FRIDAY-SUNDAY, JULY 23-25, 2010

WEEKEND JOURNAL.

EUROPE

Summer wine

What to drink when the sun is shining

Film: Action in Norway | Travel: Pearls in Bahrain

Contents

Mentzendorff

The vineyards at Champagne Bollinger in Aÿ, France.

COVER, illustration by Mike Carina.

Courtesy of Bonhams

Colt 1862 Revolver owned by Lieutenant Arthur Sinclair who served on the CSS Alabama. Estimate: £10,000-£15,000

WEEKEND JOURNAL
EUROPE

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THE JOURNAL CROSSWORD / Edited by Mike Shenk

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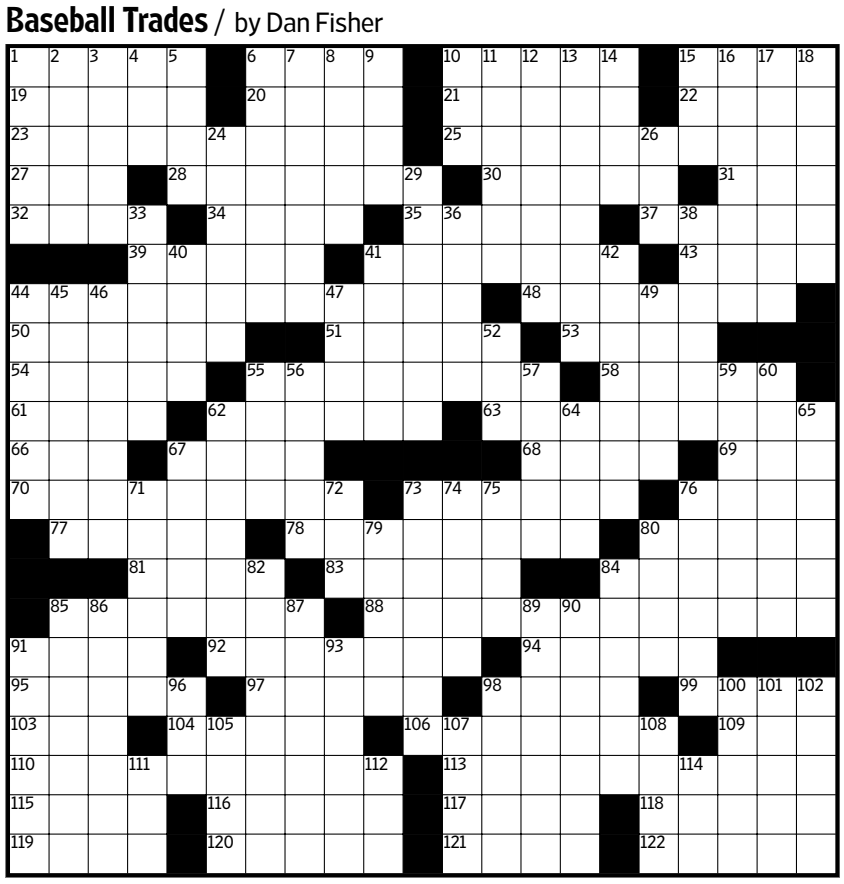
Baseball Trades / by Dan Fisher



Last Week's Solution

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Giampaolo Marconato for Valoreitaliano.Com; Christian Iallonardi for Valoreitaliano.com (hat)

A hat fit for a queen

Milan's master hat maker Lorenzo Borghi tells his tale; a slowly dying art

By Aaron Maines

Milan

IN VIA DEI Piatti, a narrow one-way street in the rabbit's warren of roads around the Duomo in downtown Milan, a small, innocuous shop caters to clients from all over the world. There, master hat maker Lorenzo Borghi has labored for almost 60 years, creating elegant, striking hats for everyone from local ladies to Queen Elizabeth II.

Today, Mr. Borghi is 70 years old, but he can still be found working in the shop from dawn to dusk at least six days a week. Using a special contraption of his own devising—a Cimbali espresso maker turned steam machine—he heats pieces of felt until they become pliable, fitting each to one of the dozens of wooden forms lining the walls in order to create the basic hat he has in mind.

Once the base has dried, he decorates it with ribbon flourishes, feathers, pearls or whatever materials he feels are required, responding in part to his clients' requests, in part to his own creative instincts.

He mostly works alone, relying on his wife and a friend for help when the orders pile up. He has no apprentice, and past attempts to teach younger generations have proved unsuccessful. "The first thing they ask is 'How much are you gonna pay me?'" says Mr. Borghi. "Then they ask 'Do I have to work weekends, too?'"

He doesn't say it, but the contempt is clear in his voice and expression. While it is tempting to dismiss Mr. Borghi's critiques as simple intergenerational mistrust, it is equally difficult to imagine the young, iPhone-equipped Italians lounging around in the piazza nearby spending their days as the septuagenarian maestro does, hunched over an ancient wooden desk, struggling to get this fold just right or adjust that feather to the correct height. "The hardest part is finding talented hands," he says. "I could teach the rest."

