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WEEKEND JOURNAL.

EUROPE

Lobster safari

Cruising for crustaceans
along the Swedish coast



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Cruising for crustaceans along the Swedish coast



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WEEKEND JOURNAL

EUROPE

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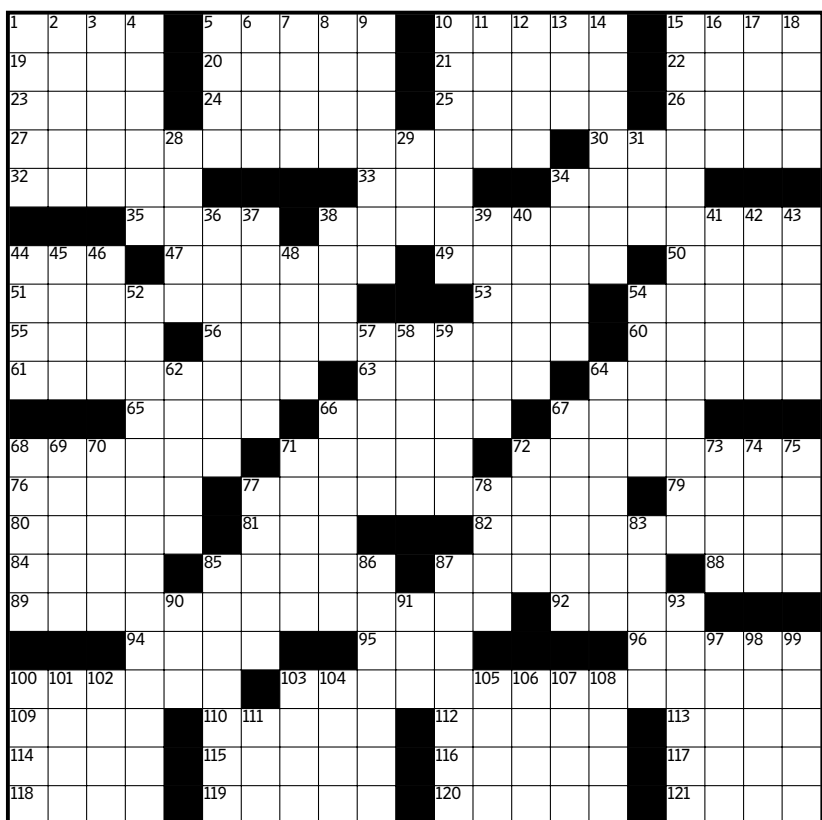
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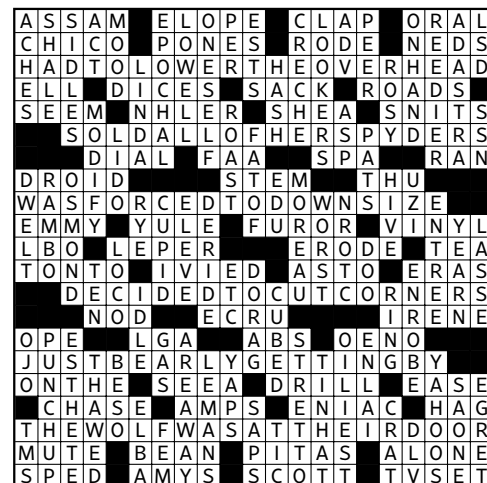
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Last Week's Solution



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For Arsenal fanatic, a stadium to call home

BY JAMES APPELL

IN THE WORLD of sports, there are fans and there are fanatics—and Steven Kyprianou, a life-long Arsenal Football Club obsessive, falls squarely among the latter. Not only does he own season tickets for 14 seats, Mr. Kyprianou adores Arsenal so much that, earlier this year, he moved into the stadium.

The old stadium, that is. Arsenal announced plans in 1999 to relocate from Highbury Stadium, the club's home for 93 years, to a state-of-the-art venue about 500 meters away. The new home, Emirates Stadium, opened in July 2006 at a cost of about £400 million (\$660 million), boasting a 20,000-plus-seat upgrade. Meanwhile, the old stadium was converted into a high-end apartment complex, Highbury Square, which opened in August 2008.

Mr. Kyprianou relished the chance to spell out his commitment to Arsenal in bricks and mortar. He attended his first Arsenal match at the stadium when he was five. Now, 30 years later, he owns two flats there, a coveted penthouse and the one-bedroom apartment in which he lives, an outlay valued in the region of £1.7 million (\$2.8 million).

"It's private, secure, quiet, very aesthetically pleasing, with parking off the street," said Mr. Kyprianou, who runs a business that provides communications technology to commercial retailers. "And let's not forget—it's Highbury Stadium! I'd happily camp here in winter."

Mr. Kyprianou isn't the only fan able to take advantage of the burgeoning trend for integrating sports venues and housing. Also in London, Leyton Orient Football Club developed its Brisbane Road stadium five years ago, constructing blocks of flats on the four corners of the pitch. Plans are also afoot for a project at the Walthamstow Dog Track in northeast London and, further afield, in Dubai's Stadium Point, a complex next to the city's new cricket arena. The idea was also floated for the redevelopment of Tiger Stadium in Detroit—though ultimately a decision was made to flatten the site.

On the whole, though, the Highbury Square project, comprised of 725 flats in North London that range in price from £250,000 to £1.5 million, is largely a unique one, bucking the usual preference, as at Tiger Stadium or the Brooklyn Dodgers' Ebbets Field in New York, for demolishing old stadiums entirely.

Never before has a football club so eagerly sought to maintain the link with its former home as Arsenal did at Highbury, where the benefit was historical preservation—the East and West stands happen to be listed buildings protected by law—and the added bonus of potential tenants like Mr. Kyprianou. Not only did he buy apartments in the Arsenal complex, he also splashed out when the club auctioned off all the items that were left, from the turf to the bath-taps, before it moved stadiums in 2006.

"The idea was to buy stuff that I would then put into my own property," said Mr. Kyprianou. His arsenal of booty that day included three baths from the changing rooms, the showerheads and taps, soap dispensers and soap holders.

Then there are his "prized possessions": former Arsenal striker Dennis Bergkamp's coat hook and shoe holder. Mr. Kyprianou's shoes fit handily in the holder, while his

own jacket now hangs where Mr. Bergkamp's once was. In total, he estimates that he spent £3,000 at the auction, admitting that he has stretched himself financially to satisfy his love for Arsenal.

The football theme continues throughout the rest of Mr. Kyprianou's flat, with memorabilia adorning the walls. The true *pièce de résistance* is in the bathroom, where a flat-screen television on the wall plays round-the-clock sports news, allowing him to stay informed in even the most private of moments.

The Highbury Square complex, estimated to have cost £150 million, still bears many of the telltale signs of its former guise. The stands were hollowed out, rather than knocked down, and flats built inside the metal shells. Original Art Deco features, most notably the East Stand's red-and-white Arsenal insignia, have been retained. And where once there was a pitch, there now stands a garden, replete with fountains and colored lighting, designed by landscaper Christopher Bradley-Hole. Architects Allies and Morrison have been nominated for a clutch of awards for the site.

But the development of Highbury Stadium has not been without challenges. Though sales have been steady, occupancy rates remain only around the 70% mark, according to the club. In September, Arsenal sold a tranche of nearly 150 apartments to real-estate group London and Stamford Property at a discount to market value of 20%, with cashflow problems blamed. A spokesman for Arsenal declined to comment on the specifics of the deal. Financially, at least, the stadium move may not have been entirely successful for the club.

Despite the business risks, though, the decision to convert the old stadium into apartments has changed the life of Mr. Kyprianou, who finally has found an apartment that's a match made in heaven. Waking up every day to look out over his club's former home is the stuff of boyhood dreams.

"I didn't sleep for the first week I moved in here," he said, smiling as he sat on a comfortable leather sofa in his Highbury Square home. "I just put my face to the window and looked out, in awe of the place."

But those fans without Mr. Kyprianou's means were sad to see the old stadium go—and now are tempted by a dream they can't live out. "They'd ripped it all out, smashed all the windows in, cut big holes in it and it was a bit depressing," said Pete Krige, a season-ticket holder who stood gazing through the entrance of the new complex. Now Mr. Krige, who lives in a terraced house around the corner, admits the new flats make him proud to be an Arsenal fan, though it's all a bit bittersweet. "They've done a fantastic job with the place," he said. "I'd love to live here."

Though largely ecstatic about his new home, Mr. Kyprianou laments that other residents in the complex do not share his commitment to Arsenal. Other true fanatics, he says, have been left peering at the gate—and Highbury Square has been infiltrated by traitors.

"I know there's a Liverpool supporter here, and a Manchester United supporter, because I've seen them wearing their shirts," he said. "It's a bit of a slap in the face."

—James Appell is a writer based in London.



Clockwise from top left: The façade of Arsenal's old Highbury Stadium is part of the new apartment complex known as Highbury Square; Steven Kyprianou in his new Highbury Square flat, with former Arsenal striker Dennis Bergkamp's coat hook behind him on the door; a view of Highbury Square from above.

James Appell, www.highburysquare.com (2)

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East German guards threw open Berlin Wall checkpoints on Nov. 9, 1989, and jubilant crowds began dismantling the wall in the days that followed.

Hammer, no sickle

How the fall of the Berlin Wall and communism's collapse reshaped Europe

BY WILLIAM ANTHONY HAY

BENJAMIN DISRAELI described the Franco-Prussian War that brought about Germany's unification in 1871 as "the German revolution, a greater political event than the French."

It turned out to be a shrewd claim, given the two world wars that followed. But the German reunification of 1989 seems less a revolution in Disraeli's sense than a restoration. Rather than setting into motion yet another round of great-power rivalry, the end of Germany's division brought about changes that extended democratic stability through Eastern and Central Europe. That Europe is no longer a flashpoint in world politics is a measure of just how successful the transformation has been.

In "1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe," Mary Elise Sarotte charts the events of that momentous year and their astonishing effects. With the collapse of East Germany's communist dictatorship, Helmut Kohl, West Germany's chancellor, shrewdly played events to the advantage of the West. He managed to absorb the "other" Germany within the Federal Republic despite resistance from the Soviet Union and other European powers. Mr. Kohl found an invaluable partner in George H.W. Bush and James Baker, Mr. Bush's secretary of state, both of whom saw a democratic Germany within NATO as part of a structure that would preserve both American influence and European stability.

But the full story shows how con-

tingent the transition was. Leadership, as we know, must not only manage crises but also avert them, often in conditions of uncertainty. Conditions in 1989 were uncertain indeed.

In the late 1980s, the Soviet bloc was engaging in a process of slow reform, but the possibility of repression was never far away. East Germany remained the most authoritarian Soviet satellite. Its leaders feared that Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of *Perestroika*—a cautious loosening of Communist Party control over the economy and political life—would unleash forces impossible to control. They were right to worry. The citizens of Eastern Europe were already restless, seeing ever more vividly—thanks in part to global technology—how materially de-

"That Europe is no longer a flashpoint in world politics is a measure of just how successful the transformation has been."

prived they were, compared with the West, and how unfree.

