, has experienced similar discounting and as I write I know of at least one other large European supermarket chain that is looking to sell Champagne at £10 a bottle.

There is no doubt that the knowledge gleaned in Champagne has been exported to countries such as California, Australia and New Zealand, which are all making extremely good fizz. But nothing quite compares with the bone-dry, rich depth of flavor found in the viticultural area 145 kilometers north-east of Paris.

The secret lies in its soil, a porous chalk subsoil deeper than the Eiffel Tower is tall, topped with a shallow covering of rubble comprised of sand, lignite, marl, loam and clay. It is this soil that provides the vine with ample drainage. Different pockets of soil give contrasting characters to the Chardonnay grape. This, coupled with a cold, wet northern climate, heavily influenced by the Atlantic, means the grapes struggle to ripen giving them their searing acidity.

In order of preference, I still rate Krug and Pol Roger as the greatest producers of the region, swiftly followed by Bollinger, Louis Roederer Cristal, Billecart-Salmon and Veuve Cliquot. But I question whether Champagne prices ought to continue their stratospheric ascent.

There is excited talk about the potential of markets such as China, India and Russia but the latter two are mainly spirits-drinking cultures while the potential of China is still largely unknown.

While the major houses continue to produce ever more expensive prestige cuvées the smart buyer will look to the smaller artisan grower. There are more than 22,000 different Champagnes produced from 15,000 farmers. These small producers know and understand the land, and are beginning to bottle their own wine. Perhaps their time has come.

### DRINKING NOW

**Bollinger**  
Aÿ, Champagne

Vintage: **RD 1997**

Price: **about £120 or €132**

Alcohol content: **12.5%**

Recently disgorged, or RD, is a practice where the wine is left to mature in the bottle for longer than a straight vintage wine before being disgorged, in this case early this year. Fantastically complex with a variety of flavors from initial fruit, marmalade, cooked fruits, spice to cherry, mushrooms and truffle. Yet it is still very young and fresh





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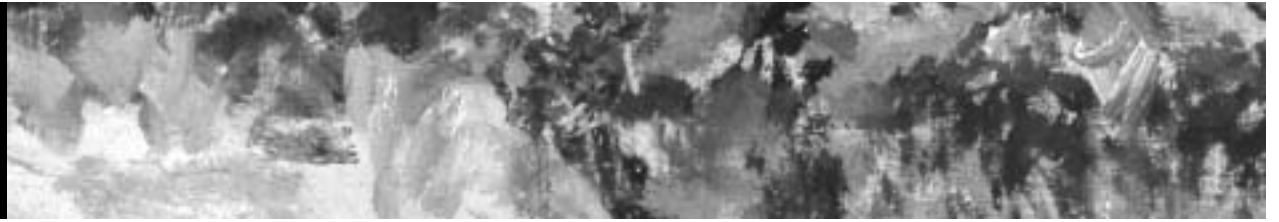


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## NEUCHÂTEL, SWITZERLAND



Rare and Exceptional Chateau Estate. Chateau from early 1800's constructed in elevated position with panoramic views over the Lake of Neuchâtel. Price upon request. Pascal Quartenoud. Pascal.Quartenoud@deRham-SIR.com

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## PROVIDENCIALES, TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS



Coral House. The epitome of Caribbean elegance. 136' of frontage on Grace Bay. 12,000 sf, 5 BR and 1 BR guest cottage. \$9,000,000. Nina Siegenthaler, nina@tsothebysrealty.com.

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## PROVIDENCIALES, TURKS & CAICOS ISLANDS



Penthouse at Grace Bay Club, the ultimate in beachfront living in an established and award-winning resort. 3 BR + media room. \$2,950,000. Nina Siegenthaler, nina@tsothebysrealty.com.

Turks & Caicos Sotheby's International Realty  
649.946.4474 | tsothebysrealty.com

## SCOTTSDALE, AZ



REO. Legendary 13,700 sf Oasis, to be completed by December and purchased under replacement cost. Silverleaf, a prestigious and joyful world class guard gated golf community. MLS#4279122. Price upon request. Frank Aazami/ Private Client Group.

Russ Lyon Sotheby's International Realty  
480.266.0240 | PreviewAZ.com

## BOCA RATON, FL



Located within the exclusive Royal Palm Yacht & Country Club, this gated Italian Renaissance style waterfront estate offers majestic views and overlooks approx 475' of water frontage with protected yacht dockage. \$17,900,000. Mark Nestler & John Poletto.

Nestler Poletto Sotheby's International Realty  
561.212.1517 / 561.239.0700 | npsir.com

## HUTCHINSON ISLAND, FL



Located on the southernmost tip of Sailfish Point this estate offers panoramic views of the St. Lucie inlet & Atlantic Ocean. 8,122 sf a/c with private guest house. Interior highlights include French limestone and rich Brazilian cherry floors. \$6,800,000.

Sailfish Point Sotheby's International Realty  
772.225.6200 | sailfishpoint.com

## KEY LARGO, FL



Waterfront treasure on 2 lots with ocean views in prestigious Ocean Reef community. 10,000+ sf, 6 BR, 7 baths, den/media, pool & spa, guest quarters w/separate living, 3 car+ garage, 70' dockage for access to Florida Keys fishing. \$12,500,000. Russell Post.

Russell Post Sotheby's International Realty  
305.367.2027 | russellpostsir.com

## KEY LARGO, FL



The Sanctuary at Ocean Reef. Gracious condo living offers 4,000 sf living plus 1,000 sf terraces, 3 BR + den, 4.5 baths, 2 car + 2 cart garage. Includes private cabana alongside pool/Jacuzzi for relaxation. Come enjoy the unique lifestyle. \$2,495,000. Russell Post.

Russell Post Sotheby's International Realty  
305.367.2027 | russellpostsir.com

## SAILFISH POINT, FL



Majestic estate w/ 275' of Indian River frontage offers panoramic views of Sailfish Point Marina & Intracoastal waterway from nearly every rm. Features include custom marble flrs, epicurean kitchen & floor to ceiling windows. 7,654 sf. \$4,675,000.

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## STUART, FL



Located in the private oceanfront community of Sailfish Point, this recently updated, direct Atlantic Oceanfront estate offers 8,425 sf of luxury. Beautiful interiors with custom home theatre, stone flooring and designer details throughout. \$5,499,000.

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## NEWTON, MA



Award-winning architect. Contemporary townhouses at Cold Spring Park. Each with private elevator. 'Green' construction including geothermal heat/AC. Soaring ceilings/skylights, Sub-Zero & Bosch appliances. \$1,789,000. Elissa Rogovin.

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617.620.2440 | gibsonsothebysrealty.com

## WESTON, MA



Arts and crafts inspired by renowned architect. Modern twist on classic mountain lodge style home. Slate roof. 33,000+/- sf, 13.5+/- acres. Adjacent to country club. \$24,500,000. Beth Dickerson & Julie Harrison.