Mr. Borghi is matter-of-fact about the future of his business. "If I can't find anyone, then my skills die with me," he says.

Born in 1940, Mr. Borghi's earliest memories are of helping his siblings scour the marketplace at dusk, searching for broken fruit crates their mother could burn as firewood. His father abandoned them not long after World War II, and his family experienced the hardship common to many Italians in the postwar years.

> 'The hardest part is finding talented hands,' the hat maker says. 'I could teach the rest.'

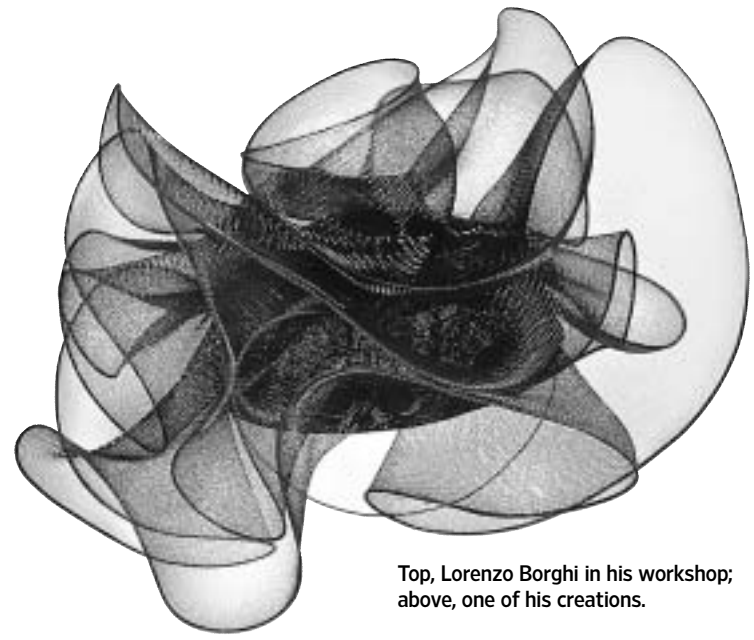
Forced to find a way to help support the family, young Lorenzo abandoned school to look for work. The only professional artisan he knew, a local hat maker, was willing to take on an apprentice. Lorenzo was barely 13 and Italian law forbid children under 14 from working, so he lied about his age to secure a spot in the hat maker's shop. Within a year his master learned the truth, but by then the apprentice had proven his worth, and there was no talk of him leaving the atelier.

Mr. Borghi was a quick learner. He had a knack for selecting the right materials, instinctive creative flair, and he was humble enough to keep a close eye on his employer, picking up whatever tricks of the trade the man was willing to impart, consciously or otherwise. "That's how it was done. You had to pay attention and copy the master. But the best things I learned by spying on him when he wasn't looking," Mr. Borghi says with a smile.

Before long, the young apprentice learned to be critical as well, gradually developing the courage to experiment. He ventured beyond his master's sober, traditional style, adding details in silk and organza that would eventually develop into the light, bright and colorful profusions of stiff, transparent ribbon that distinguish Mr. Borghi's most elaborate hats, which can sell for as much as €400.

Asked to point out a few of his favorites, Mr. Borghi insists that the hat he loves the most is the one he "hasn't made yet." But walking around the shop, he lingers on several elaborate hats in display cases behind the counter: a wide-brimmed violet hat with a fold in the front decorated with purple feathers; a maroon beret covered with purplish red crimped silk flowers no larger than gumdrops; a black hat made of rigid, woven cloth so thin it is almost transparent, decked with a profusion of stiff ribbon folded over and over again to form a sort of abstract flower sprouting from the hat's thick black velvet band.

When Mr. Borghi was 21, the man he still refers to as "master" died, leaving the atelier entirely to him. In order to make a name for himself, Mr. Borghi expanded the business, taking in as many orders as he could, working late into the night and early in the morning while the shop was closed, a demanding rhythm he continues to sustain today.



Top, Lorenzo Borghi in his workshop; above, one of his creations.

His work began to be noticed, and hats he created were picked up by some of the world's most important clothing designers. He created special designs for Valentino, Gianfranco Ferré and others. Franco Moschino, founder of the fashion house Moschino Couture, spent time in Mr. Borghi's shop as a young man, watching the hat maker work and learning about the trade.

Some clients have been demanding. One Maltese noblewoman made repeated visits to Milan to supervise the work Mr. Borghi was doing on four different hats for four different outfits she'd ordered for the wedding she was attending. "It was a December ceremony, and she didn't know what the weather would be like," says Mr. Borghi. "She kept insisting I make small changes to each hat, just to make sure no other woman at the wedding could have one like it."

In 2000, upon learning that Queen Elizabeth II was planning to visit Milan for the first time in two decades, Mr. Borghi decided to create a special hat just for her: an artisan's gift for a ruler reputed to appreciate superior headwear. "I made it with apricot and turquoise-colored felt," he said, "with a double brim and hand-painted silk flowers on one side."