China's crackdown on protesters at Tiananmen Square on June 3, 1989, provided an alternative to *Perestroika* that fit more closely with the history of Communist rule. But East German authorities—in a fatal miscalculation—failed to seize on it; at a tipping-point moment, they chose not to repress mass protests

in Leipzig on Oct. 9, 1989. Western television captured the size of the demonstrations and the lack of a firm response—and momentum shifted dramatically to the East German public. Meanwhile, for the government, the cost of repression grew, making a "Chinese solution" increasingly unlikely. Several Eastern European regimes began making concessions that included opening their borders to the West. The spirit of rebellion reached its height on Nov. 9, when the Berlin Wall fell.

Few welcomed the change. A French novelist captured the general sentiment by writing that he loved Germany so much that he was glad there were two of them. François Mitterrand and Margaret Thatcher both joined Mr. Gorbachev in opposing German unification. The U.S., for its part, had long embraced a policy of preferring the divided-Germany status quo.

The U.S. became more engaged after Nov. 9, however, and Mr. Bush ended up having the fewest qualms, among Western leaders, about reunification. Mr. Baker privately noted that for the past 40 years America had wanted a free Europe; with a united Germany, he saw, the U.S. would have a greater role than Mr. Gorbachev in Europe's destiny.

Thus Mr. Bush became Mr. Kohl's partner in overcoming the resis-

tance to German reunification. He and his American ally had the advantage of a clear objective: democracy, with a market-based economy for all of Germany and, it was hoped, for the rest of the Eastern Bloc, too. The moment for repression had passed, and West Germany's prosperity appealed to East Germans more than their old system did.

Mr. Kohl persistently caught Mr. Gorbachev and other resistant leaders off-balance, presenting successive *faits accomplis* that defined the new reality. When Mr. Mitterrand dropped his opposition, in the hopes of gaining German backing for French ambitions in Europe, Mrs. Thatcher found herself marginalized. Mr. Kohl also chipped away at Mr. Gorbachev's objections, eventually even winning his acceptance of a united Germany's continued membership in NATO.

At home, Mr. Kohl used the skills of a ward healer to play German politicians off one another and to align himself with his supporters in the East. Monetary union—requiring a one-to-one exchange rate for the deutsche mark, despite huge differences in the value of East and West Germany's currency—was a potent lure. It helped sell the idea that East Germany could be absorbed into existing West German structures.

Indeed, money played a key part in the whole process. Mr. Kohl realized that Mr. Gorbachev would insist on payment for his concessions. The Soviet Union was feeling severe economic strains, and it could not count on either the U.S. or major Eu-

ropean countries for help. The burden thus fell on Germany, which promised the Soviets generous loans and other financial guarantees.

The costs of reunification—combined with such checkbook diplomacy—hobbled the German economy for a generation, making Germany anything but the superpower that many had feared. Indeed, worries about a reunited Germany were appeased, in part, by the crippling burdens that the country bore merely to end its own division.

Ms. Sarotte makes clear that 1989 was a hinge moment that, unlike 1871, moved history in a better direction. Despite the literal costs to Germany, the events she describes brought considerable benefits—and not only to the deprived East. German reunification became a model for peaceful transfer. NATO and the European Union pressed aspiring members to match Germany's standards of transparency and to institute the rule of law, easing the transition from totalitarianism.

Many analysts predicted a return to the instability of the 1920s and 1930s or the pre-1914 rivalry among great powers. Instead, they saw peace, rising living standards and spreading democracy. A beneficent European order that collapsed with World War I returned when the Berlin Wall fell. It is an achievement well worth celebrating.

—William Anthony Hay, a historian at Mississippi State University, is the author of "The Whig Revival."

Letters paint portrait of van Gogh

Collection of correspondence dispels key myths associated with the Dutch artist's life and work

BY PAUL LEVY

AMSTERDAM AT LEAST SINCE the advent of cheap color reproduction in the 1960s, Vincent van Gogh has been a front-runner for the title of the world's most popular artist, with millions of copies of his paintings "Sunflowers" and "The Starry Night" decorating student walls everywhere.

You can't miss the irony of such posthumous fame for an artist who sold only a single painting in his lifetime. The view of the mad, almost possessed genius springs from the bad 1934 Irving Stone novel based on van Gogh's letters, "Lust for Life," and from the less bad 1956 MGM film of it starring Kirk Douglas. More recently we've had the tender, sad van Gogh of Don McLean's 1972 song, "Vincent" (which begins "Starry, starry night").

Now a landmark six-volume edition of his letters (Thames & Hudson, £325-£395, www.vangoghletters.org) and some exhibitions based on it, argues that we've got Vincent wrong. Fifteen years of scholarship by a trio of curators at the Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam—Leo Jansen, Hans Luijten and Nienke Bakker—have arrived at very different conclusions from the 820 autographed letters by the artist—about 600 of them to his art-dealer brother, Theo—and 80 written to van Gogh. Though these letters have never been out of print since first published in English in 1958, the new edition dispels some of the key points of the van Gogh myth.

Born in 1853, the second of six children of a clergyman of the Dutch Reformed Church, Vincent van Gogh worked from the young age of 16 for a firm of art-dealers in the Hague and London, before becoming a missionary in a wretched Belgian coal-mining district. At the age of 27 he decided to teach himself to become an artist. In a career that lasted only 10 years before he shot himself in 1890, he produced more than 800 paintings and 1,200 drawings. A prodigious, compulsive letter writer, he often illustrated his letters with a sketch of work he'd already done (probably to justify himself to Theo, who was supporting him financially). He was a genuinely good writer—in three languages, Dutch, French and English.

Physically, the letters are extremely fragile, and opportunities for the public to see the actual autographed copies of them are rare. There is an exhibition of 120 of the letters at the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam until Jan. 3. The museum has rearranged its own very large permanent collection of paintings, which includes most of the iconic works—"The Potato Eaters," "Sunflowers," "Irises," the paintings of reapers and sowers, the chair and the famous portraits and self-portraits—so that the letters can be seen alongside the works he was writing about.

Amsterdam



2009 The Press Association (2)



Top, a letter from Vincent van Gogh to his brother Theo (1882). Bottom, van Gogh's 'Self Portrait as an Artist' (1888) in Amsterdam.

Then, at the Royal Academy in London from Jan. 23 to April 18, curator Ann Dumas will show 35 letters in the context of a mighty loan exhibition of 65 paintings and 30 drawings that explore the themes of the letters. Some of the pieces, which are on loan from public and private collections all over the world, are well known, and some are being exhibited for the first time. The curators say this may well be the last time the letters can ever be shown to the public; it will also be the first major van Gogh exhibition in London for more than 40 years.

Ms. Dumas calls her show "The Real Van Gogh: The Artist and his Letters." The title of the exhibition is a tribute to the scholarship of the editors, which, she says, allows us now to see van Gogh as he really was. The letters are so good, she

says, that they have intrinsic literary worth. They reveal the originality of his ideas about art; his theories of complimentary colors; his passion for Japanese woodcuts; his admiration for Jean-François Millet and Eugène Delacroix; his use of a perspective frame, which he discarded when he became skilled enough to do without it; his immersion in religion, until he felt able to do without it as well; but also his deeply Protestant understanding and appreciation of scripture. They indicate the vast reach of his reading. Though he left school at 15, he was hardly a working-class dropout: he had been home-schooled by a governess, and then attended a boarding school.

When van Gogh turned 16, his uncle got him a job with the art dealer Goupil & Cie in the Hague. After four years of training, Goupil sent him to England, where he lived in South London, and, at 20, earned more than his father did. Here he fell in love with and was rejected by his landlady's daughter, and succumbed to religious mania. He was sent to a Paris dealer, but began to despise the commercial side of art and was sacked in April 1876. Back in England, the letters record his time as a substitute teacher, then as a Methodist minister's assistant, "preaching the Gospel everywhere," working in a bookshop, translating parts of the Bible into Dutch, French and English and going to Amsterdam to study theology.

It seems obvious with hindsight that he was mentally unstable. Yet Messrs. Jansen and Luijten are cau-

tious about saying that the letters confirm the now-popular view that Vincent had bipolar disorder. He was diagnosed with epilepsy, though; and they said that at that time, symptoms such as mania and depression might have been ascribed to epilepsy. Their research tells us that in the notorious incident, van Gogh sliced off only a small bit of his ear; and that he never remembered his bouts of manic agitation. When he and Paul Gauguin conducted what he saw as the utopian experiment of living in the Yellow House in Arles, he was by no means as poor as in the myth. Theo made him an allowance of 300 French francs a month in 1888, considerably more than the postmaster, Joseph Roulin (whose entire family Vincent painted) had to support his wife and three children.

When Ms. Dumas displays some of the swirling, thickly impasto'd, turbulent Saint-Rémy paintings done shortly before his suicide, made in the frenzy of madness according to the standard myth, she'll point out that the letters indicate a calm spirit; and that, indeed, he never made a painting—or wrote a letter—during his bouts of illness.

The new edition of the letters depict Vincent as a rational artist, but a troubled, though superlatively talented, modern man. Above all, the letters are a remedy for critical judgment jaded by a million cheap posters: they help us look at the pictures afresh and see the truly great artist who made them.

—Paul Levy is a writer based in Oxfordshire.

Saint Laurent sale, part deux

There's something for everyone at the second Yves Saint Laurent-Pierre Bergé auction, which is set to take place in Paris on Nov. 17-20 and offer household items from Chateau Gabriel, the pair's fairytale retreat on the Normandy coast. The first Yves Saint Laurent-

Collecting

Margaret Studer

Pierre Bergé estate sale, held in February, featured masterpieces of fine art and furniture. It fetched €374 million, making it the most valuable private collection sold at an auction. A 1911 painting by Henri Matisse, the top lot, went for €36 million, a record for the artist.

Part two of the pair's estate sale is less expensive, but no less intriguing, featuring household items from Chateau Gabriel's kitchen, bedroom and beyond. Expected to go for €3 million-€4 million in total, the 1,185 lots in the Christie's sale come not only from Chateau Gabriel, but also from the pair's Parisian apartments and Mr. Saint Laurent's Paris offices. Among the items are furnishings, art, walking sticks, Louis Vuitton and Hermès luggage, framed butterflies, toy soldiers and even Mr. Saint Laurent's Mercedes Benz, estimated at €30,000-€50,000.

Paris designer Jacques Grange, who was responsible for Chateau Gabriel's interior decoration, says the inspiration for the retreat came from the exotic castles created by Ludwig II of Bavaria and also from patrician director Luchino Visconti's film sets, particularly that of "L'innocente" (1976), a film about infidelity and betrayal in the spoiled world of the Italian upper class.