Gibson Sotheby's International Realty  
617.510.8565 / 617.413.6332 | gibsonsothebysrealty.com

## WESTON, MA



Expansive contemporary on 3 acres. Lovely marble foyer. Floor to ceiling windows, skylights, woodland views. Oversized family/great room w/ fireplace and wet bar. Impeccably landscaped with pool/hot tub and fully equipped pool house. \$3,700,000. Elissa Rogovin.

Gibson Sotheby's International Realty  
617.620.2440 | gibsonsothebysrealty.com

## LIVINGSTON, MT



Barney Creek Ranch. Premium gentlemen's ranch. 661 +/- acres, stunning views of Paradise Valley, borders National Forest Service, minutes to Yellowstone River and Yellowstone Park. Convenient, private and commercial air service. \$7,300,000. Tracy Raich.

The Collection Sotheby's International Realty  
406.223.8418 | ThecollectionSIR.com

## WHITEFISH, MT



A skier's dream, on the slopes at Whitefish Mountain Resort. 1.34 acres in the Northern Lights neighborhood. 14,958 sf with views of the slopes & Glacier National Park. Fully furnished, turn-key. \$20,000,000. Stephanie Skinner & Misty Retz.

Glacier Sotheby's International Realty  
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## PRINCETON, NJ



In the coveted western section of Princeton, walk to train for NY/Philadelphia/DC, this Colonial stands tall as a tribute to gracious craftsmanship of yesteryear, but w/ modern conveniences coveted by today's discerning buyer. Versatile living spaces. \$2,275,000.

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609.924.1000 | HendersonSIR.com/370900

## BETHEL, NY



Adirondack style custom lodge with spectacular views of sunsets & conservation lands. 5,250 sf, exquisite hardwood floors, granite and hand forged lighting. Within the prestigious gates of the Chapin Estate. Less than 2 hours from Manhattan. \$3,199,000. Jeffrey Loholdt.

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866.583.4900 | chapinsothebysrealty.com



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## BETHEL, NY



A home so secluded a pair of American Bald Eagles live in your shoreline treetops. Within the prestigious gates of the Chapin Estate & less than 2 hours from Manhattan, this 6,100+/- sf retreat offers 800+/- ft of waterfrontage. **\$2,800,000.** Jeffrey Loholdt.

Chapin Sotheby's International Realty  
866.583.4900 | chapinsothebysrealty.com

## BETHEL, NY



Old world "mortise & tenon" architecture meets state of the art technology on the shores of Swinging Bridge Reservoir. 4,200+ sf custom timber frame home within the prestigious gates of the Chapin Estate. **\$2,250,000.** Jeffrey Loholdt.

Chapin Sotheby's International Realty  
866.583.4900 | chapinsothebysrealty.com

## BETHEL, NY



Meandering pastures, manicured lawns and private pond compliment this 6,900 sf custom country estate. Walking distance to the new Bethel Woods Center for the Arts & steps from deeded lake access. 2 hours from Manhattan. **\$1,200,000.** Jeffrey Loholdt.

Chapin Sotheby's International Realty  
866.583.4900 | chapinsothebysrealty.com

## MAMARONECK, NY



Dramatic Contemporary on prestigious Orienta Point with 6 BR, 4.5 baths and fabulous lower level with office/exercise/playroom. On 1+ private acre with pool. **\$2,750,000.** Barbara Rosenblum & Ruth Brause.

Julia B. Fee Sotheby's International Realty  
914.834.0270 | jbfSir.com

## NEW YORK, NY



House in the sky. Elegant, classic 5 BR triplex penthouse, E. 70's/Park Ave. One-of-a-kind pre-war co-op with 4 fireplaces and lovely architectural details. WEB: 0015765. **\$22,000,000.** Bunny Goodwin.

Sotheby's International Realty East Side Manhattan Brokerage  
212.606.7721 | sothebysHomes.com/nyc

## NEW YORK, NY



Dramatic penthouse. High-floor condo with sweeping open views in prestigious Olympic Tower. Features 10' ceiling, 3 BR, 4.5 baths. **\$15,000,000.** WEB: 0016614. Serena Boardman, Meredith Smith.

Sotheby's International Realty East Side Manhattan Brokerage  
212.606.7611/7683 | sothebysHomes.com/nyc

## NEW YORK, NY



162 East 63rd Street. Exceptional 5-story home with south facing private planted garden. 5 BR, 5.5 baths, 5 fireplaces, terraces. Impeccably renovated. WEB: 0016674. **\$9,250,000.** Olga Neulist.

Sotheby's International Realty East Side Manhattan Brokerage  
212.606.7707 | sothebysHomes.com/nyc

## NEW YORK, NY



350 West End Ave. Extra wide 10,300+/- sf, 3-family house with 2 duplexes and grand quad duplex. 6 wood burning fireplaces. Can be delivered vacant. WEB: 0016452. **\$7,300,000.** Michael Pellegrino.

Sotheby's International Realty East Side Manhattan Brokerage  
212.400.8731 | sothebysHomes.com/nyc

## NEW YORK, NY



75th St/Fifth Ave. Spectacular parlor floor in 30' wide Beaux-Arts mansion. Meticulous restoration with 14'5" ceilings, 4 wood burning fplcs, 2 Juliet balconies. WEB: 0016469. **\$6,500,000.** Jeffrey Firth.

Sotheby's International Realty East Side Manhattan Brokerage  
212.606.7673 | sothebysHomes.com/nyc

## NEW YORK, NY



Castle on Central Park. Neo-French renaissance double turret condo commissioned by John Jacob Astor III. Large terrace with views. **\$6,500,000.** WEB: 0016574. Nikki Field & Kevin Brown.

Sotheby's International Realty East Side Manhattan Brokerage  
212.606.7669 / 7748 | sothebysHomes.com/nyc

## NEW YORK, NY



Mint 2 BR, 2 bath in Yorkville's premiere condo. Bright home with partial views of Carl Schurz's Park and impeccably renovated by renowned Barbara Lane. WEB: 0134978. **\$1,695,000.** Robin & Jeremy Stein.

Sotheby's International Realty Downtown Manhattan Brokerage  
212.431.2446 | sothebysHomes.com/nyc

## PURCHASE, NY



Stanford White designed. 13,149 sf Colonial set on 8 acres with pool, 2 cottages, mahogany herringbone floors and French doors throughout leading to terraces. **\$9,500,000.** MLS: 2934682. Marcia Rogull.

Julia B. Fee Sotheby's International Realty  
914.967.4600 | jbfSir.com

## SCARSDALE, NY



Trophy estate. Timeless statement of beauty and permanence. 3.73 level acres overlooking private Duck Pond in coveted Heathcote Association. 8,000 sf, 15 rooms and 4 fireplaces. MLS: 2910031. **\$6,250,000.** Mary Katchis.

Julia B. Fee Sotheby's International Realty  
914.725.3305 | jbfSir.com

## SOUTHAMPTON, NY



Estate Section. This home offers the finest in summer living. 1.5 acres, formal living room with fireplace, formal dining room, eat-in kitchen, 1st and 2nd floor master suites, 6 additional BR and pool. WEB: 0054551. **\$7,950,000.** Pat Petrillo.