Making the hat was one thing, getting it to the queen quite another. Fortunately, the wife of the British consul was among Mr. Borghi's clients. He entrusted her with the hat, even though the woman protested that the Queen made a point of refusing personal gifts.

The visit came and went, and Mr. Borghi received no word. Then, seven days after the queen's departure, a personal letter of thanks arrived from Buckingham Palace. He framed the letter and hung it on the wall of his atelier.

Recently an Italian company called Valore Italiano, or "Italian Quality," began filming Mr. Borghi and other artisans like him as part of an initiative to create a visual documentary of their skills that can be used to teach future generations. "These master craftsmen are national treasures," says Mario Pirolli, president of Valore Italiano and artificer of the initiative. "We have to try and salvage what we can before their knowledge and experience are lost for good."

—Aaron Maines is a writer based in Milan.

Chardonnay vines at Ridgeview vineyard in Sussex, U.K.

Ridgeview/Matt Strugnell

Summer drinking

Wine columnist Will Lyons picks his favorite 20 bottles for every occasion

Wine
WILL LYONS

IN THE VINEYARD, summer is marked by the flowering of the vine. After the first cluster of leaves has emerged, the tiny embryo bunches will break into flower and, providing the weather stays dry and the last of the spring frosts subside, they will evolve into a shock of minute, green berries. In the Northern hemisphere, as we pass the midsummer celebrations and the morning birdsong reaches its full chorus, the clusters will evolve into fruit—discernible to the naked eye as a tiny bunch of grapes.

Summer rain, warm winds and sun that stretches into the evening will help the grape develop its fleshy fruit. By the time Europe is dancing to the rhythms of August's myriad festivals, the grape is beginning to ripen. As the skin gradually changes color and the sugar content increases, the soft malic acid will subside to give way to more zingy, riper tartaric acid, while the grapes' tannins form their distinctive bitter character. As the days shorten and August gives way to autumn, harvest is only weeks away.

In the cellar, summer is marked by a blitzkrieg of depletions fueled by a raft of parties, celebrations, open-air concerts, smart sporting events and simple al-fresco soirees. There is an art to summer drinking, one that requires juggling the varied weather conditions that we experience over the summer months, and one, I have to confess, I haven't fully mastered. It involves balance, flexibility, patience and restraining the excesses warm weather can encourage. As the philosopher and wine writer Roger Scruton argues, sharing a glass of wine al fresco with family and friends over the course of a summer evening reaches to the heart of human social civilization.

But for the wine lover, assembling a cellar that lends itself to summer drinking can be a surprisingly complicated affair. For a start, our drinking patterns change throughout June, July and August. For example, in June, when the weather can be wet, cloudy and overcast, those leaner wines low in alcohol and high in acidity such as German Rieslings, Alsatian Pinot Gris or zippy Sauvignon Blancs from the Loire can fall flat as the clouds draw over. On a sunny day with a clear eggshell-blue sky, they will taste elegant, light and sophisticated. But when the rain comes they will clam shut, leaving a glass that is dull and lifeless.

Then there is the paradox of the barbecue. The usual light red wines that our palates tend to favor in warmer weather such as refreshing Beaujolais, Burgundy's ethereal Pinot Noirs or Chinon from the Loire aren't the best wines to stand up to the robust flavors of barbecued meat. Dishes that have been prepared from the grill or on a barbecue are far better matched with heavier, jammy, fruit-driven flavors derived from wines such as Argentinean Malbec, South Africa's Pinotage and Australia's Shiraz. In other words, strong, powerful wines that won't be overwhelmed by the onslaught of flame-grilled meat. Grape varieties such as Shiraz, Zinfandel, Malbec and Grenache all work well with barbecued meat as they have strong tannins and plenty of ripe, juicy fruit.

This year I have sipped, slurped and spat my way through dozens of samples to come up with my summer list—20 wines for every occasion. I started with the reds and found that time and again, I tend to return to Pinot Noir, particularly those examples grown in Burgundy. The versatile flavor of the variety, from a vegetal, farmyard character to a heavily perfumed nose and an ethereal, silky palate, light in texture, lends itself to the warmer months. For the heavier option, I have also included a red Bordeaux that can withstand most meat dishes. The year 2009 is one of the greatest Beaujolais vintages on record, and some of them are approachable surprisingly young. I have included an example, but as a general rule of thumb any Beaujolais with '09 on the label shouldn't disappoint.

Assembling a cellar that lends itself to summer drinking can be a surprisingly complicated affair.

A versatile wine to have in your armory throughout summer is rosé, and I make no apologies from sourcing most of mine from the Provençal villages between Avignon and Cannes, where, in my opinion, the wines are at their freshest, bursting with citrusy acidity and traces of summer flavors such as raspberry, peach and melon. They match very well with strong, garlicky dishes. I have also found an example in Tavel, perhaps France's most famous appellation for rosé and one ideally suited to matching with food.