Some of the lots are particularly colorful. An ancient Etruscan terracotta left foot from around the third century B.C. is estimated at €1,000-€1,200, while a double-headed cup from the Congo is pegged to go for €4,000-€6,000. There's also a 19th-century bronze statue of Neptune from Chateau Gabriel's billiard room (estimate: €2,500-€3,500) and a sculpture set of Mr. Saint Laurent's favorite pets, French bulldogs, estimated at €400-€600.

Proceeds from the sale will go to the fight against AIDS.



A double-headed cup from the Congo (estimate: €4,000-€6,000).

Hunting for diamonds in the rough

Looking for an alternative to flashy gems, discerning shoppers turn to black stones and natural cuts

BY JEMIMA SISSONS

WHEN SARAH TAYLOR, a 27-year-old law graduate from London, received an engagement ring, she was more than a little shocked, and not only because her boyfriend proposed on a railway platform in northern Scotland on a rainy Monday morning in March.

"It was black—a band of tiny black diamonds, set in black gold," Ms. Taylor said. "When I finally managed to compose myself and look at the ring, it was exquisite."

Her 30-year-old fiancé, Paul Williams, a teacher, wanted to buy something different, so he opted for a black diamond. "Why go for bog-standard solitaire?" he said. "I wanted something out of the ordinary."

Mr. Williams turned out to be remarkably in touch. Tired of the garish bling that has come to epitomize Champagne-popping yacht hoppers, many shoppers are seeking out more original types of diamonds, with rough cuts or alternative hues—and black diamonds have become a particularly popular choice. Apart from their own distinctive qualities, alternative diamonds are also a better credit-crunch choice: Both rough diamonds and treated, colored diamonds are cheaper than their polished counterparts.

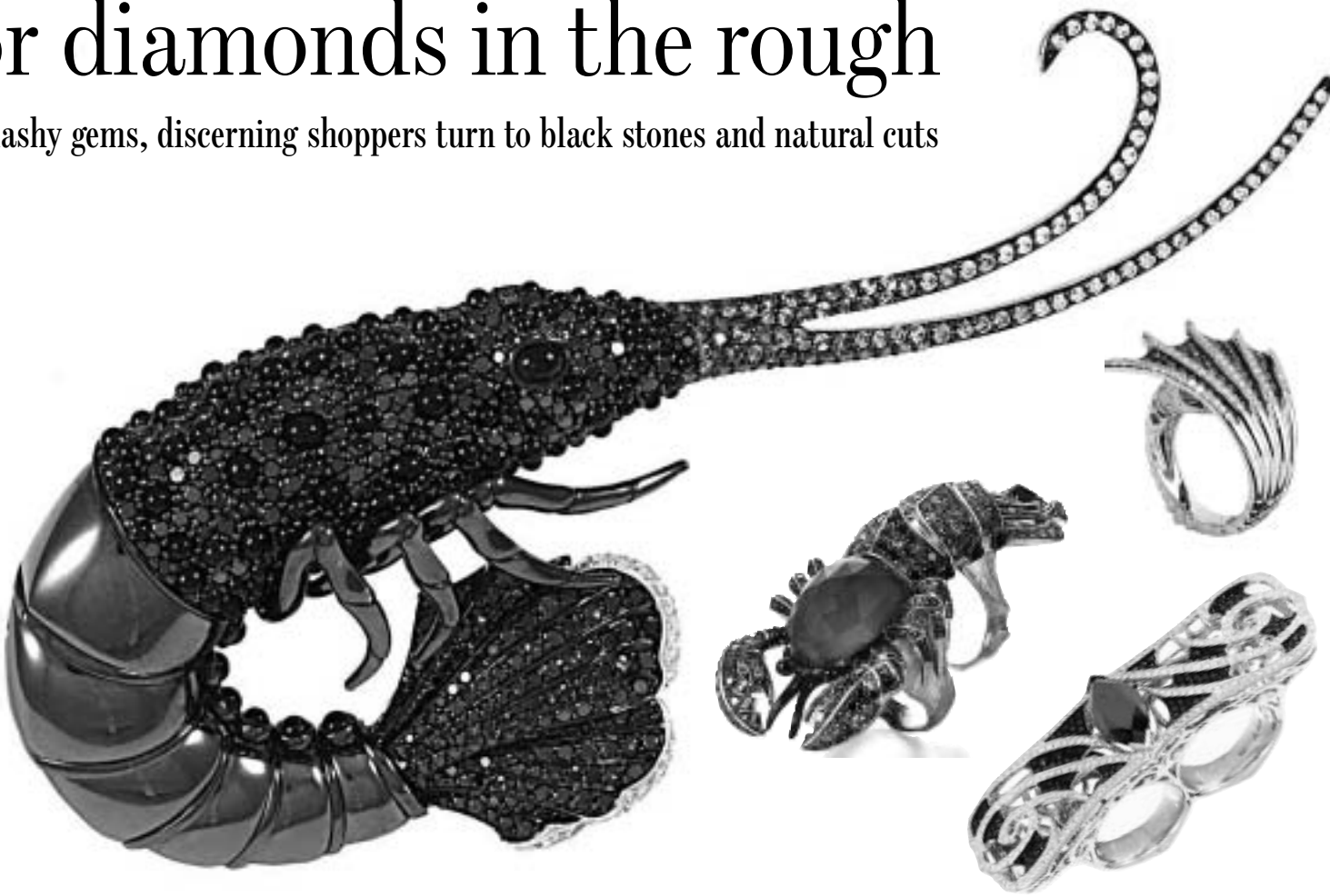
London-based jeweler Ming Lampson, who makes exquisite heirloom-quality pieces for her clients, has noticed a real surge in interest in black diamonds. "In the last three months alone I've made four or five black diamond engagement rings," she said, adding that there is a hunger for unusual stones at the moment. "In the '90s everything used to be white diamond and white metal. Now people are becoming more adventurous."

Ms. Lampson said she likes using black diamonds because they reflect the light in a special way, flashing in a bright white. "If you see someone wearing a black diamond necklace, it catches your eye from the other side of the room," she said. "Unlike a white diamond, there are no rainbows, no internal reflection. They possess this very special opaqueness."

Hollywood also has given black diamonds a boost. Sarah Jessica Parker donned a black diamond strand necklace by American jeweler Itay Malkin in the "Sex and the City" movie, and Adrian Grenier sported a similar one in this season's finale of the TV show "Entourage." At the Baselworld jewelry fair in March—a barometer of what's going to be hot in the coming year—the pairing of black and white diamonds was one of the strongest trends. According to its organizers, the show featured a lot of "unpretentious jewelry"—pieces that didn't draw attention to the wearer and could be worn every day, such as those with dark or rough stones.



Dita Von Teese wears an Art Deco ring with black diamonds (£3,250) by Stephen Webster.



Cult Mayfair-based jeweler Stephen Webster, whose neo-gothic crab rings, poisonous necklaces and knuckle dusters are worn by gothic-inclined celebrities, fashionistas and socialites, sees the shift in trend as part of a cultural zeitgeist. "Black diamonds are about dark glamour, which is perfect for today," Mr. Webster says. "There is a huge craze for the romantic, grown-up goth, symbolized by interest in [vampire TV] programs like 'True Blood.' I think this look has become quite seductive." Mr. Webster says that one of his clients—a Russian art collector—has commissioned him to make a £20,000 vampire ring that will include black diamonds. Mr. Webster added that black diamonds have captured another, previously untapped audience: "Earlier this year I made a bespoke black diamond tie-bar for Mickey Rourke, and Russell Brand is a real fan of our black-diamond pieces. Men are going mad for them—it's the acceptable non-bling way to wear jewelry."

Black diamonds have a storied history. In medieval Italy, they were known as the "stones of reconciliation." A wave of a black diamond in the face of an unhappy spouse would, according to legend, clear things up. The Duke of Wellington admired them for their opaque beauty and reportedly owned a black diamond weighing 12.25 carats. One of the largest black diamonds in the world today—the Spirit of de Grisogono—comes in at a whopping 312 carats.

These show-stoppers are genuine black diamonds, which acquire their gloomy hue naturally because they have high concentrations of dark crystals, such as sulphides. Manufacturers also can treat diamonds to make them black. Modern processes have allowed them to enhance and change the color of poor-quality, muddy diamonds—which would never be sold in their natural state—in a laboratory, using radiation or heating. Both natural and treated black diamonds are much cheaper than your run-of-the-mill diamond. Whereas a one-carat white diamond can range from £3,000 to £8,000, a natural black diamond costs £250-£450 a carat, and treated black diamonds start at only £80-£120 a carat. Diamonds treated to become colors other than black cost from £500 to £2,000 a carat. (The real thing will cost you a small fortune—"fancy color" natural diamonds, such as red, blue and yellow, are the most expensive in the world).

Rough diamonds are also becoming stylish. In keeping with more austere times, these natural stones are admired for their

raw, organic quality. Worn by royals hundreds of year ago, before polishing techniques were mastered, they are enjoying a revival as people look to adorn themselves with less ostentatious, subtler rocks.

London jeweler Leonardo Pieroni has been using rough diamonds for more than 20 years. His beautiful, simple designs—a gold band with a single stone is one of his signature styles—are a way to own diamonds without breaking the bank. A four-carat rough diamond gold ring, for example, fetches £3,200—much cheaper than a polished rock of the same size, which would go for £10,500 to £250,000, depending on its quality.

Recently, however, rough diamonds have started to go luxe too. De Beers's Talisman collection, which is based on rough diamonds and features beautiful, rustic-style medallions, pendants and rings, is definitely not a budget option: A pair of yellow gold earrings containing 741 carats of rough and polished stones costs £16,500.

Another leader in rough-luxe diamond jewelry is American company Diamond in the Rough. Started four years ago by New York-based Anjanette Clisura and Daniel Eskapa, who felt there was something missing in the market, the company now sells its jewelry around the world. "I think that rough is so appealing because you get to see the stone exactly how nature has formed it," said Ms. Clisura, who became in-

Left to right: Jewels Verne shrimp brooch (£30,000); Jewels Verne lobster ring (£17,000); vortex diamond couture knuckle duster ring (£15,340); and Jewels Verne 'Bit on the Side' ring (£5,800), all made by Stephen Webster with black diamonds.

terested in rough gems over 10 years ago, when she was working for diamond miner Leviev. "So many years of heat, pressure and natural gasses have turned carbon into this amazing stone with all its natural crystal shapes. It has a perfect raw beauty."

Diamond in the Rough sells its jewelry at the Moussaieff stores in London and Geneva, with prices starting at £6,000 for a ring with a sizable rough diamond. Many pieces include smaller, polished diamonds as well. "There is a craze for everything that is natural these days, and these are something different, a conversation piece," said Alisa Moussaieff, Moussaieff's managing director and owner.

What's next for jewelry? Baselworld featured an array of purple-hued jewelry made from stones like agate and amethyst. In the U.K., Mayfair jeweler Mr. Webster says people are already searching for something edgier. "I've had huge demand for gray diamonds recently," he said. "They're definitely going to be the new black."

—Jemima Sissons is a writer based in London.