Sotheby's International Realty Southampton Brokerage  
631.283.0600 x 16 | sothebysHomes.com

## SOUTHAMPTON, NY



The Irving offers convenience as well as location. Fronting First Neck Lane, this 3 story unit offers 3 BR, 3 baths. Living room with wood burning fireplace. WEB: 0054559. **\$2,300,000.** Molly Ferrer.

Sotheby's International Realty Southampton Brokerage  
631.283.0600 x 25 | sothebysHomes.com

## WATER MILL, NY



180° ocean/ bay views. Near completion. Exquisitely appointed shingled traditional. 8 BR, 9 baths, kitchen, gunite pool. Pool house w/ bath, studio and dock. WEB: 0044356. **\$21,500,000.** Ed Petrie.

Sotheby's International Realty East Hampton Brokerage  
631.324.6000 x 8442 | sothebysHomes.com

## WATER MILL, NY



Bay views on Mohawk Creek. Exquisite new construction of 8,500 sf. 6 BR, 8.5 baths, country kitchen, formal dining, 3 fireplaces, 3.5 acres, gunite pool 3 car garage. WEB: 0054570. **\$10,950,000.** Harald Grant.

Sotheby's International Realty Southampton Brokerage  
631.283.0600 x 13 | sothebysHomes.com

## HORSESHOE BAY, TX



Private English Tudor estate on constant level Lake LBJ in the heart of Texas hill country. 5 BR, 6.5 baths, 5 living areas, gardens, antique cabinetry, elevator, exquisite craftsmanship. **\$6,500,000.** Deborah Nichols.

Capital City Sotheby's International Realty  
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❖ Wealth

# Philanthropy as enterprise

Donors look for hands-on approach to giving, with greater transparency, return on money

BY TARA LOADER WILKINSON

PHILANTHROPIC endeavours are usually one of the first things to fall by the wayside when the wealthy are faced with tougher times.

There are no European statistics on philanthropic giving. But trends are likely to mirror what has been happening in the U.S., experts say—and the picture there isn't good. The American Philanthropic Giving Index, produced by the Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University, revealed giving fell dramatically in the first half of the year. The PGI, similar to a Consumer Confidence Index for charitable giving, is now 64.8, a 21.7% decrease from just six months ago and a 27% decrease since December 2007. The index found that fundraisers' assessment of the current giving environment fell to its lowest level since records began in 1998.

Lena Schreiber, a senior consultant at the London-based consultancy New Philanthropy Capital, believes that the fall in giving has moved across the Atlantic. "Professional advisers tell us that wealthy individuals who may have intended to set up philanthropic foundations are delaying this decision, along with other decisions about their wealth management," she says.

Still, it's not all doom and gloom. Those at the forefront of the industry say many of the wealthy continue to give, but are often looking for a more hands-on approach, demanding greater transparency and a return on their money. Outright giving is being replaced by social investing, and philanthropy is becoming more efficient and entrepreneurial as a consequence.

"Since the credit crisis, we've seen more philanthropists turning to alternative ways of helping charities, notably through specialist finance in providing the capital to fund loans to charities," says Mike Packman, head of private clients, enterprise and philanthropy



Citylife supports creative-arts activities for people with disabilities at the Bromley by Bow Centre and a Community Links play program for children in Newham, London.

at the Charities Aid Foundation. "We expect the market for alternative investment to increase over the coming years as a more entrepreneurial approach to charity is adopted."

Those spending the money of the wealthy—the charities—should adopt a more commercial imperative, says James Caan, a prominent British entrepreneur and philanthropist. "Charities need to start running like businesses," he says. "At the end of the day, most charities are investing other people's money so they should be much more efficient."

Demands for greater efficiency, and returns, have helped promote the development of venture philanthropy in Europe. At the European

Venture Philanthropy Association's annual conference last month in Amsterdam, co-founder Serge Raicher said membership had risen by 10% in the previous two months.

EVPA's membership is made up of individuals and corporations. New members include private banks, like Liechtenstein's LGT Group, which want to offer their clients more philanthropic services.

The U.K.-based Bridges Ventures is a good example of an EVPA member. The company attempts to deliver social returns by investing in companies in deprived areas. The impact of its investments on the area is reported to investors alongside their financial returns.

"There was a lot of skepticism in 2001 when we raised our first fund, but five years later, we set up a second fund that was oversubscribed and raised £75 million," says Michele Giddens, executive director at Bridges. "You have to get real financial results as well as social impacts to do this."

So-called charitable bonds are another area gaining in popularity. Citylife, the U.K. charity that issues these bonds, will next week open the East London Bond on behalf of two community-based charities working in some of the most deprived areas in Europe. The East London Bond has a number of supporters, including City of London veteran and philanthropist Brian Winterflood.

Citylife bonds work by paying the investor back in full, but at the same time giving to charity. The bonds are available to purchase for a fixed offer period. When the offer closes, around

80% of the total is loaned to a social-housing provider, while the rest is given to charity. After five years, the housing provider repays the loan with interest, taking the fund to its original 100% level, and bondholders are repaid in full.

In a similar effort to gain greater control over their philanthropic efforts, the very wealthy are setting up foundations in increasing numbers. Rebecca Eastmond, head of philanthropy at J.P. Morgan, says her bank has witnessed an increase in demand for foundations in the last year.

Stanley Fink, one of the U.K.'s most vocal proponents of the importance of philanthropy and the former head of Man Group PLC, believes a commercial element should play a big part of the giving process. He says: "Entrepreneurs want to be actively involved in charitable work and actually see where their money is going, rather than just writing off a cheque."

But Mr. Fink and others argue that for philanthropy and social investment to be taken more seriously, it would help if they were considered part of the portfolio-allocation efforts of private banks. Some wealth managers are certainly adding staff to their philanthropy departments. Barclays Wealth, J.P. Morgan Private Bank, Citi Private Bank and Coutts & Co. have added resources to their philanthropy units in the last years.

Ms. Giddens says wealth managers still need to take philanthropy more seriously. "There isn't a clear place for it in the asset allocation table among wealth managers yet. It will be a victory when it is eventually accepted."

## Elegance is on sale in London

FASHION WORN BY legendary film and style icon Audrey Hepburn (1929-1993) will take center stage next week in London.

Around 50 lots in Kerry Taylor's vintage auction house "Passion for Fashion" sale, held in association with

### Collecting

MARGARET STUDER

Sotheby's on Tuesday, will be devoted to the Belgium-born, British actress who was a 20th-century personification of chic. They include evening gowns, cocktail dresses, day wear, letters and photographs. The pieces come from Hepburn's lifelong friend, Tanja Star Busmann, to whom Hepburn gave much of her wardrobe.

A highlight will be a feminine black Chantilly lace cocktail dress with full skirt by Hubert de Givenchy, which Hepburn wore in the Ritz Hotel bar scene in the 1966 film "How to Steal a Million" (estimate: £15,000-£20,000). A short black silk dress by Givenchy, worn in publicity shots for the film "Paris When it Sizzles" (1962-1964), is estimated at £10,000-£15,000. If Hepburn liked a dress, she ordered it in more than one color. In the sale is a black version of a Givenchy ball gown that she wore in white for her role in "Love in the Afternoon," which was released in 1957 (estimate: £5,000-£8,000).