For the whites, I had one overarching goal; to find wines that displayed freshness, zippy acidity, and clean, pure fruit. In some cases, these aren't wines that scream from the glass with their immediate fruit flavors. They are wines sourced from unfashionable, often unlikely regions, wines that are to be enjoyed with company and in the presence of food.

For the most part, not always successfully, I might add, I have also attempted to source wines with moderate alcohol levels. One area that so far hasn't experienced soaring levels of alcohol is sparkling wine. There is perhaps no wine that can lift morale and the mood of a room quite like a glass of sparkling wine. My preference will probably always favor the distinctive bite of champagne, achieved partly through the makeup of its soil, porous chalk topped with a shallow covering of rubble comprising sand, lignite, marl, loam and clay. But in recent years, I have come to appreciate the charms of English sparkling wine, which in part shares the same soils as champagne and the attraction of a glass of prosecco. Its light, clean flavors and abundance of fruit such as lemon and green apples, and wild flowers make it the perfect early-evening summer aperitif. Happy drinking.

Sparkling

Lindauer Special Reserve Brut Cuvée NV
New Zealand
12%
Between £10 - £12
For the price, this really competes with most other sparkling wines. On the palate, it has just enough crisp attack to satisfy champagne-lovers and a marked fruit character that aids summer drinking.

Prosecco Valdobbiadene Brut Jeio Bisol NV
Veneto, Italy
11.5%
Between £10 - £12
Bisol is one of Veneto's top prosecco houses. This example is gentle and delicate, with a trace of sweetness and an appley character. A palate-pleasing aperitif.

Ridgeview Cavendish 2007
Sussex, England
12%
Between £20 - £25
It may be from England but this is a serious wine and arguably the country's top-performing sparkling wine on the market. A blend of 25% Chardonnay, 34% Pinot Noir and 41% Pinot Meunier, it has a distinctive, toasty character with refreshing acidity.

Bollinger, Special Cuvée, Brut
Champagne, France
12%
Between £28- £40
The Special Cuvée really is good at the moment and is textbook Bollinger style –biscuity and yeasty, with robust acidity and a soft mousse. A serious, dry, masculine wine.

Clos des Goisses Brut 2000 Philipponnat
Champagne, France
13%
Between £90 - £100
Single-vineyard champagnes are enjoying renewed popularity with those in the know. This wine is produced from Clos de Goisses, a south-facing slope that overlooks the Marne canal. It will cellar for years but its rich fruit and soft style mean it can be drunk now.

White

Les Abymes, André & Michel Quenard 2008
Vin de Savoie, France
11%
Between £8 - £10
This is one of those rare wines that provide both thirst-quenching, fresh acidity and a satisfying, complex bite on the palate. At 11% alcohol, sadly a rarity these days, it will also not leave you feeling too dazed.

Hattenheimer Pfaffenberg Riesling Spätlese, Schloss Schönborn 2007
Rheingau, Germany
9.5%
Between £15 - £17
Spätlese, meaning late harvest, gives the grapes a little more richness and complexity. The lower alcohol content makes it's perfect to pull out on a hot summer day. It has notes of melon and an attractive steely minerality.

Grüner Veltliner, Alte Reben Trocken 2002 Willi Bründlmayer
Langenlois, Kamptal, Austria
12.5%
Between £18 - £20
Grüner Veltliner isn't an obvious grape variety. Its flavors can range from green pepper to grass to plum. Willi Bründlmayer's wines from Kamptal are beautifully restrained and ethereal.

Le Soula blanc 2005
Vin de Pays des Côtes Catalanes, France
13.5%
Between £18 - £20
This exotic blend - 40% Grenache Blanc, 30% Sauvignon, 20% Marsanne/Roussanne and 10% Chenin - has a purity and freshness belying its alcohol level. It's a complex glass, with honeyed, mineral notes.

Ribolla Gravner Anfora 2002
Friuli, Italy
12.5%
Between £40 - £45
You may not have come across the Ribolla gialla grape variety, but in Josko Gravner's hands it produces a wonderfully ethereal, delicate white wine. The texture is as silky as a top white Burgundy, with a smooth, dry character.

Rose

Château Saint Roch-les-Vignes 2009
Côtes de Provence, France
13.5%
Between £7 - £9
Soft, light and floral, it has a slight smoky trace from the Grenache and slips down dangerously easily. It is also a rosé that can be drunk with most foods.

Bruno Clair Marsannay Rosé 2008
Burgundy, France
12%
Between £8 - £10
This is one rosé that actually benefits from cellaring for a year or two. Fairly powerful, lean and dry, it has a distinctive pinot edge and can stand up to most robust summer dishes, such as cold meat or salad nicoise.

Château d'Aquéria 2008
Tavel Rosé, France
14%
Between £12 - £14
Good Tavel can lift the spirits like no other. This is a superb example; refreshing, with lots of fruit and power on the palate.