Arbitrage

Marc Jacobs Lola perfume

City	Local currency	€
New York	\$92	€62
London	£59	€66
Hong Kong*	HK\$780	€68
Paris	€89	€89
Frankfurt*	€89	€89
Rome	€91	€91



* only available mid-November

Note: Prices of 100-ml bottle, plus taxes, as provided by retailers in each city, averaged and converted into euros.

Sewing a sequel at Vionnet

AS "ROCKY VII" PROVES, it's hard to live up to the original but even harder to abandon an established brand. This is true of fashion houses, too, which is why we're essentially up to "Dior V," "Givenchy V" and "Halston VI: The Designer Strikes Back."

On Style CHRISTINA BINKLEY

Now another former haute couture house is seeking ready-to-wear immortality with new backers and a fresh designer. Testing the limits of the strategy, the brand in question is Vionnet, a masterful label that you probably have never heard of.

Its founding designer, Madeleine Vionnet shuttered her business in 1939, and it stayed shut for six decades. So while the name is venerated in fashion circles, it's not as if every high-school girl is dying to own a Vionnet bag.

Yet earlier this year, Matteo Marzotto bought the rights to the Vionnet brand with his friend Gianni Castiglioni, chief executive of Marni. Mr. Marzotto is the sixth-generation scion of an Italian textile family and the former chief executive of Valentino (now "Valentino III"). "We have to re-interpret a bright past, but not reproduce it," he says.

The reintroduction of Vionnet comes just in time to take advantage of the first-ever Vionnet retrospective at the Louvre's Musée des Arts Decoratifs in Paris. The exhibit of 130 dresses, with interactive explanations of Vionnet's techniques, runs through Jan. 31. The show also may remind the public that Coco Chanel was not the only designer who pioneered today's modern, comfortable clothing.

Madeleine Vionnet popularized the forgiving bias cut and dispensed with buttons, zippers and hooks in favor of draping and wrapping fabric in comfortable forms; she dressed Garbo and Dietrich. She created clothing for women who traveled, and her designs were so modern and influential that you can find bits of them—wrap looks and drop-waist dresses, for instance—in almost any store today. Her work is studied in fashion schools with a reverence akin to aviation's regard for Charles Lindbergh.

Ms. Vionnet was paranoid when it came to copies—she pioneered dress-design copyrighting methods, cutting down on knock-offs. And in 1952, she donated her entire archive of dress samples, patterns and photographs to what is now the Musée des Arts Decoratifs. The museum's curator, Pamela Golbin, grins at the fortune. "We've got the goods," she says. "She gave us the entire memory of her house."

The donation meant something different for Vionnet's new designer, Rodolfo Paglialunga: He lacked the benefit of an archive, bringing a whole new meaning to "inspired by." He worked from textbooks, photographs and anything else he could get his hands on.

Ms. Golbin says she toured Mr. Marzotto, Mr. Castiglioni and his wife (Marni designer Consuelo Castiglioni), and even Mr. Marzotto's mother through the exhibit. But Mr. Paglialunga says he was too shy to request a special tour. "I just went very quietly myself," he says.

"After I saw that, I was very

scared ... she's influenced everything," the designer says of Ms. Vionnet's work.

Thirteen years of designing women's wear for Miuccia Prada have given him a background in independent women, though. Vionnet's spring 2010 collection shown in Paris last month walks a fine line between homage and modern life. Largely created from squares of fabric (right out of Vionnet textbooks), long tunics can also be worn as short dresses. Sleeves are tied like scarves at the shoulders, and the scarf becomes a motif for shoes.

These are attractive clothes that could be tossed in a suitcase. But because they're labeled Vionnet, they must be compared with the originals. The new Vionnet is heavier and less elegant, without the magic of

the original.

Of course, the current Givenchy under Riccardo Tisci bears no resemblance to the former label of Hubert de Givenchy. It's just a brand—and a successful one. Brands like Nina Ricci, Halston and Rochas recently have been revolving doors for designers who set aside their artistic druthers to channel someone else's. Sometimes, as in the case of Balenciaga with designer Nicolas Ghesquière, investors hit gold.

This isn't the first attempt to revive Vionnet. Previous investors tried it in 2006 and 2007. So we're really talking here about "Vionnet IV." Mr. Marzotto, too, worries about missteps; as he details his plans, he adds, "I'm still crossing fingers every morning for Vionnet—crossing fingers with both hands."



Left to right: a 1936 Vionnet gown; Madeleine Vionnet; a design from the new Vionnet.

Vionnet



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Frank Heuer

Lobster Safari

Where foodies on the hunt for fresh seafood come out of their shell

By Paul Ames

Flatön, Sweden

LOW, BLACK CLOUDS swallowed the cliff-top church, hailstones like ball bearings pounded the little boat and the wind whipped up the slate-gray waves into a frenzy. All of a sudden, the Swedish lobster safari seemed not such a good idea.

Not only were the elements against us, the seafood wasn't on our side either. Most of the baskets hauled with much manpower from the seabed were either empty or filled with a derisory selection of hermit crabs, undersized cod or starfish. When eventually the sight of our first lobster brought a cheer from everyone on board, the caviar-like roe glistening on her belly meant we were legally bound to return her to the deep.

"Don't worry, they have hot dogs," skipper Andreas Sveaberg joked, referring to our hotel restaurant, as the prospects of a self-caught meal dimmed.

Lobster safaris, which give landlubbers the chance to pluck their own lobster dinner from the sea, are offered by several hotels along Sweden's Bohuslän coast. This intricate network of 8,000 islands, countless inlets and scattered fishing villages is strung for 200 kilometers along Sweden's western seaboard from the Norwegian border south to Gothenburg, which has developed a reputation as country's gourmet seafood capital.

On a fine day the views here are spectacular, with innumerable, moss-covered skerries emerging through flat, blue waters bathed in soft, northern light. Communities made up of wooden fishermen's cottages painted mustard, white or deep Falu red, are strung along the coast. They include Ingrid Bergman's retreat in Fjällbacka, the windswept old herring port of Klädesholmen and fashionable Marstrand, which is situated in the lee of a 17th-century fortress built for defense against Danes and Norwegians.

Scandinavian relations may be more pacific these days, but fishermen along Sweden's west coast still complain about Nordic neighbors stealing their seafood. Lobsters are known as "black gold" in reflection of the price the king of crustaceans fetches on markets in Gothenburg and Stockholm.

For visitors hoping to get a taste of Swedish shellfish mania, the charming Handelsman Flink hotel on the island of Flatön offers a fall package for lobster safaris that starts with a hearty lunch of fish soup and *äggost*, a local dessert that translates as "egg-cheese." Suitably nourished, guests head out with the crew of a nine-meter boat for an afternoon spent pulling lobster traps from the deep. Provided the expedition is successful, the hotel's chef will prepare the lobster for dinner upon return, while you relax in the sauna.

Fortunately, the hotel provides its guests with fluorescent green oilskins, which may not win any prizes for sartorial elegance but will shut out most of the weather screeching down the Skagerrak channel that runs between Sweden, Denmark and Norway on its way to the North Sea.

"Yesterday we had a glorious day: sun, flat seas, lots of lobsters," Mr.



Paul Ames



Thörnströms kök



Jennie Lund



Frank Heuer

Clockwise from left: Handelsman Flink's lobster safari boat in Flatön; freshly boiled Swedish lobster; Håkan Thörnström at his restaurant in Gothenburg; a fishnet at a boathouse in Bohuslän; fisherman Ivan Axelsson runs a lobster safari out of Resö.

Sveaberg, the skipper, explained to one guest who seemed unamused as her surf-tossed complexion began to match the color of her green coveralls. Mr. Sveaberg and his shipmate, both locals from the west coast, had laid the traps days in advance and baited them with herring. Each of the passengers took turns pulling up a trap from the bottom by hand, but once we'd dragged them on board, the professionals took over, carefully extracting the lobsters to ensure that none of the safari-goers' fingers risked claw-induced injury.

Although there was no sign of the weather improving, our luck with the nets began to change when our boat, the Nephrops, edged out of the relatively sheltered waters between Flatön and Bokenäs islands into the mouth of the Gullmaren fjord. By the time we paused for an on-board picnic of coffee and cinnamon buns, we had three of the beauties safely stored on deck. The friendly group of 50-something professionals from Stockholm on our sister boat had done even better with four. Dinner was on.

Swedes claim the salt levels and chilly waters of their west coast are perfect for seafood. In the cold, experts say, shellfish grow more slowly, giving them a sweeter, more intense flavor. "Of all the lobsters I've tried, I think ours have the best quality," says leading Gothenburg chef Håkan Thörnström. "You can't compare it."

Beneath the arches of Gothenburg's fish market lies a dazzling display of pink shrimp, black-tipped crab claws, piles of oysters, crawling live crayfish, gleaming rows of haddock, hake and mackerel and, of course, lobster—either dull, black living specimens or vivid scarlet, fresh from the pot. The market was constructed in 1874 beside the dock in the style of a gothic chapel and is known as the Feskeköja, meaning "fish church."

Traditionally, seafood was served simply and unadorned here. "You cook it plain and you eat it plain," explains Ann Katrin Ljung, food editor of the national daily Expressen. "You don't fuss."

But over the past decade, things have been growing more sophisticated. In 1999, now legendary chef Leif Mannerström won a Michelin star for Sjömagasinet, a fish restaurant housed in a timber-framed waterfront building that served as a warehouse for the Swedish East India Company. From then on, Gothenburg has been on the map as a gastronomic hot spot, where a generation of younger chefs built reputations by combining the region's superlative seafood with seasonal local roots, berries and herbs to produce a fresh take on Swedish traditional cuisine.

Today, Sweden's second city boasts five Michelin star restaurants, with a queue of others tipped to join the constellation of stars. Gothenburg's culinary kudos have helped put this elegant and cultured seaport firmly on Europe's city-trip circuit, as an increasingly number of visitors come to stroll its 18th-century avenues and tree-lined canals.

At the start of the lobster season in late September, the city's top tables compete to honor the "black gold" from the coast with specially crafted lob-

ster menus. At Mr. Thörnström's eponymous restaurant tucked away in a residential neighborhood behind the Museum of Art, this year's lobster menu kicked off with vanilla-glazed lobster claw with Jerusalem artichokes. It moved on to braised lobster with veal sweetbread and truffle, followed by lobster tail saffron rice with squid and mussels, and then a selection of Swedish cheese that includes "granbarksost" wrapped in the bark of Christmas trees. Finally, it finished with rum-flambéed pineapple.

Food like this doesn't come cheap, although the kronor's recent slide against the euro has made Sweden more affordable for visitors from points south. Pound and dollar holders must still dig deep. Combined with a wine menu that matches each course with top-class tipples from Germany, New Zealand, California, Cognac and the Loire Valley, dinner for one at Thörnströms Kök came to 1,520 kronor (\$218).