Also in the sale is a Hepburn garment that doesn't come from Ms. Busmann: an ivory satin bridal gown (estimate: £8,000-£12,000) made by Italian fashion designers Zoe, Micol and Giovanna Fontana in 1952, when Hepburn was filming "Roman Holiday." She was engaged to British businessman James Hanson, but the marriage never took place. After the breakup, Hepburn told the Fontanas to give it to a girl who would be unable to afford such a dress, and they chose Amabile Altobella, who was engaged to a farm worker. In the catalog, Mrs. Altobella is quoted as saying, "I have had a happy marriage, so the dress brought me luck."

Evening sheath (1966-67) by Givenchy; estimate: £6,000-£8,000.  
Givenchy ball gown (1956); estimate: £5,000-£8,000.



Kerry Taylor Auctions

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# Remembering a model childhood

BY LENNOX MORRISON

**A**N OIL PAINTING shows a tawny-haired infant slumbering peacefully in cloud-like bed linen. For most viewers the portrait by Augustin Rouart is likely to evoke tenderness and protectiveness. However, for Jean-Marie Rouart, the artist's son and model for the 1946 work, very different emotions are stirred.

"I was only a few months old when already my father was aiming a light in my face to do my portrait. It's my earliest memory," he recalls. "What struck me was his strained expression, his features taut as though trying to unravel a riddle on my face. What was he searching for, through me, so passionately and with such suffering?"

Mr. Rouart's essay, "Under the Artist's Gaze," forms part of a new exhibition, "Child Models—from Claude Renoir to Pierre Arditi," at the Orangerie in Paris until March 8 ([www.musee-orangerie.fr](http://www.musee-orangerie.fr)). Mr. Rouart, now 66 years old, is one of several sons, daughters and wider family members of artists whose testimony brings a fresh perspective to portraiture.

In addition to the 100 or so paintings and sculptures on display, and written statements from some of the models, 18 of them, now adults, share their memories in an engrossing documentary, screened at the exhibition. While they are all clearly proud of their artist relatives, some have happier recollections than others. In the film, Claire Denis, one of Maurice Denis's grandchildren, explains that "as a model you feel completely loved and chosen for who you are," whereas Olivier Brayer, son of artist Yves, says, "It wasn't fun for a child to stay still for several hours and try to find a pose which was relatively comfortable." His complaint is echoed by others.

What makes this exhibition so

engaging is that in the galleries you can view, for instance, a portrait of baby Claude Picasso in Polish folk costume, painted by his father Pablo in 1948. Then, in the screening room, you can watch 62-year-old Claude on film as he reminisces about playing at artists and art dealers.

"We made little paintings in the bottom of match boxes and put on exhibitions," he says. "We had toy money and everything. We pretended to be [Picasso dealer Daniel-Henry] Kahnweiler. We bought and sold paintings. We pretended to be unbearable clients."

The show is the brainchild of Orangerie chief curator and director Emmanuel Bréon, whose ancestor Guillaume Dubufe painted notable Paris interiors such as a ceiling of the Comédie Française. Mr. Bréon, 53, grew up in homes full of family portraits and was particularly intrigued by the children. "As a little boy I always wondered what had become of them in life and what stories they could tell," he says.

In the exhibition is Dubufe's watercolor of his young cousin Raymond from 1884. Fair-haired and in a sailor suit, Raymond looks like the model child of nineteenth-century children's literature, as in Frances Hodgson Burnett's "Little Lord Fauntleroy."

Mr. Bréon says, "When I asked my family what had happened to the children in the portraits, I didn't always receive an answer." It was only later that he discovered that little Raymond had died at Tonkin, having fought for the Boers against the English in southern Africa. Mr. Bréon's vision for this exhibition is that for once, rather than art historians providing commentary, the child models should have their say.

Among them is Pierre Arditi, the French actor. He and his sister Catherine, also an actor, often posed for their father Georges.



Shown here is a portrait of them as children in 1949, in which they look stunned. In the documentary, Pierre, now a silver-haired 65-year-old, recalls the intense disappointment, after sitting for hours, of finally seeing his father's preparatory charcoal sketches. "I'd say to myself: 'How can he ruin so many hours of my young life for this hodgepodge.'" Their father liked to work in complete silence and Catherine remembers his shout-

ing, "Don't budge!"

Other models have happier memories. Pierre-Auguste Renoir often painted his family, and the exhibition features portraits of his youngest son, Claude. Another son, Jean, the film director, also posed for his father. In a book about Renoir he wrote, "When I was very little, three, four or five, he never chose the pose himself but took advantage of my doing something which seemed to keep me quiet," such as when Jean was eating soup or playing with toy soldiers. When his father wanted him to stay still longer, he recited stories, such as Hans Christian Andersen's "The Steadfast Tin Soldier."

Maya Picasso, daughter of Pablo's liaison with Marie-Thérèse Walter, now a striking 74-year-old, recounts in the documentary that she would ask her father to paint her cat, her doll, her sail boat. "He'd say, 'Okay, but you hold it then,' and unknown to me he'd paint my portrait," she says. "To me the cat was the main thing but in the story I became the star."

Portraits here show her at age three with a sailor doll and, in a separate painting, with a little boat in her hands; both from 1938. Nearby, Maya's half-brother Paul, son of Pablo's marriage to Olga Khokhlova, is depicted at age four in a white Pierrot's costume in the well-known painting from 1925. The original outfit is also on display. Elsewhere, the viewer discovers ball-point drawings of seven-year-old Claude and younger sister Paloma playing separately with toy trucks. The pictures, created by their father in 1954, are executed in an engaging, child-like style.

Another charming image in the exhibit is that of four-year-old Do-

minique Denis nailing his own drawing to the wall with a miniature hammer. The piece from 1913 is by his father Maurice.

A finely executed bronze bust of a curly-haired boy turns out to be a depiction of Jean-Paul Belmondo, the French cinema star, at about six-years-old. The sculpture by his father Paul, circa 1939, is unique, as young Jean-Paul preferred to roller-skate around the family apartment rather than pose for dad.

Mr. Bréon says of the child models: "I think that at heart they are all happy to be the children of artists. They all feel a great sense of filial devotion."

Some children grew up to work on the other side of the easel—as three paintings here demonstrate. The first is Renoir's celebrated portrait of a finely pretty nine-year-old girl holding her cat in 1887. The girl is Julie Manet, daughter of artist Berthe Morisot and Eugene Manet, younger brother of painter Édouard Manet. Julie became a painter and among her subjects was nephew Augustin Rouart, depicted here as a rosy-cheeked four-year-old in 1911.

Augustin, in his turn, took up brushes and palette. He often painted his son Jean-Marie, the sleeping infant in the 1946 painting, who as a writer now describes so vividly the experience of being his father's subject: "He scrutinized me with eagerness. He seemed to be in the grip of a difficult ordeal. I could even have believed that I'd woken up unexpectedly in the middle of surgery. Although I was the subject of the operation, the importance of it extended far beyond myself."