Rimauresq Cru Classé 2008
Côtes de Provence, France
13%
Between £12 - £15
Quite simply one of the classiest Provence rosés on the market. It is bursting with all sorts of floral and fruit flavors, but what makes this stand out is its sheer drinkability, thanks to its delicate, nuanced character.

Château Coussin Rosé 2009
Côtes de Provence, France
12.5%
Between £14 - £16
The blend is 80% Grenache, 10% Cinsault and 10% Syrah. In the glass it has lots of peachy, grapefruit freshness, with a slight trace of cranberry. Dangerously quaffable.

Red

Beaujolais-Villages 2009
Louis Jadot
Beaujolais, France
13%
Between £8 - £10
Lots of crunchy, raspberry and cherry flavors on the nose. Light on the palate, it slips down easily but is robust enough to stand up to most dishes.

Olga Raffault Les Barnabés 2007
Chinon, France
12.5%
Between £9 - £10
Purity, freshness and a little earthy, mineral complexity combined with lively fresh fruit earn it a place in this year's summer round-up. A supreme example of Cabernet Franc.

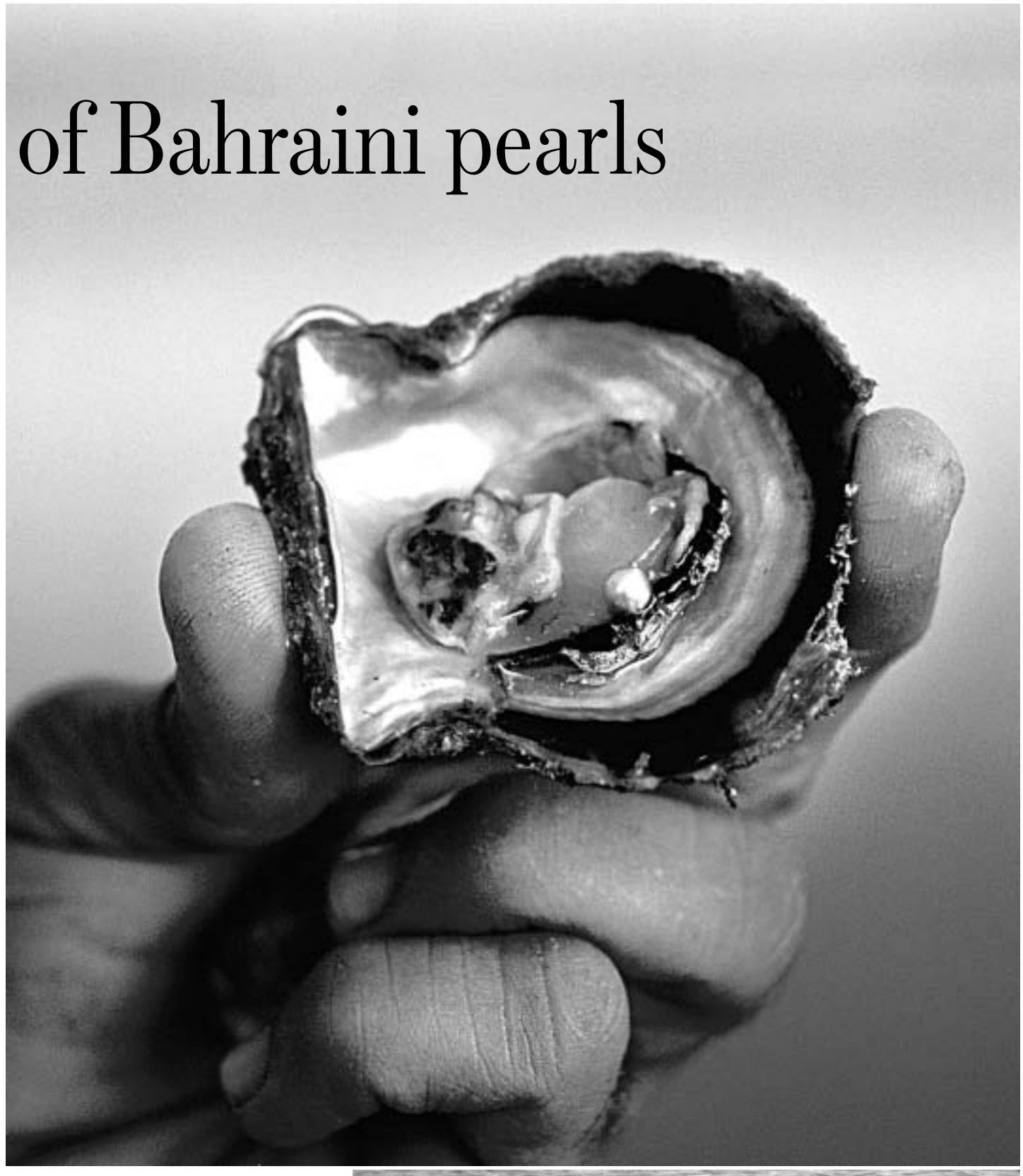
Chateau Meaume Reserve du Chateau 2003
Bordeaux, France
13%
Between £10 - £12
For the price, the quality of this wine really surprised. The Reserve, aged in barrels bought from Pomerol's Le Pin, is only made in good years and it shows. For a '03 it has real restraint, with deep red-berry and cedar notes. Superb.