Catching your own lobster is not exactly a low-cost alternative. The safari package, which includes a one-night hotel stay, costs 3,500 kronor (\$503) a head. That's not including drinks, although they did throw in the steaming mug of rum-infused tea waiting to greet our bedraggled group as we returned from our expedition. An even warmer welcome was awaiting our lobsters. Set up on the jetty was a huge cauldron of bubbling broth.

Though the Lobster Institute, based in Maine, says lobsters, like insects, do not process pain, animal rights campaigners insist there is evidence that the shellfish suffer. Nonetheless, the successful lobster safari-goers cheerfully lined up to drop their catches into the pot. Minutes later the lobsters were lifted from the bouillon, shells transformed from dull black to peppered. In the wooden boathouse, we were given a crash course in how to remove claws and carapace cleanly, offered a nibble on the spindly legs, then sent off to warm up in the hotel spa while dinner was prepared.

This being Scandinavia, guests should be prepared to discard their inhibitions and mingle naked in the sauna with their crewmates without turning as scarlet as the lobsters. More difficult was to rewind in the hot tub, contemplating the tempestuous sea view without your mind drifting to the fate of the seafood in their cauldron.

By late September, the Nordic nights come down early and it was dark as we made our way to the hotel restaurant. Our lobster arrived, halved, accompanied by a glass of Pouilly Fumé and adorned only by a bowl of hollandaise—plain, simple and sea-fresh delicious. It was followed by a beautifully presented dish of hake served with our lobster's claws, pork belly, shredded cabbage and pickled cucumber.

After a finale of crème brûlée served with wild berries and a vivid orange sorbet of sea buckthorn and washed down with a honey-scented glass of American ice-wine, sleep came easy despite the gale still blowing outside. The lobster safari seemed like a fine idea after all.

—Paul Ames is a writer based in Brussels.

Where to STAY

Handelsman Flink

A cluster of mustard-colored wooden houses built around an old general store, the hotel is known for its lobster safaris and restaurant. Double with breakfast from 1,780 kronor (€170); lobster safari package, 3,500 kronor p.p. (€335). ☎46-304-550-51 www.handelsmanflink.se

Salt & Sill

Hotel and restaurant situated on floating pontoons on the sea on the fishing island of Klädesholmen, which specializes in herring. Hotel rooms combine modern Scandinavian design with spectacular views of the rocky coast. Doubles with breakfast from 1,590 kronor (€152). ☎46-304-673-480 www.saltosill.se

Hotel Flora

A neat boutique hotel in a canal-side square on the edge of historic central Gothenburg. Doubles with breakfast from 1,050 kronor (€101). ☎46-31-138-616 www.hotelflora.se

Hotell Liseberg Barken Viking

Built in 1907, the sailing ship Viking once carried cargos of Swedish timber to Australia. Now it's moored permanently in Gothenburg, converted into a hotel. Doubles from 1,596 kronor (€153). ☎46-31-635-800 www.liseberg.com

Where to EAT

Thörnströms Kök

Chef Håkan Thörnström, who makes modern Swedish cuisine based on local ingredients, has cooked for the 60th birthday of King Carl Gustaf and the Nobel banquet. ☎46-31-162-066 www.thornstromskok.com

Swedish Taste

Home of what is arguably Gothenburg's most inventive cuisine. Chef Magnus Lindström serves up scallop terrine or wild duck with ginger and sea buckthorn. ☎46-31-132-780 www.swedishtaste.com

Sjömagasinet

Supreme seafood on Gothenburg's riverfront. The late New York Times journalist and food writer R.W. Apple Jr. listed it as one of his top 10 restaurants. Chef Leif Mannerström is so well known in Sweden that he has appeared on a postage stamp. ☎46-31-775-5920 www.sjomagasinet.se

Smaka

Known for the best meatballs in Gothenburg, this neighborhood restaurant serves Swedish classics like elk steak or 'old man's mix' (cured sprats and egg on rye bread). ☎46-31-132-247 www.smaka.se

—Paul Ames



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The man behind the magic

BY KATI KRAUSE

WHEN THE PORTUGUESE magician Luis de Matos made an elephant and a Ferrari disappear in front of 12,000 people in a Lisbon sports stadium for the Expo '98, when the Spaniard Mag Lari cut a person in eight pieces in his 2007 show Secrets, and when a magical chest spat fire, smoke and objects during a recent production at the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya, Carles Ferrandiz was never far away.

He might shy away from the lime-light, but Mr. Ferrandiz's invisible hand is behind some of the most spectacular magic tricks performed in Spain and the rest of Europe over the past 40 years. Together with his team of six, the owner of the Mágicus magic shop in Barcelona manufactures devices for magicians and theater productions, invents magic tricks and makes objects and people disappear upon request.

Mr. Ferrandiz is the son of Spanish magician José María Ferrandiz, and as a young man he was disenchanted with magic for the disruptive effect it had on their family. He decided to become a mechanical engineer—only to find himself manufacturing pieces for his father's shop. The two formed a partnership, and Mr. Ferrandiz warmed to the subject. Now 61 years old, he has made more things disappear than he can remember.

We met Carles Ferrandiz in his Barcelona office, replete with magical devices, ancient books and diplo-

mas proclaiming him a member of associations like the International Brotherhood of Magicians. His Mágicus shop can be visited at c/Diputació, 274, in Barcelona.

Q: How would you define your job title?

You could call me an artisan of magic or a creator of illusions.

Q: That sounds very artistic.

Yes, but when you do a job for a professional showman the work isn't that artistic anymore. Imagination ends when the show begins.

Q: What do your commissions usually look like?

The most creative work is when a professional comes to me with an idea but doesn't know how to achieve it. That's imagination and invention. It's also more fun and challenging than inventing devices for the shop. Any commission depends on the circumstances—money, space, the situation on stage. For example, what if the stage is empty? I can do magic but not wonders.

Q: Because if it's empty...?

If there are other people or items, you have more possibilities. I need dancers, music, light, or at least a couple of plants!

Q: So the difficulty of a production doesn't depend on the size of the object?

No, it's about the situation and location. It can be easier to produce a

truck full of TV sets in a convention center than one TV set on a football pitch.

Q: What has been your most difficult commission?

That was the presentation of a new Volkswagen Golf convertible in the now-defunct Sala Scala theater in Barcelona, around 1990. We had to make the car vanish and reappear. It was extremely complicated because the theater's layout was really weird. The stage was 30 meters long but very narrow and grew out into the room, which meant there were people sitting around it. The same presentation was then taken to Madrid and I spent a month adapting it to the different stage.

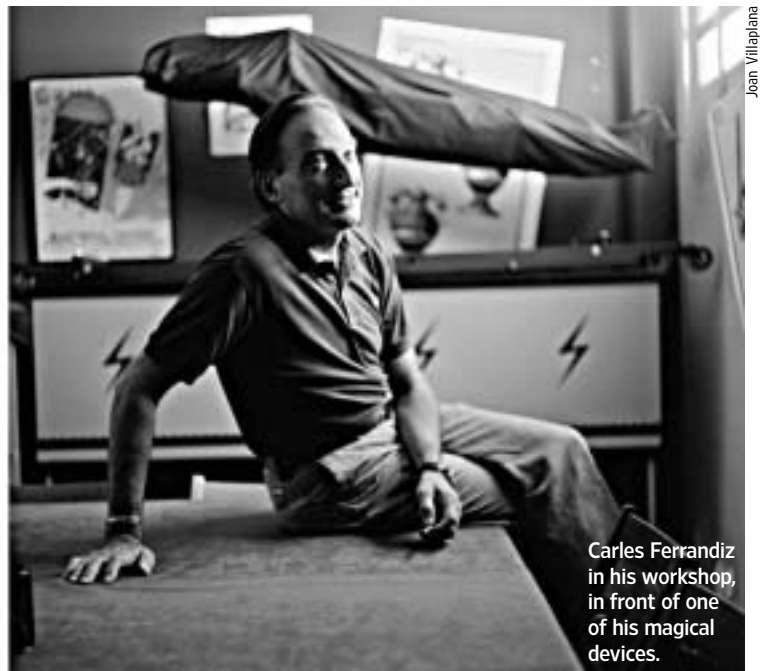
Q: How much do you charge to make a car vanish?

About €20,000.

Q: Do you go to see the shows where your devices are being used?

Of course, I try to go as often as possible. I find it interesting. And I learn: sometimes artists, when they rehearse with the device, change things. That gives me great satisfaction. People often ask me whether a magician can still impress me, since I know all the tricks. I reply that if the show is good, I'm impressed. On the other hand, when I see a bad show, I suffer.

Q: Do you think that magic is an art form in decline?



Carles Ferrandiz in his workshop, in front of one of his magical devices.

Absolutely not. What has changed is the way of performing magic. There are fewer shows, but the problem is not magic: there are fewer shows in general. There is hardly any variety left. I don't think it's a lack of interest; it has to do with an interpretation, taken by the authorities, of what is culture and what isn't. I think juggling is as much culture as the recital of poems—if it is done well. Culture doesn't always have to be sublime and deep.

Q: Do you think there are cultural differences in the world regarding magic?

I think that people all over the world enjoy seeing a good show.

However, the less knowledgeable they are, the more magical the show becomes. I've got old books on magic here that teach ways of doing tricks that would be impossible today. Nobody would buy it.

Q: So increased knowledge has made magic look less magical?

Yes, but it has also led magicians to put in more effort. Of course it has lost something wonderful: the innocence. But I think that before, magicians didn't use to be artists—they were simply people performing tricks that no one else knew. Today's great magicians are first and foremost artists.

—Kati Krause is a writer based in Barcelona.