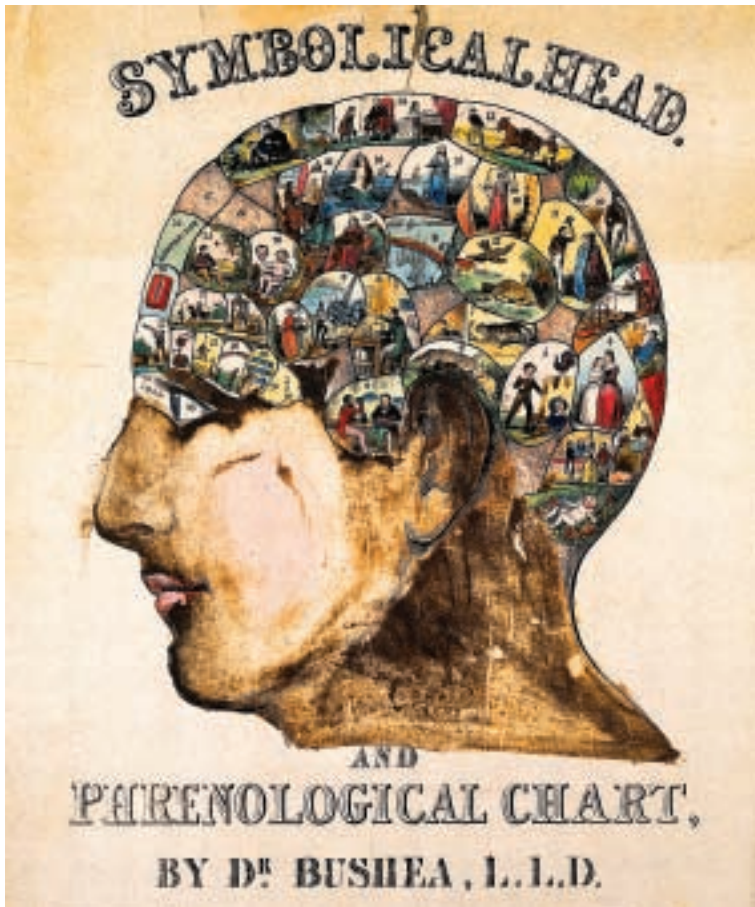
Lennox Morrison  
is a writer based in Paris.



Top, 'La Sainte Suzanne' by Lucien Jonas, (1921). Above, Augustin Rouart's 'Enfant dormant no. 1' (1945).

© Private collection (2)

# Eight rooms, nine lives: soul searching at the Wellcome



Wellcome Library, London. Wellcome Images

**LONDON:** As part of a nine-month project on the subject of identity, the Wellcome Collection has mounted a fascinating exhibition, "Identity: Eight Rooms, Nine Lives," which asks questions that are usually the province of philosophers, psychologists and, increasingly, geneticists. How do we get our own sense of who we are, and what makes us distinct from other people? What does science have to say about these matters?

In his poem "To a Louse," Robert Burns wrote: "O wad some Power the giftie gie us./ To see oursels as ithers see us!" Does art or science now give us the ability to see ourselves, objectively, as others see us?

Complementing the exhibition, curators James Peto and Ken Arnold have put together a book, "Identity and Identification," that nicely explicates the eight rooms, each of which displays an exemplary life (think Theocritus or Plutarch). It also includes interviews in which notables expatiate on their own identities.

One room deals with studies of

twins, exemplified by a family that has both identical and non-identical twins; another looks at gender, taking as an example April Ashley, who had an early sex-change operation; a room features Franz Joseph Gall (1758-1828), who invented phrenology; another showcases Francis Galton (1822-1911), the Victorian polymath whose passion was hereditary intelligence but who founded the false science of eugenics; yet another room is devoted to performances by British actress Fiona Shaw.

Finding visual means of examining an abstract idea like identity has required ingenuity. Seeing vitrines containing two sets of identical toys (to prevent ownership disputes between identical twins), and then watching the twins diverge in their adolescent record collections, makes a nicely concrete point. Though Francis Galton made the discovery that human beings can be distinguished by their fingerprints, the pedigree Galton drew up for himself shows that his own motivation was to demonstrate to the world that, as the cousin of Charles Darwin, he had a hereditary claim to genius.

I came away concluding, with economist and philosopher Amartya Sen, that we all have multiple

identities, but that none of them is essential in the sense that it provides a complete key to our character.

At the Royal Academy's adjunct at 6 Burlington Gardens is this year's GSK Contemporary show, "Earth: Art of a Changing World." Thirty-five artists (including writer Ian McEwan and poet Lemn Sissay) have been asked to produce work about the impact of climate change on culture—more or less.

Some have been disturbingly successful: Yao Lu's mounds of rubbish looking like a traditional Chinese landscape painting; Cornelia Parker's eerily beautiful ceiling mobile made of the charred remains of a forest fire; Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey's token recreation of Joseph Beuys's acorn project to plant 7,000 oaks; and Sophie Calle's brilliant, moving installation about burying her mother's jewelry in a glacier. And there is a very amusing temporary ("pop-up") café that serves oysters and champagne—with blankets and a hot-water bottle—on the wintery terrace.

—Paul Levy

Wellcome until April 6  
[www.wellcomecollection.org](http://www.wellcomecollection.org)  
 GSK Contemporary until Jan. 31  
[www.royalacademy.org.uk](http://www.royalacademy.org.uk)

An engraving detailing phrenological faculties (circa 1845). A new Wellcome Collection exhibit on identity includes phrenology founder Franz Joseph Gall.

# James Earl Jones wows in London staging of 'Cat on a Hot Tin Roof'

**LONDON:** Debbie Allen's Broadway production at the Novello Theatre brings the action of Tennessee Williams's "Cat on a Hot Tin Roof" forward to the 1980s and features a cast of black actors. In practice, this means that the 28,000-acre "biggest estate in the Delta" is now occupied not by redneck whites but by bourgeois blacks, that Big Daddy's fortune has been increased eightfold to \$80 million to account for inflation—and that the f-word is used instead of Williams's euphemisms for it.

Though this production's premise is the opposite of the colorblind casting that is now common, it did not seem to me a terribly radical venture. What's key is that the Southern accents are correct.

James Earl Jones was born to play Big Daddy, the patriarch who has progressed from being a farm laborer to owning the spread and furnishing his house by making shopping sprees to Europe. On the occasion of the play, he is celebrating his 65th birthday, having learned that

he's not, after all, dying from cancer. He reveals that he hates his wife, Big Mama, played with mischief and sparkle by Phylicia Rashad (who is Ms. Allen's sister), and is going to celebrate his reprieve by buying sex.

The center of the drama is their son Brick (Adrian Lester), alcoholic and hobbling around on a crutch because he broke his ankle the night before while drunkenly attempting to recreate his athletic past. Sexually confused, Brick is unable to admit to himself that his feelings for his dead team-mate, Skipper, were love rather than friendship.