Kinien Malbec Bodega Ruca Malen 2007
Mendoza, Argentina
14%
Between £16 - £20
Made only when the vintage conditions demand it, this is a dark, brooding wine with rounded, dark-fruit flavors such as blackberry and plum. Will stand up to most barbecued red meat.

Hamilton Russell Pinot Noir 2007
Walker Bay, South Africa
14.5%
Between £30- £35
One of the freshest, silkiest pinots I have tasted from Hamilton Russell's superb estate just behind Hermanus. The nose is distinctively black cherry, with some raspberry, cranberry, a little spice and smoky notes.

In search of Bahraini pearls

The Kingdom encourages tourism to the Al Dar Islands to dive for the lustrous gems



By Katherine Bergen
Al Dar Islands, Bahrain

IT WAS TINY, not much larger than a grain of sugar, or as one of my companions put it somewhat prosaically, rather like a piece of chipped tooth. But it was a pearl, and I had found it myself, in a live oyster in the warm sea of Bahrain.

The allure of the pearl has captivated the Queen of Sheba, Elizabeth I and Catherine the Great, all of whom are said to have worn Bahraini pearls. Their fabulous luster is to do with the combination of the sea's freshwater springs that give the island kingdom its name—Bahrain means "two seas" in Arabic—and its warm, shallow, highly saline water. Whatever rare alchemy creates these lustrous objects, then as now Bahraini pearls are widely believed to be the best in the world.

Legend recounts that almost 5,000 years ago, Gilgamesh, the epic hero, landed here in search of paradise, where he is said to have found the flower of eternity, the pearl, along the shores of ancient Dilmun, now modern Bahrain. An Assyrian inscription from around 2,000 B.C. mentions "fish eyes," or pearls, from Dilmun, and Tylos, the classical name for Bahrain, was stated by Roman naturalist Pliny to be "famous for the vast number of its pearls."

So, with Bizet's opera "The Pearl Fishers" playing in my head and the enticing promise that we could keep what pearls we found, we set off for our diving expedition from Sitra island for the Al Dar Islands, 10 minutes away by motor launch. The oyster beds here haven't been harvested for 70 years and there is no limit on the number of tourists who can visit them.

This trip was for snorkelers, rather than experienced scuba divers for whom there are separate expeditions, and the sea off the islands is only chest height. The package cost 120 Bahraini dinars (€245) for a maximum of six people, which allowed for two hours snorkeling and two hours opening the catch. You may keep as many pearls as you can find at no additional charge.

Each of us was equipped with mask, snorkel and flippers, and a rope bag to put our oysters in. Mohamed Slaise, manager of the Al Dar Islands beach resort, instructed us on how to identify the oysters on the sea bed of which there are about 15 varieties. He pointed out the gnarled oysters with the most growth on them. These are a good bet, as this suggested not age necessarily, but weakness, which might allow for the presence of a foreign body within now being turned into a nacre-smooth pearl.

After an hour or two, and with a bag each, we returned to the Al Dar Islands beach resort, an attractive white-washed retreat, where for five Bahraini dinars including entry and sea taxi, visitors can enjoy two air-conditioned restaurants, a cocktail bar and play beach volley ball. Here, Mr. Slaise showed us the proper technique for opening the oysters, slicing through the muscle, and finding the pearls.

There are 44 sizes of pearls and I think it is safe to say that those we found were around the 45th category. One sneeze would have carried them away. But we were inordinately proud of our minuscule haul of 10.

At one time, there were hundreds of pearl merchants in Bahrain. Up until the 1930s, pearls had been the Kingdom's principal economy for centuries. In the 19th century, pearls were still the most valuable gemstone known to man and were worth far more than diamonds. Famous buyers traveled to Bahrain, including Jacques Cartier, who frequently visited in the 1920s for the eponymous jewelers. In the early 20th century, British colonial statistics attributed about 40% of the Arabian Gulf's pearl revenue to the small islands of Bahrain.

The main pearling season lasted from June to early October. The dhows carrying their all-male crews would all leave Bahrain on the same day, and festivals would be held on the beaches, with women singing special songs wishing them safety, prosperity and luck. The captain gave the divers an advance on their wages to provide for their families during the four months they were away. The divers, who wore weights on one leg to help them drop to the seabed, used bone or tortoise-shell nose clips and leather finger guards to protect themselves from the coral.