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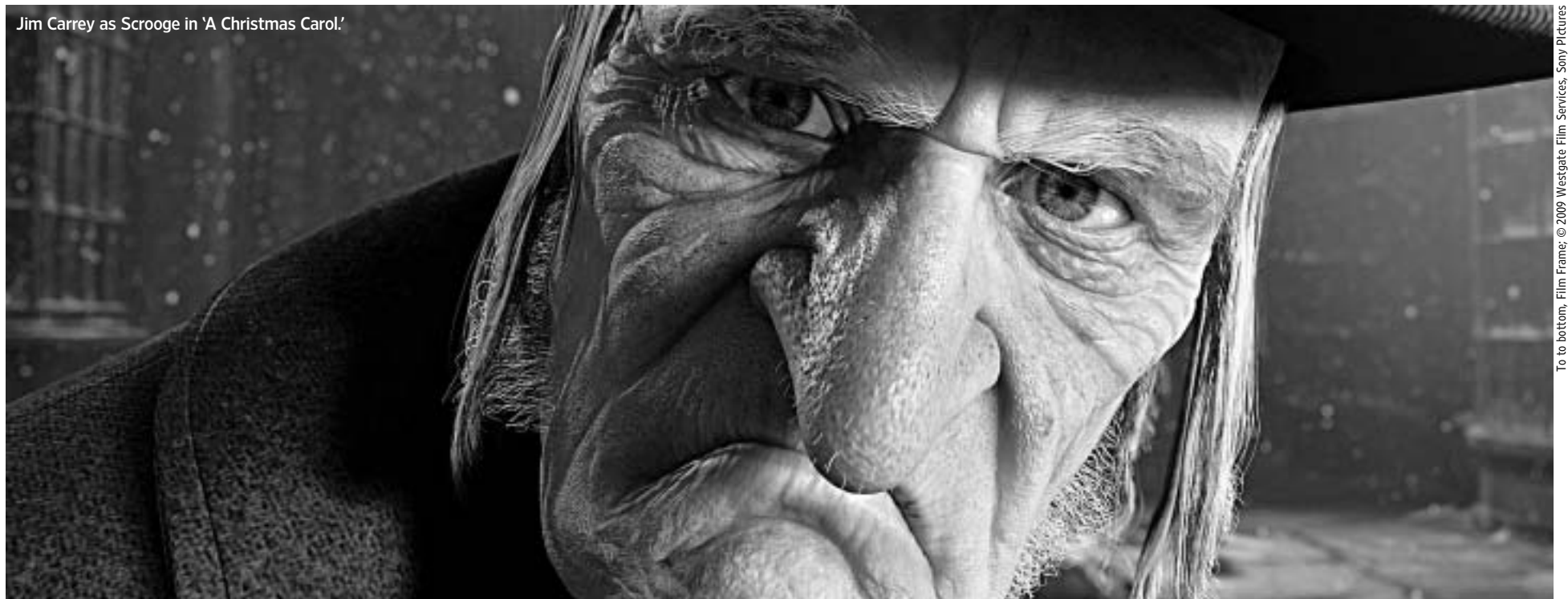
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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

EUROPE



Jim Carrey as Scrooge in 'A Christmas Carol.'

To top: Film Frame; © 2009 Westgate Film Services, Sony Pictures

'A Christmas Carol': What the dickens?

TO PUT IT bluntly, if Scroogely, Disney's 3-D animated version of "A Christmas Carol" is a monstrosity. The pace is predominantly glacial—that alone would be enough to cook the goose of this premature holiday turkey—and the tone is joyless, despite an extended passage of bizarre laughter, several dazzling flights of digital fancy, a succession of striking images and Jim Carrey's voicing of Scrooge plus

unnature of that technology. Like "The Polar Express" and "Beowulf," which were also directed by Mr. Zemeckis, "A Christmas Carol" employs a motion-capture process that translates the movements of live actors into fantasy images. For its detractors, including me, motion capture has long been synonymous with a special sort of semi-lifelessness—body language that is vaguely impoverished, faces with limited mobility and dead eyes.

In the global marketing push for his new film, the director has dismissed such problems as essentially solved. But they haven't been solved at all; they've only been mitigated, and partially masked by the novelty value of 3-D. Motion capture remains an impediment to capturing emotion. "A Christmas Carol" soars only when Scrooge is in temporal transit—one lyrical sequence flies him back to his boyhood village. And some of the action, as well as a cataclysmic climax fueled by hellfires and hellwinds, will scare little kids out of their little wits.

Dickens framed his novella as a moral tale. Disney sells it as a thrill ride—"The Polar Express" with a really bad Santa. Well, it's a free country, and a public-domain property. Nevertheless, you can almost see the various rooms on the Disneyland ride-to-be while the movie makes its way from Victorian past to fun-house future. (Maybe the ride's sound design-to-be is why the Ghost of Christmas Present laughs so long and maniacally.) In the turgid stretches between action sequences, the drama, or what's left of it, makes its way with such ponderous, self-important artistry that Scrooge's present threatens to become an

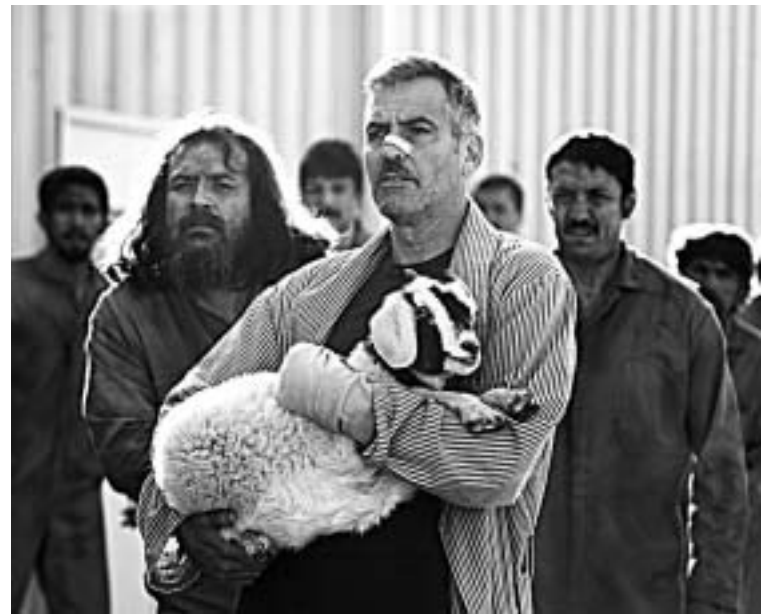
eternity. This sad excuse for family entertainment tries to enshrine a classic while defacing it.

'The Men Who Stare At Goats'
"The Men Who Stare At Goats" stars George Clooney, Jeff Bridges, Ewan McGregor and Kevin Spacey. All of them look like they're having lots of fun, and their enjoyment promises to be infectious. After a while, though, the only sign of infection may be an urge to squirm, followed by nagging doubts. You may wonder if this screen version of the book of the same name is as unfunny and strangely mushy as it seems, or if you're simply failing to lock in on its frequency. But there's no steady signal to lock in on, no firm ground beneath the story of a secret U.S. Army unit that was dedicated to developing psychic powers. It's a goof about goofballs, a comedy that takes self-pleasure wherever it can be found.

Jon Ronson, the book's author, said the story was true; ostensibly sane citizens really did try to create a force of American soldiers with superpowers, warrior monks who could make themselves invisible, walk through walls and, as a training exercise if nothing else, kill a goat by staring at it. Yet demonstrable truth wasn't the issue. The pleasures of the book came from the craziness of the schemes, the fervor of the crackpots who devised them and the steady skepticism of the prose. In the movie, which was directed by Grant Heslov from a screenplay by Peter Straughan, the two main crackpots, played by Mr. Clooney and Mr. Bridges, have become arch charmers, and the tone is New Age whimsy, with absurdist overtones by way of the Coen brothers and Wes Anderson. One of the superpowers under study involves remote viewing by means of extrasensory perception. I wish I could have viewed this movie remotely, or not at all.

'This Is It'
After all the media madness about Michael Jackson over all the years and decades, it comes as bitersweet news—though maybe not sweet, depending on one's attitude toward the late King of Pop—that he lives vividly in "This Is It," a spectacular record of rehearsals for a show that wasn't to be.

Kenny Ortega's film is more than



George Clooney stars in 'The Men Who Stare At Goats.'

that, of course. It's a series of testimonials and expressions of love from cast members, many of whom had idolized Michael when they were kids. It's a pastiche that pulls together live footage and pieces of a marvelous black-and-white homage to Hollywood that was to be played against "Smooth Criminal" in the show—the Rita Hayworth of "Gilda" tossing Michael her glove, Humphrey Bogart scowling at him or firing a tommy gun. And it's an expertly packaged—brilliantly packaged, considering how quickly the job was done—phantasmagoria that emphasizes, quite convincingly, the energy that Michael could still draw from whatever was fueling his wraith-thin body.

In most of the footage we see, the star, like the superb professionals around him, already knows all his moves and does them dazzlingly. (Many of those moves must have been as deeply imprinted in his muscles as they were in his tortured psyche.) Nevertheless, "This Is It"—how eerie that the show's bland title could become so tersely apt—gives us a few glimpses of Michael Jackson's struggles during the rehearsal process.

He stops at one point to say, haltingly, "What I'm trying to hear is like a fist in my ear." It's more of a plea than a complaint, and the prob-

lem is resolved simply by reducing the volume in his earpiece. At another point he asks, in a tone that also verges on plaintiveness, "I'm trying to conserve my voice. Please understand." Singers almost always conserve their voice during rehearsals, so his plea falls on sympathetic ears. Still, there's a strong sense of a fragile man at the center of sensory pummeling, trying to conserve what's left of himself.

Film

JOE MORGENSTERN

half a dozen other roles. "Why so coldhearted?" Scrooge's nephew, Fred, asks the old skinflint. The same question could be asked of Robert Zemeckis, who adapted and directed the film, and of the company that financed it. Why was simple pleasure frozen out of the production? Why does the beloved story feel embalmed by technology? And why are its characters as insubstantial as the snowflakes that seem to be falling on the audience?

A catch-all answer—and by now an all-too-familiar one—lies in the



Michael Jackson in 'This Is It.'

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- (500) Days of Summer Belgium, Croatia
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- The Informant! Czech Republic, Germany, Poland
- The Men Who Stare at Goats Greece, Italy, U.K.

Source: IMDB
WSJ.com subscribers can read reviews of these films and others at WSJ.com/FilmReview

Top Picks

Berlin Art Nouveau exhibit crawls with mysterious fauna

BERLIN: The Bröhan Museum, discreetly located across from the city's Charlottenburg Palace, is one of Germany's best niche museums. Blessed with a comprehensive collection of Art Nouveau and Art Deco objects, first assembled by a West Berlin industrialist in the 1960s and '70s, the museum is a knickknack lover's paradise. It is also a serious institution, with a mission to investigate the origins and manifestations of modernity in the decorative arts. This fall, the museum has mounted a special exhibition about the Art Nouveau period, drawing primarily on German sources, called "Peacock, Dragonfly and Bat: Art Nouveau's Mysterious Fauna."

Jugendstil—the German variation of Art Nouveau—became an established style in the last few years of the 19th century, extending an influence throughout northern Europe. Named after a Munich magazine called "Jugend," or "Youth," German Art Nouveau, like Art Nouveau everywhere, tried to break away from stiff, ornate historical styles by deriving inspiration from the natural world. Owing something to the theories of Charles Darwin, and to the Paris of Toulouse-Lautrec, Art Nouveau remade nature's relationship with reality, turning vases, tables and tableware into can-

vasses depicting the sensual side of flora and fauna. Animals had a featured role in the movement, and Jugendstil designers slid them up, down and off the evolutionary ladder, giving them human, plant-like, or even mineral, characteristics.

The curators, reaching into hidden corners of their permanent collection, present animal-themed works that are both hilarious and hypnotic. A sea-green ceramic vase, made around 1900 by Amphora, a now-defunct Bohemian firm, has menacing cat heads around its rim, which function as what could be called predatory mock-handles. A 1903 metal candelabra features a candlestick holder rising, like a cartoon thought bubble, out of a bat's head; while an 1896 glass goblet has dragonfly wings for a stem.

Some of these objects, like porcelain owls meant to resemble sad children, have crossed the dividing line between fun and kitsch. A few, however, appeal to us today as genuine works of art, especially those made by Copenhagen's Royal Porcelain Factory. The single best piece in the show is a Danish decorative plate depicting jellyfish at sea, floating like clouds in the sky.