Mr. Lester, who was a great Rosalind, in the 1991 Cheek by Jowl production of "As You Like It," is splendid as the man who refuses to sleep with his wife, Maggie, the "cat" of the title. She is made wonderfully attractive (as Williams himself came to find the character) by actress Sanaa Lathan.

—Paul Levy

Until April 10  
[www.catwestend.com](http://www.catwestend.com)



Sanaa Lathan and Adrian Lester in Debbie Allen's 'Cat On A Hot Tin Roof.'

Nobby Clark



Museo Nacional del Prado

Juan Bautista Maino's 'Portrait of a Gentleman' (1613-18).

# Madrid's Prado situates an Old Master where he rightfully belongs

**MADRID:** In his lifetime, the Spanish painter Juan Bautista Maino (1581-1649) was one of his country's most celebrated artists. Admired by the playwright Lope de Vega and a tutor in drawing to the Spanish royal family, Maino later managed to slip between the cracks of art history—until now. Two years after its dramatic expansion, the Prado has mounted the first significant Maino exhibition, bringing together nearly all of the artist's 40 known works, and placing them alongside key works by other important Spanish and Italian artists of the period. The result is a display of great curatorial acumen. Art histori-

ans will never be able to think of Maino in the same way again, and ordinary museum-goers have a new Old Master to admire.

Juan Bautista Maino was born and raised in Spain, the son of an Italian father and a Portuguese mother, but he spent his decisive years in early-17th-century Rome, where the new naturalism of Caravaggio was competing with the sumptuous classicism of Annibale Carracci and, later, Guido Reni. By 1611, Maino was back in Spain. His work proved to be a great synthesis of what he must have found in Rome.

Maino became a Dominican friar in his early 30s, which greatly cur-

tailed his artistic activity, but also lent his art a depth of religious feeling. In "Adoration of the Shepherds" (undated, but probably around 1613), a favorite subject, Maino heightens the spiritual aspect by portraying shepherds who are anything but reverent. The attending figures are of the temporal world; while an idealized Reni-like Virgin and the glowing Christ child convene with Caravaggio-like angels in heaven.

Maino's religious belief also brought depictions of poverty into his work. In his majestic history painting, "Recapture of Bahía de Todos los Santos" (1634-35), which

commemorates a Spanish military victory over the Dutch in what is now Brazil, the wounded and the needy are in the foreground, while symbols of the Spanish crown remain in back.

The curators' decision to include works by Maino's contemporaries and influences, including those by Caravaggio, makes the case for Maino's larger achievement. It is fascinating to see Maino's richly decorative version of "The Adoration of the Magi" paired with Velázquez's more subdued treatment from 1619.

—J.S. Marcus

Until Jan. 17  
[www.museodelprado.es](http://www.museodelprado.es)

## The Cruel Path to Impasse

France and Germany marshaled 3.7 million soldiers for the Western offensives that began World War I in August 1914—with Britain adding an additional 130,000. In the decisive days between Sept. 5 and Sept. 11, the two sides threw two million men into desperate combat along the Marne River. More than 610,000 men were killed and wounded during the month-long campaign.

But such numbers do little to bring home the ordeal. To reach the Marne, Alexander von Kluck's First Army had marched more

### The Marne, 1914

By Holger H. Herwig  
(Random House, 419 pages,  
\$16.99)

than 300 miles on stiff-nailed boots through August's stifling heat and had to forage for whatever food it could find at day's end. A single infantry regiment (5,000 men) took up more than a mile of road, and a fully mobilized army corps covered 30. Kluck was driving seven corps (320,000 men) toward Paris. Will Irwin, a correspondent for Collier's magazine, reporting on the progress of the German "gray machine of death," noted: "Over it all lay a smell of which I have never heard mentioned in any book on war—the smell of a half-

million unbathed men, the stench of a menagerie raised to the nth power. That smell lay for days over every town through which the Germans passed."

From the moment the offensive began, on Aug. 3, the German army was almost entirely victorious. No matter the intensity of the fighting, every battle ended with the French (or Belgians or British) in retreat. The German plan for war, the famed Schlieffen Plan, called for a vast right wing of attack to wheel through Belgium and northern France, strike the French forces in the flank, and then hammer them upon the anvil of the German armies grouped in Lorraine.

The plan came close to working—and certainly the French cooperated by making repeated disastrous attacks in Lorraine and the Ardennes. But for all the local success of the German commanders, they kept failing in their main goal of creating a Kesselschlacht ("cauldron battle"): encircling and then annihilating a French army between two German pincers. Many opportunities arose, but conflicting orders and poor coordination allowed the French to escape. By Sept. 9, the great invasion had collapsed 13 miles short of Paris. It has been hotly debated ever since just why this happened and who is to blame.

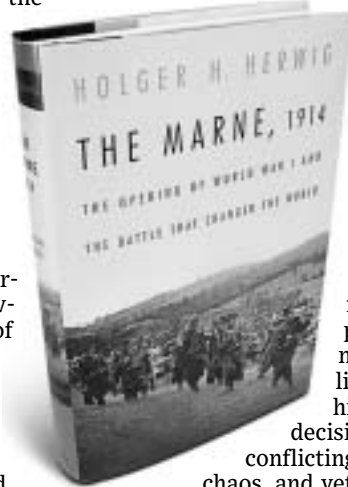
For more than seven decades Sewell Tyng's "The Battle of the

Marne, 1914" (1935) has defined how we view the opening battles of World War I, and it remains a great work of military history. Yet much material was not available to Tyng, an American lawyer and government official who had served in the French army's ambulance service during the war—particularly the German military archives that became accessible only after the Berlin Wall fell. Mining them to good effect after a long career studying the war, the Canadian scholar Holger Herwig has now delivered an account of the Marne campaign that supplants Tyng's and makes plain how the German command failed to seize its victories and why it retired from the Marne's close-run battles.

In a couple of paragraphs, Mr. Herwig handily dismisses the "historian's war" that raged in recent decades over German war guilt, and he rejects the idea that World War I started by accident, because of a mechanical series of military measures over which politicians had no control. He shows, rather, that politicians in every

combatant country made willing decisions to go to war in 1914.

The Schlieffen Plan, too, receives a revisionist interpretation in "The Marne, 1914." For more than a century, Helmuth von Moltke—Schlieffen's successor—has been criticized for shifting troops away from the right wing



of the attack, but Mr. Herwig argues that Schlieffen's original memo was too vague to be an actionable plan. Moltke's mistakes, Mr. Herwig notes, came much more in failing to control his armies in the field. He let his disputatious army commanders—some brilliant, some over the hill—make their own

decisions, all too often conflicting. The result was chaos, and yet the Germans nearly won, thanks to the excellence of their troops.

The great crisis of the German offensive came when Joseph Joffre, the French commander, went all in with an assault on the Marne on Sept. 5. Kluck kept his head and rushed forces to crush the French left wing. It looked as if his action, risky as it was, might achieve success for the whole German campaign—until Lt.-Col. Richard

Hentsch arrived at First Army headquarters. Sent by Moltke, Hentsch was making the rounds of German commanders, encouraging each of them to pull back his main assault forces to a more defensible line. Kluck, fearing that First Army would be cut off, broke off the battle.