The decline of the pearl industry was influenced by the arrival of the cheaper Japanese cultured pearl, costing a fraction of a Bahraini pearl. And when oil was discovered in Bahrain in 1932, many divers left the sea and went to work in the oil industry for a safer, steadier and higher wage.

Although its economic importance has long waned, the pearl remains a national icon.

Buying, rather than finding these national icons, is expensive. But cultured pearls are banned from the Bahraini market in an effort to preserve the Kingdom's heritage (all imported pearls are tested at the Gemstone & Pearl Testing Laboratory at the Ministry of Commerce & Industry). Shop keepers are vehemently loyal and won't risk their license to sell artificial, imported ones.

Earlier this year, Bahrain applied to Unesco to have a project preserving its pearl-diving traditions listed as a world-heritage site. Bahrain's pearl project will refurbish traditional houses, create a path to link fishing museums to a historic fort, restore some oyster beds protected by a buffer zone restricting fishing and allow for tourist boat tours to the oyster beds. In a neat historical tie, culture minister Shaika Mai bint Mohamed Al-Kalifa has even persuaded Cartier to invest in the project, which will be ratified by Unesco next year.

Katherine Bergen; Abdulla M. Alkhan/Bahrain House of Photograpy

If its pearling harks back to a millennia-old tradition, Bahrain also does contemporary pretty well and with 450,000 expatriates in a population of about a million, Bahrain is a highly cosmopolitan society.

On land, try cocktails at the Capital Club on the 52nd floor on Bahrain Financial Harbour for the wonderful view. The food generally is modern international. During my stay I had delicious Thai food at Monsoon restaurant, authentic Italian at the Italian Cafe and then hankering for Arabic food, a Lebanese feast at the Gulf Hotel, accompanied by some old-fashioned belly dancing.

The hotels and shopping malls, as might be expected in this wealthy kingdom—which is the financial center of the Middle East with the largest number of Islamic banks—are top end. But along with the pearling project, there is a clear new emphasis on its cultural heritage, as the meticulous restoration of some of the houses in Muharraq, the oldest residential district, is also evidence of.

I have what I came here for, and I am in illustrious company with the likes of the Queen of Sheba, with my own real, albeit tiny, prized Bahraini pearl.

—Katherine Bergen is a writer based in London.

Top and bottom, Sonny Saguil; Middle photo, Abdulla M. Alkhan/Bahrain house of photography

Left page, from top to bottom, a Bahraini pearl in an oyster shell; writer Katherine Bergen holds up her finds. This page, top to bottom, Bahrain Financial Harbour, pearl jewelry and a pearl assortment by size.

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

Marco Island, Florida

Reporter **Douglas Belkinon** on what to do, where to eat and where to stay on Marco Island, Florida.

What to do

For anyone who has ever suffered through a miserable winter, Marco Island is a made-to-order resort—a place to get away to catch a few rays, lie on the beach and finish that interrupted cribbage game with grandma and grandpa.

This quiet, well-manicured Gulf Coast island that lies along the Sunshine State's southwest littoral is also a convenient springboard to the Florida Everglades, the imperiled wetlands that harbor a wealth of plant and animal life. In it, visitors can have an otherworldly experience of moving among the flora and fauna far from the hum of the highway.

On arrival, park the rental car in the lot across from Residents Beach (south on Collier Blvd.; www.marco-island-florida.com/beach.htm) and take a long stroll along the sea-shell-strewn water's edge. The shallow tidal waters of this barrier island offer a clear prism through which one can comb for lion's paws, lightning whelks and moon snails—molluscs native to the area. The sunset over the Gulf will relax the crankiest traveler. If you're traveling with children, check out Tigertail Beach. Parking is $8 (€6.20) but the jungle gym, snack shop and protected waters make this sandy perch perfect for little ones.

Head 40 kilometers southeast to Fakahatchee Strand Preserve State Park. (www.floridastateparks.org/fakahatcheestrand; ☎1-239-695-4593), called "the Amazon of North America" for its wilderness feel. At the base of the park is a slow-moving river of clear, thigh-deep water protected by a canopy of cypress trees that is home to all manner of birds. Between November and the end of April, take a five-hour swamp walking tour for $50 with a guide from "Friends of the Fakahatchee" (☎1-239-695-1023)—call ahead for reservations. If you want to keep your feet dry, mount The Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk and follow its meanders through this ethereal forest.

To glide through the Everglades by canoe, head over to Everglades City and hook up with North American Canoe Tours (www.everglade-sadventures.com.; ☎1-239-695-3299. Keep an eye out for alligators which you will almost assuredly come across as they bask in the sun.

Where to eat

Marco Island is a seafood lovers' paradise. Try the stone crabs and red snapper or seared yellow-fin tuna with mango chutney at the Old Marco Lodge Crab House (www.oldmarcolodge.com; ☎1-941-642-7227) in neighboring Goodland. Quaff a beer at the Riff Raff Bar with the locals if there is a wait. Back on Marco Island, hang with a more buttoned-up crowd of retirees and tourists at Café DeMarco, a bistro famous for its butterflied jumbo prawns (www.cafedemarco.com; ☎1-239-394-6262). For a picnic on the beach or to fuel your Everglades adventure, pick up a turkey wrap with avocado and mozzarella at Ne Ne's Kitchen (neneskitchen.com; 239-394-3854). And don't forget the sunscreen.