—J.S. Marcus

Until Feb. 14
www.broehan-museum.de



Shell with coral stems by Johann Lötz Witwe, on show at the Bröhan Museum in Berlin.

Martin Adam, Berlin

Vienna's Kunsthalle revisits 1989; the end of history or the beginning of the future?

VIENNA: In 1989, the Berlin Wall crumbled. But what else happened? A new show at the Kunsthalle, entitled "1989: The End of History or the

Beginning of the Future" helps to answer that question. At the entrance is a series of panels: 1989 around the world, a year in pictures. It shows



'The Big Archive' (1993), installation by Ilya and Emilia Kabakov.

Photo by Jan Verneil © VBK

that peace and bloodless revolution that year didn't stream forth domino-like the world over. But this often wry group show of 35 artists from 20 countries makes connections to 1989's unexpected effects.

The exhibit sidesteps a wholesale condemnation of life under totalitarianism, though there's some of that, too. Ilya and Emilia Kabakov recreate mindless bureaucracy in their installation, "The Big Archive" (1993). A room-sized labyrinth of cubicles, papered over meticulously with sketches and notes, eventually leads the viewer to nothing. In addition to a sense of frustration, what's also created here is a nostalgia for the safe, nearly cozy dimension of communism. Memos are beautifully sketched, points of emphases traced over in pastel felt-tip. The space is timeless and free from the pressures of modern life.

Boris Mikhailov's photo series, "Salt Lake" (1986), is captioned with anecdotes on the absurdities of everyday life. One explains that con-

doms were in short supply in the USSR. Couples would wash them and hang them to dry in their bathrooms for re-use.

The show doesn't stop here, as one might expect, but also extends to more familiar forms of discontent in the West. Seen alongside works from post-communist countries, however, the similarities between the two become unnerving. The Norwegian graphic novelist and painter Hariton Pushwagner sketched endless identical high-rises in his novel "Soft City" (1968-76). Take away the cars, however, and these same buildings could be concrete high-rises ubiquitous in the former Eastern Bloc, stretching to infinity.

Nam June Paik's "Good Morning, Mr. Orwell," a taped variety show which aired to 10 million American and French viewers on New Year's Day 1984, was conceived in response to George Orwell's "1984." It's hard not to sing along during Allen Ginsberg's "Do the Meditation Rock" segment (parts of which can

be seen on YouTube): "It's never too late, it's never too late, to tell the superpower to stop and meditate."

Even more fundamentally, Neo Rauch's socialist-realist paintings of parallel worlds question whether we're even able to make sense of the recent past. Likewise, the idea that history itself is suspect pervades Sophie Calle's ephemeral photographs of East Berlin (1996), Stephan Huber's imaginary world maps (2009) and the film "Video-gram of a Revolution" (1992) by Harun Farocki and Andrei Ujica.

Footage, both professional and amateur, of the capture, trial and execution of Romanian dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in late December of 1989, is spliced together. What begins as a staged media circus grows grotesque and surreal. And even though Ceausescu's regime fell nearly 20 years ago, the video still feels remarkably immediate. The past, it seems, may still be in flux.

—Helen Chang

Until Feb. 7
www.kunsthallewien.at

Old master artists draw attention at London's Dulwich Picture Gallery

LONDON: It's always worth making the trip to the Dulwich Picture Gallery in southeast London, if only to look again at the Old Master paintings in the permanent collection. But currently there's also "Drawing Attention: Rembrandt, Tiepolo, Van Gogh, Picasso and more Master Drawings from the Art Gallery of Ontario." This long-winded title has the merit of showing the catholicity of this selection of about a hundred of the best works on paper drawn from Canada's best collection of (mostly European and British) drawings. A grant made in 1969 allowed a curator in Canada early access to what was still a buyers' market in many areas, from French drawings to

British watercolors.

The Dulwich installation is as plain as can be, with simply framed pictures displayed on a dark, chestnut-colored wall, which makes it possible to concentrate exclusively on the images. And some of these are very splendid. Among the Italian drawings, Giambattista Tiepolo's "A Reclining Male Nude" (1745) is worth a look, if only to see the details of modeling and shading that were later assimilated into his grand ceiling paintings. His son Domenico's jolly, playful "Satyrs and Satyresses in a Landscape" remedied a gap in my own classical education—I suppose there had to be female satyrs in order for there to be

little satyrs, but this benign image of a goat-footed woman surprised me.

Other treats include: van Gogh's drawing of his father's vicarage (circa 1884); a very tactile Ingres study of drapery; and a strange, gory Delacroix "The Bride of Lammermoor" (circa 1826). This is matched by Fuseli's pen and brown ink double-sided study of "A Standing Nude Figure, Seen from Behind." The mere detail of the pointed ears tells you this creature is demonic.

A lovely 1905-07 charcoal representation of a farmhouse by Piet Mondrian indicates that the artist was more interested in the vertical lines of the trees and the horizontals of the house than he was in its

architectural detail. It hangs near Giacomo Balla's abstract red and blue gouache and graphite study "Line of Speed" (circa 1913). And don't miss the creepy, technically highly accomplished "The Snake Charmer" (1866) by Edward John Poynter, which contrasts in its liveliness with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's pallid lily-pad ladies, such as "Ariadne" (circa 1867) by Edward Burne-Jones, hanging nearby.

—Paul Levy

Until Jan. 17
www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk

'Portrait of a Girl' (1917) by Egon Schiele on show at the Dulwich.



© Art Gallery of Ontario

The Tycoon's Companion

When F. Scott Fitzgerald died in Los Angeles in 1940, he'd been laboring for a year and a half on "The Last Tycoon," a novel about a charismatic movie producer named Monroe Stahr. Published posthumously, this uncompleted manuscript would be called—by, among others, Edmund Wilson—the finest work of fiction ever written about Hollywood.

On weekends during those same creative months, Fitzgerald dashed off (for quick cash) a batch of tales involving a much different Hollywood type: a down-at-heels scriptwriter named Pat Hobby. The 17 Hobby episodes, printed in *Esquire* magazine between 1939 and 1941 and later collected into "The Pat Hobby Stories" (Scribner), complement "The Last Tycoon" and fill out his vision of the movie-town that fed and inspired him in his final years. The unfinished "Tycoon" is a masterpiece of modern-romantic tragedy. "The Pat Hobby Stories" is an acerbic comedy—one where the laughs often stick in your throat.

"He was a writer but he had never written much, nor even read all the 'originals' he worked from," Fitzgerald recorded of Hobby, "because it made his head bang to read much. But the good old silent

days you got somebody's plot and a smart secretary and gulped Benzdrine 'structure' at her six or eight hours every week. The director took care of the gags."

A decade after the coming of talkies, though, the gags have grown thin. "All of [his stuff] was old," a script-department man notes of Pat's material, "and some didn't make sense." When a studio executive named Jack Berners casts his gaze on this perennial supplicant, "he saw a sort of whipped misery in Pat's eye that reminded him of his own father.

Pat had been in the money before Jack was out of college—with three cars and a chicken over every garage. Now his clothes looked as if he'd been standing at Hollywood and Vine for three years."

Forty-nine years old, twice divorced ("they had both given up asking for alimony"), Hobby—once a \$2,500-a-week man, now lucky to get \$250—prolongs his "career" through wheedling, pleading and lying. He cadges ideas, steals others' work to present as his own, even tries his hand at blackmail. No ploy is too low.

Seizing on a chance encounter with a studio honcho named Marcus to beg for a pass back into

the studio, Hobby the former University of Pennsylvania student adopts "the foreign locution"—reminiscent of a Yiddish or old-country Jewish accent—he feels will find favor with the old mogul: "I want only one thing . . . I should go on the lot anytime. From nothing. Only to be there. Should bother nobody. Only help a little from nothing if any young person wants advice."

When Berners the studio executive denies him an assignment with the topical brushoff, "Good luck, Pat. Anyhow we're not in Poland," which the Nazis have just overrun, the author notes: "Good you're not," said Pat under his breath. "They'd slit your gizzard."

Pat was "a complete rat," Fitzgerald told his *Esquire* editor, but not sinister. (His offenses are almost always found out and foiled.) And he has pride: He doesn't think of himself as washed-up but as "an old-timer"—a badge of honor and term of endearment on the movie-lot away from which he's lost.

Hobby served "as a punching bag" for his creator's frustrations, wrote Fitzgerald's secretary Frances Kroll Ring: "Pat was not Scott, nor did Scott, even in his lowest moments, ever consider

himself a hack." For his own occasional movie "polish jobs," Fitzgerald was paid \$1,200 a week. "But the irony of having Pat embody Scott's mercurial mood and financial instability was appealing."

The more Hobby stories he did, the more Fitzgerald liked his amoral protagonist. To the author these vignettes were humor sketches, and so they still seem: some of them semislapstick, some surprisingly poignant, and some flashing with unexpected menace like a cute animal that suddenly snarls.



"The Pat Hobby Stories," with its odd mix of guffaws and chagrin, is unique in the literature of Hollywood. It even sounds a few grim echoes of Nathanael West's apocalyptic 1939 novel "The Day of the Locust."

Fitzgerald was friends with West, another transplanted author employed by the studios. In late 1940, Fitzgerald often drove

with his companion, Sheilah Graham, to visit the newly married West and his wife Eileen at their North Hollywood home. By then Fitzgerald the alcoholic romantic was in undeniable professional and physical decline. West the hyperrealist was in gratifying ascent: He'd gotten the hang of scriptwriting and was doing well, with his weekly rate just raised to \$600.

Fitzgerald had his fatal heart attack on Dec. 21, 1940, at age 44. "The Last Tycoon," edited and with a foreword by Fitzgerald's friend Edmund Wilson, would be published in 1941. "The Pat Hobby Stories," with an introduction by Esquire's Arnold Gingrich, wouldn't become a book until 1962.

Nathanael West, 37, and his 27-year-old wife were killed in a road accident in El Centro, Calif., the day after Fitzgerald's death. As Pat Hobby said in a different context, "That's pictures. . . . You're up—you're down—You're in, you're out. Any old-timer knows."

Mr. Nolan is the editor of Ross Macdonald's "The Archer Files: The Complete Short Stories of Lew Archer, Private Investigator."

Meet F. Scott Fitzgerald's Pat Hobby.

Bookshelf / By William Anthony Hay

Hammer, No Sickle

Benjamin Disraeli described the Franco-Prussian War that brought about Germany's unification in 1871 as "the German revolution, a greater political event than the French." It turned out to be a shrewd claim, given the two world wars that followed. But the German reunification of 1989 seems less a revolution in Disraeli's sense than a restoration. Rather than setting into motion yet another round of great-power rivalry, the end of Germany's division brought about changes that extended democratic stability through Eastern and Central Europe. That Europe is no longer a flashpoint in world politics is a measure of just how successful the transformation has been.