Hentsch has been endlessly blamed for the German defeat. Mr. Herwig offers little to exculpate him. Yet he is correct to say that the blame must rest with the German senior commanders. Kluck should have demanded a direct order from Moltke before breaking off his assault—he owed it to his troops, who had sacrificed so much. And Moltke ought to have himself been at the front.

Like Tyng before him, Mr. Herwig creates order out of overlapping events and makes vivid the full tragedy of what the Marne set in motion. The fighting soon moved into siege-style warfare; the goal was no longer decisive victory but simply to kill large numbers of the enemy. Victory would come when one of the combatants saw that it had been bled to death. Before the war was over in 1918, France, Germany and Britain would suffer 16.5 million casualties. As Georges Clemenceau noted in 1917: "War is a series of catastrophes that ends in victory."

Mr. Messenger is a senior editor of the *Weekly Standard*.

### Masterpiece / By Joseph Epstein

## A Biography Like No Other

"All I can tell you about the book, my dear fellow," A.J.A. Symons wrote to his brother Julian in mid-composition of "The Quest for Corvo," "is that it will be unlike any other biography ever written." He was right. Symons, 34 when he published the book in 1934, never wrote another. (He died at 41.) One begins the "The Quest for Corvo" in delight and ends it in satisfaction—one definition, surely, of a masterpiece.

Symons's biography of a little-known writer named Frederick Rolfe (1860-1913) is unique in biographical literature in bringing the reader in on how the biographer knows what he knows about his subject; and in owning up to what he doesn't know or feels cannot be known. "The Quest for Corvo" is biography in the form of a detective story, and as such it is riveting.

The surest formula for a masterpiece biography—of which there are not that many—is an extraordinary human being writing about a great one. In "The Quest for Corvo" we have an utterly charming man writing on a madly eccentric one. "Charlatan or Genius?" is the subtitle, and when one has finished reading the book one is inclined to conclude that Rolfe was fully both.

Rolfe was a failed painter, photographer, musician and, most devastatingly of all to him, a born Anglican who failed to achieve priesthood in the Catholic Church. (He claimed never to have met an honest Catholic, yet, in a characteris-

tic touch, added, "if I were not Catholic I shouldn't be anything at all.") Toward the end of his life, he signed himself Fr. Rolfe, hoping to be mistaken for a priest.

What Rolfe was, indisputably, was an immensely talented writer. He wrote no great books, though his "Hadrian the Seventh," a brilliant fantasy in which he imagines a character obviously based on himself being made pope after the College of Cardinals can't decide on a worthy candidate, has gone through many printings since his death. A remarkable stylist, Rolfe wrote with precision and high comic flourish.

"The Quest for Corvo" begins with Symons chatting with a friend who tells him about Rolfe's "Hadrian the Seventh." Symons reads it and is so struck by it that he is determined to learn more about its author and to search

out anything else by him. At the time, Symons was working on a book of his own—"A Select Bibliography and History of the Books of the Nineties, with Notes on Their Authors," which he never completed—and was the secretary of the First Edition Club in London. Later, with the French gourmet and wine merchant Andre Simon, he founded the Wine and Food Society. Symons was dedicated to el-

egant acquisitions and good living. At his life's end he said, "No one so poor has lived so well."

Symons's biography takes the form of a continual connecting of the dots, filling in gaps through Symons's encounters with Rolfe's former friends and those with whom he had business dealings. Chance plays a large role, as Symons is led from one to another of Rolfe's connections. "Mr. Pirie-Gordon was the missing link between Rolfe's middle and his later



years," Symons writes. "I was able to piece the story together, to watch another rotation of the wheel to which Rolfe was bound."

One of the book's special pleasures is in Symons's portraits of the extraordinary characters who offered their hands to Rolfe only, inevitably, to have them bitten. Among these are splendid miniatures of now-forgotten but once-important English men of letters

and publishers, among them Shane Leslie and the religious novelist Robert Hugh Benson. Most extraordinary of all is the astonishing Maundy Gregory, who buys a Rolfe letter from Symons and later himself turns up several of Rolfe's missing manuscripts. The mysteriously wealthy Gregory, though Symons was unaware of it, was a bagman for David Lloyd George, selling knighthoods and other honors for the right price.

"The Quest for Corvo," as Symons notes, is in part a story of human benevolence. Men and women were attracted to Rolfe, despite all that was off-putting about him. The Duchess of Sforza-Cesarini, who gave him an allowance, also conferred upon Rolfe, or so he claimed, the title of Baron Corvo. But Rolfe was a genuine paranoid—a paranoid who made his own enemies, and did his utmost to keep them.

He was a sponger, a liar, a homosexual dedicated to suborning the innocent, a fantasist ever ready, as Symons has it, to add "new turrets" to "his castles in the air," yet in his dedication to his pretensions, in his utter friendlessness—he dedicated one of his books to "the Divine Friend much desired," a want ad if ever

there was one—Rolfe was also unspeakably sad.

Refreshingly un-Freudian, "The Quest for Corvo" makes scant reference to Rolfe's parents, his upbringing, the formation of his character. Rolfe enters Symons's book fully formed. "Though the peculiar inner energy which possessed Fr. Rolfe is beyond analysis," Symons writes, "the external events of his life, and his reactions to them, can be collated and made comprehensible."

Rolfe's troubles began, Symons concludes, with his homosexuality, his knowledge that he was not like most men, which fed into his paranoia. "His forbidden love," Symons writes, "was a source of weakness, but hate could make him strong." Rolfe was hard to do justice to, but Symons, out of the largeness of his imagination, in the end finds him a figure from whom "it is unjust . . . to withhold admiration and pity," a judgment that seems exactly right.

A slender book, an odd book, a completely original book, "The Quest for Corvo" also represents a new method of writing biography that has never been copied. That it hasn't been, that perhaps it cannot be without the keen mind that Symons brought to it, is but another mark of its standing as a masterpiece.

Mr. Epstein's collection of stories "The Love Song of A. Jerome Minkoff" will be published in the spring by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

# time ff



## Amsterdam history

"From Jerusalem with Love" presents a selection of ceremonial objects, art, photographs and souvenirs from Palestine 1799-1948, collected by film maker Willy Lindwer.  
Bijbels Museum  
Dec. 10-Sept. 5  
☎ 31-20-6242-436  
www.bijbelsmuseum.nl

## art

"Rembrandt Reflected: A Glimpse into the Master's Mind" shows etchings by Dutch artist Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-69) alongside their mirror images to reveal what the artist saw when he was drawing with the etching needle.  
Museum het Rembrandthuis  
Dec. 11-March 21  
☎ 31-20-5200-400  
www.rembrandthuis.nl

## Antwerp art

"Room for Art in 17th-century Antwerp" showcases three paintings by Willem van Haecht (1593-1637) featuring "treasure rooms," interiors filled with paintings and other art objects.  
Rubenshuis  
Until Feb. 28  
☎ 32-3-2011-555  
www.rubenshuis.be