In "1989: The Struggle to Create Post-Cold War Europe," Mary Elise Sarotte charts the events of that momentous year and their astonishing effects. With the collapse of East Germany's communist dictatorship, Helmut Kohl, West Germany's chancellor, shrewdly played events to the advantage of the West. He managed to absorb the "other" Germany within the Federal Republic despite resistance from the Soviet Union and from other European powers. Mr. Kohl found an invaluable partner in George H.W. Bush and James Baker, Mr. Bush's secretary of state, who came to see a democratic Germany within NATO as part of a structure that would preserve both American influence and European stability. But the full story shows how contingent the transition was.

In the late 1980s, the Soviet bloc was engaging in a process of slow reform, but the possibility of repression was never far away. East Germany remained the most authoritarian Soviet satellite. Its leaders feared that Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of *perestroika*—a cautious loosening of Communist Party control over the economy and political life—would unleash forces impossible

1989

By Mary Elise Sarotte
(Princeton, 321 pages, \$29.95)

to control. The citizens of Eastern Europe were already restless, seeing ever more vividly—thanks in part to global technology—how materially deprived they were and how unfree.

China's brutal crackdown on protesters at Tiananmen Square on June 3, 1989, provided an alternative to *perestroika* that fit more closely with the history of Communist rule. But East German authorities—in a fatal miscalculation—failed to seize on it. At a tipping-point moment, they chose not to repress mass protests in Leipzig on Oct. 9, 1989. Several Eastern European regimes began making concessions that included opening their borders to the West. The spirit of rebellion reached its height on Nov. 9, when the Berlin Wall fell.

Few welcomed the change. A French novelist captured the general sentiment by writing that he

loved Germany so much that he was glad there were two of them. François Mitterand and Margaret Thatcher both joined Mr. Gorbachev in opposing German unification. The U.S., for its part, had long embraced a policy of preferring the divided-Germany status quo.

Washington became more engaged after Nov. 9, however, and Mr. Bush ended up having the fewest qualms, among Western leaders, about reunification. Mr. Baker privately noted that for the past 40 years America had wanted a free Europe; with a united Germany, he saw, the U.S. would have a greater role than Mr. Gorbachev in Europe's destiny.

Thus Mr. Bush became Mr. Kohl's partner in overcoming the broad resistance to German reunification. He and his American ally had the advantage of a clear objective: democracy, with a market-based economy for all of Germany and, it was hoped, for the rest of the Eastern Bloc, too. No one else had a better idea.

Mr. Kohl persistently caught Mr. Gorbachev and other resistant leaders off-balance, presenting successive faits accomplis that defined the new reality. When Mitterand dropped his opposition, in the hopes of gaining German backing

for French ambitions in Europe, Mrs. Thatcher found herself marginalized. Mr. Kohl also chipped away at Mr. Gorbachev's objections, eventually even winning his acceptance of a united Germany's continued membership in NATO.

At home, Mr. Kohl used the skills of a ward heeler to play German politicians off against one another and to align himself with his supporters in the East. Monetary union—requiring a one-to-one exchange rate for the deutsche mark, despite huge differences in the value of East and West Germany's currency—was a potent lure. It helped to sell the idea that East Germany could be absorbed into existing West German structures.

Indeed, money played a key part in the whole process. Mr. Kohl realized that Mr. Gorbachev would insist on payment for his concessions. The Soviet Union was feeling severe economic strains, and it could not count on either the U.S. or other major European countries for help. The burden thus fell on Germany, which promised the Soviets generous loans and other financial guarantees. At the same time Mr. Kohl offered assistance to Poland and reassured poorer European Community mem-

bers—long the beneficiaries of German largess—that they would not lose out to East Germany.

The costs of reunification—combined with such checkbook diplomacy—hobbled the German economy for a generation, making Germany anything but the superpower that many had feared. Indeed, worries about a reunited Germany were appeased, in part, by the crippling burdens that the country took on merely to end its own division.

Ms. Sarotte makes clear that 1989 was a hinge moment that moved history in a better direction. Despite the literal costs to Germany, the events she describes brought considerable benefits. German reunification became a model for peacefully transferring democratic institutions to the former Soviet bloc. NATO and the European Union pressed aspiring members to match their standards of transparency and to institute the rule of law, easing the transition from totalitarianism. Many analysts predicted a return to the instability of the 1920s and 1930s or the pre-1914 rivalry among great powers. Instead, they saw peace, rising standards of living and the spread of democracy. A beneficent European order that had collapsed with World War I returned when the Berlin Wall fell. It is an achievement well worth celebrating.

Mr. Hay, a historian at Mississippi State University, is the author of "The Whig Revival, 1808-1830."



time off

Barcelona religion

"The Worlds of Islam in the Aga Khan Museum Collection" showcases objects from 1,400 years of Islamic history, illustrating religious art, history and traditions from the Far East to the Iberian Peninsula.

CaixaForum
Until Jan. 17
☎ 34-93-4768-600
obrasocial.lacaixa.es

Berlin history

"Celebration of Freedom," the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, features a giant domino chain following the wall's former route, fireworks exploding over the Brandenburg Gate, a concert and all-night party.

Brandenburg Gate
Nov. 9
☎ 49-30-2474-9888
www.mauerfall09.de

art

"Grey Area—Julie Mehretu" presents densely-layered abstract paintings and prints by the Ethiopian-born American artist.

Deutsche Guggenheim
Until Jan. 6
☎ 49-30-2020-9314
deutsche-guggenheim-berlin.de

design

"Decorum" displays 600 glass prototypes by 80 contemporary designers, offering modern interpretations of traditional glass-decoration techniques.

Kunstgewerbe Museum
Until Nov. 22
☎ 49-30-2664-2304-0
www.smb.museum

Bilbao architecture

"Frank Lloyd Wright" shows 200 original drawings, historic and newly commissioned models alongside photographs examining the work and life of the American architect.

Guggenheim Bilbao
Until Feb. 14
☎ 34-435-9000
www.guggenheim-bilbao.es

Bonn art

"Julian Rosefeldt American Night" exhibits film installations by the German artist, created between 2004 and 2009, including "Asylum," "Trilogy of Failure" and "Ship of Fools."

Kunstmuseum Bonn
Nov. 12-Jan. 17
☎ 49-228-7762-60
kunstmuseum.bonn.de

Brussels puppetry

"Puppet Theatre of Quanzhou" features nine puppeteers and eight musicians of the Quanzhou troupe, continuing the heritage and traditions of Chinese string-puppet theater.

Théâtre National
Nov. 10-14
☎ 32-2-2035-303
www.theatrenational.be

Edinburgh art

"Sir Peter Lely: Artist and Collector" explores art by the Dutch portrait painter (1618-80), alongside Italian and Flemish works from his own private collection.



A crest that adorned the gate at Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch in California, on show in London.

Shaan Kokity/Julien's Auctions

National Gallery of Scotland
Nov. 13-Feb. 14
☎ 44-131-6246-200
www.nationalgalleries.org

Frankfurt art

"Botticelli" exhibits a selection of 80 portraits and mythological allegories by Italian Renaissance painter Sandro Botticelli (1445-1510).

Städel Museum
Nov. 13-Feb. 28
☎ 49-69-6050-980
www.staedelmuseum.de

Geneva art

"A Record of the Floating World: Japanese Prints from 1700 to 1900" shows the evolution of Japanese prints, depicting the "floating world" (ukiyo) of entertainment.

Fondation Baur
Until Jan. 3
☎ 41-227-0432-82
fondation-baur.ch

The Hague art

"Cezanne, Picasso, Mondriaan: A New Perspective" examines the importance of the works of three pioneers of modern Western art.

Haags Gemeentemuseum
Until Jan. 24
☎ 31-70-3381-111
www.gemeentemuseum.nl

Lisbon music

"Amália, Independent Heart" is an exhibition following the life and art of Portuguese fado diva Amália Rodrigues (1920-99) with documents, music, films and other objects.

Museu Coleção Berardo
Museu da Electricidade
Until Jan. 31
☎ 351-21-3612-913
mirror.berardocollection.com

London music

"London Jazz Festival" brings international jazz greats such as Sonny Rollins, Chick Corea, Carla Bley, Gilberto Gil, Dave Holland and Branford Marsalis to the Barbican and Royal Festival Hall.

Various venues
Nov. 13-22
☎ 44-20-7324-1880
www.londonjazzfestival.org.uk

photography

"Points of View" explores the evolution and influence of photography through 250 rarely seen images from 1839 to the early 20th century, as photography grew into a form of social documentary, visual expression and art.

British Library
Until March 7
☎ 44-20-7412-7676
www.bl.uk

music

"Michael Jackson: The Official Exhibition" celebrates the singer's life (1958-2009), with more than 250 items including awards, clothing and a wide range of personal belongings from his estate.

The O2 Bubble
Until Jan. 31
☎ 44-20-8463-2000
michaeljacksonexhibition.co.uk

Madrid architecture

"Palladio the Architect (1508-1580)" shows drawings and scale models of work by the Mannerist architect alongside art by his contemporaries.

CaixaForum
Until Jan. 17
☎ 34-913-3073-00
obrasocial.lacaixa.es

design

"Marimekko: Fabrics, Fashion, Architecture" traces the history of the Finnish design company with more than 150

examples of fabrics, fashion clothing, accessories and architecture.

Museo del Traje
Until Dec. 13
☎ 34-91-5504-700
museodeltraje.mcu.es

Paris art

"Le Nouveau Festival" is a new showcase for contemporary art, featuring exhibitions, shows, conferences, screenings, tableaux, concerts and performances.

Centre Pompidou
Until Nov. 26
☎ 33-1-4478-1233
www.centrepompidou.fr

art

"Albert Oehlen, Abstract Reality" showcases work by the German-born artist (b. 1954), including computer-generated designs, incorporating photographic and printed collages.

Musée d'Art Moderne
de la Ville de Paris
Until Jan. 3
☎ 33-1-5367-4000
www.mam.paris.fr

Stuttgart art

"Johann Heinrich Schönfeld" displays autographed drawings and prints by the German baroque painter (1609-83).

Staatsgalerie Stuttgart
Nov. 7-March 7
☎ 49-711-4704-00
www.staatsgalerie.de

Vienna art

"Gender Check" examines gender roles in Eastern European art created since the 1960s, including paintings, photographs, posters, films and videos.

MUMOK Museum Moderner Kunst
Stiftung Ludwig
Nov. 13-Feb. 14
☎ 43-1-5250-0
www.mumok.at

Zurich design

"Formless Furniture" examines the maxim "form follows material" through a display of furniture designs by Gunnar A. Andersen, Ron Arad, Jersy Seymour and others.

Museum für Gestaltung Zürich
Nov. 11-Feb. 14
☎ 41-43-4466-767
www.museum-gestaltung.ch

Source: ArtBase Global Arts News Service, WSJE research.



Designer glass vases by Werner Aisslinger (left) and by Hyun Ju Do (right), on show at the Kunstgewerbe Museum in Berlin.

Frederic Goetz