## Arnhem music

"Paul McCartney—Good Evening Holland" brings an elaborate tour by the former Beatle to Europe, following a successful run in the U.S.  
Dec. 9 Gelredome, Arnhem  
Dec. 10 Bercy, Paris  
☎ 31-900-1010-2020  
www.paulmccartney.com

## Berlin art

"Auke, Giorgio, Ignaz & Oskar" attempts a dialogue between art from different periods and styles, including contemporary Dutch sculptor Auke de Vries, Francesco di Giorgio Martini (1439-1502), and Ignaz Günther (1725-75).  
Bode Museum  
Until Feb. 28  
☎ 49-30-2090-5577  
www.smb.museum

## Bonn photography

"Arno Fischer" is a retrospective of work by the German photographer, featuring 170 photographs, alongside a selection of books, magazines and documents.  
Kunst- und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland  
Until Jan. 3  
☎ 49-228-9171-0  
www.kah-bonn.de

## Brussels fabrics

"Brocade from Nanjing" offers a selection of silk and brocade created by the Nanjing Brocade Research Institute, showing highlights from the history of ancient Chinese silk production and brocade-weaving techniques.  
Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire:  
Jubelparkmuseum  
Until Feb. 7  
☎ 32-02-7417-211  
www.kmkg-mrah.be

## Cologne photography

"August Sander: Cologne as it Used to Be" exhibits a selection of images from 16 portfolios by the Cologne photographer (1876-1964), created between 1946 and 1952.  
Kölnisches Stadtmuseum  
Until Feb. 7  
☎ 49-221-2212-5789  
www.museenkoeln.de

## Copenhagen theater

"Léger and the Theatre" illustrates the history of Danish theater with paintings, photographs, costumes and theatre sets, including an original by Fernand Léger (1881-1955).  
Theater Museum in the Court Theatre  
Until Jan. 28  
☎ 45-3311-5176  
www.teatermuseet.dk

## Dublin art

"Picturing New York: Photographs from The Museum of Modern Art" presents 145 historic and iconic images of New York from the 1880s to the present day.  
Irish Museum of Modern Art  
Until Feb. 7  
☎ 353-1-6129-900  
www.imma.ie

## Florence art

"Florence Biennale" offers 2,500 pieces of art, lectures, talks and performances with artists Marina Abramovic and Shu Yong attending as guests of honor.  
Fortezza da Basso  
Dec. 5-13  
☎ 39-055-2776-461  
www.florencebiennale.org

## art

"Manipulating Reality: How Images Redefine the world" explores meanings of the term "reality" in contemporary art with a selection of 23 artistic approaches using photography and video to develop possible models of reality.  
Palazzo Strozzi  
Until Jan. 17  
☎ 39-055-2760-340  
www.palazzostrozzi.org

## Frankfurt art

"Constantin Brancusi: The Sculptor as Photographer" showcases 30 photographs by the Romanian artist (1876-1957) from the collection of the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.  
Museum der Weltkulturen  
Until Jan. 3  
☎ 49-69-2123-5391  
www.mdw-frankfurt.de

## Ghent design

"Artel (1908-1935) Czech Cubism" examines work and history of the Czech Artel Cooperative in which artists like Jaroslav Benda, Pavel Janak (1881-1956) and Helena Johnova (1884-1962) took part.  
Design Museum  
Until Feb. 7  
☎ 32-9267-9999  
www.designmuseumgent.be

"Revolution" explores the world of fashion through films, interactive installations and live fashion shoots, featuring fashion icons such as Nick Knight, Alexander McQueen, John Galliano, Naomi Campbell, Peter Saville and Kate Moss.  
Somerset House  
Until Dec. 20  
☎ 44-20-7845-4600  
www.somersetthouse.org.uk

## Milan photography

"Shadows of War" presents 80 photographs taken between 1936 and 2007 by amongst others, Robert Capa (1913-54) and Margaret Bourke-White (1904-71).  
Rotonda della Besana  
Until Jan. 10  
☎ 39-02-5455-047  
www.fondazioneveronesi.it

## Munich art

"Ai Weiwei—So Sorry" displays two new large-scale works by the Chinese contemporary artist Ai Weiwei, alongside early photographs, films, the documenta 12 project, Fairytale, as well as a selection of works made after 1997.  
Haus der Kunst  
Until Jan. 17  
☎ 49-89 21127-113  
www.hausderkunst.de

## Paris art

"Soulages" is a retrospective of the French contemporary abstract artist

Pierre Soulages, presenting 100 works dating back to 1946.  
Centre Pompidou  
Until March 8  
☎ 33-1-4478-1233  
www.centrepompidou.fr

## toys

"Once Upon a Time there was Playmobil" showcases over 1,000 toy characters staged in scenes created specially by Playmobil, telling the story of the company's growth since 1974.  
Musées des arts décoratifs  
From Dec. 10 to May 9  
☎ 33-1-4455-7500  
www.lesartsdecoratifs.fr

## Rome history

"Rome, the Painting of an Empire" explores Roman landscape, portrait, mythological and still-life paintings, featuring 100 works dating from the first century B.C. to the fifth century A.D.  
Scuderie del Quirinale  
Until Jan. 17  
☎ 39-6-3996-7500  
www.scuderiequirinale.it

## Vienna design

"2x100 Best Posters" presents two shows in one—the 100 best poster designs from 2009 and 100 Austrian Seession art poster designs from 1900.  
MAK  
Until Jan. 10  
☎ 43-1711-360  
www.mak.at

Source: ArtBase Global Arts News Service, WSJE research.

## The Hague glass

"The Wonderful World of Czechoslovakian Glass Art" offers a collection of abstract geometrical objects made of optical glass, an art form that flourished in the former Czechoslovakia.  
Haags Gemeentemuseum  
Until May 30  
☎ 31-70-3381-111  
www.gemeentemuseum.nl

## Hamburg art

"Katharina Fritsch" features 13 monumental and colorful plaster and aluminum sculptures of people and animals, alongside enormous silk-screen prints by Katharina Fritsch.  
Deichtorhallen  
Until Feb. 7  
☎ 49-40-3210-30  
www.deichtorhallen.de

## Helsinki art

"Finnish Jewellery 1600-2009" examines the evolution of Finnish jewellery, including pieces by Eva Gyldeén, Elis Kauppi, Bertel Gardberg, Börje Rajalin and Paula Häiväoja.  
Designmuseo  
Until Jan. 24  
☎ 358-9622-0540  
www.designmuseo.fi

## London musical

"Legally Blonde: The Musical" is a musical based on the movie of the same name, directed by Jerry Mitchell and starring Sheridan Smith and Duncan James.  
Savoy Theatre  
Dec. 5-May 23  
☎ 44-20-7836-8888  
www.legallyblondethemusical.co.uk

## fashion

"SHOWstudio, Fashion

Above, Katharina Fritsch's 'Oktopus' (2006/2009) on show in Hamburg. Right, 'The Tear' (1981) by Henri Cadiou in Florence.



Top, VG BILD KUNST; Bottom, Collection Pierre Gilou