Where to stay

Marco Island offers a wealth of top-notch beach-front hotels along its world-class shoreline. Among the more luxurious is The Hilton Marco Island Beach Resort and Spa (☎1-239-394-5000.; www1.hilton.com/en-US/hi/hotel/MRKMHHF-Hilton-Marco-Island-Beach-Resort-and-Spa-Florida/index.do). Rooms start at $139 per night but those fill up fast. The fancier suites can run $1,500 a night. Nearby, and with equally breathtaking views is The Marco Island Marriot Beach Resort (☎1-239-394-2511; www.marcoislandmarriott.com). If you are economizing, you might try the Boat House Motel (☎1-239-642-2400; www.theboathousemotel.com), where rooms can be found for $100 a night. Though most look out over a parking lot, they are clean and quiet and you can enjoy your morning coffee on the property along the Marco River.

Douglas Belkin/The Wall Street Journal

Glide through the Everglades by canoe.

Norway in action

As young filmmakers benefit from public funding, genre movies take off

By J. S. Marcus

In 1984, A former high-ranking Norwegian diplomat named Arne Treholt was arrested for handing over secrets to the KGB. In what became the most sensational Norwegian news story of its time, Mr. Treholt was tried, convicted, and sentenced to 20 years in prison. On Aug. 13, Arne Treholt will return to Norway's headlines, this time in the entertainment section, when a wild and wacky feature film inspired by the case, called "Norwegian Ninja," has its much-anticipated Oslo premier.

"Norwegian Ninja," written and directed by a 39-year-old former advertising executive named Thomas Cappelen Malling, is just about everything you can imagine. Hilarious and menacing, absurd and insightful, it is a novice work by a first-time director—at times, almost a shot in the dark—and an accomplished work of genre filmmaking that authoritatively upends the cold-war spy thriller. It is also a signature creation of Norway's newly thriving film industry, which is promising to place film alongside oil and salmon as one of the country's most reliable export items.

"We are taking the most unpopular traitor in Norwegian history and turning him into a hero," says Mr. Malling, who has recast Arne Treholt as a covert agent working on behalf of the Norwegian king. Filled with pointedly ludicrous special effects, stock footage and slapstick humor, the film, starring Norwegian theater actor Mads Ousdal as Mr. Treholt, is an investigation into Norwegian identity that manages to play to an international audience. It is also a canny exercise in marketing, which first created a buzz at this year's Cannes Film Festival when a trailer, concisely capturing the film's unique qualities, got a level of attention otherwise reserved for actual film premiers.

"Norwegian Ninja" is the perfect poster child for the Norwegian film wave. Drawing on a range of talent both inside and outside the Norwegian film establishment, and with a heavy dose of public financing, the film takes its subject from Norway, but its style comes from just about anywhere.

Starting in the early years of this decade, Norway began to change the way it made films, says "Norwegian Ninja" producer Eric Vogel. Mr. Vogel, 35 years old, was one of the first graduates of Norway's new film school, established in the late 1990s in Lillehammer on the site of the 1994 Winter Olympics. "The 1990s were the dark ages" of Norwegian film, he says, when a tight system of government funding effectively restricted the number and style of films that got made. The change in government policy, which promoted genre movies with non-Scandinavian roots, like horror movies and thrillers, meant that people could "start making more commercial films."

Public funding is a necessity in Norway, says Nina Refseth, head of the Norwegian Film Institute, the government entity that has a hand in financing the vast majority of Norway's two dozen annual features. "Norway is a very rich country and home to a very small language," she says, arguing that Norwegian cinema wouldn't exist without government support.

Norway now has "one of the best systems of public financing of film in the world," she says. Like Mr. Vogel and other Norwegian film makers, she believes that the current success of Norwegian film, both at home and abroad, is due to the change in financing that began in the early to mid 2000s, when the government started to reward box-office success by apportioning funding based on box-office performance. This change coincided with a dramatic rise in the amount of money the government actually spends on film. In the past decade, Norway has increased its film budget from around 70 Million Norwegian kroner (€8.6 million) to 360 million kroner (€44 million). At the same time, Norwegian films' take at the domestic box office has skyrocketed, according to the Norwegian Film Institute, going from around 6% in 2000 to more than 20% in 2009.

Breakout Norwegian films over the past decade include the horror movie "Cold Prey" (2006), directed by Roar Uthaug, an early graduate of the Norwegian Film School; "Max Manus" (2008), a World War II epic, co-directed by Joachim Roenning and Espen Sandberg, which went on to become the highest-grossing film in Norway's history; and the 2009 cult horror hit, "Dead Snow," directed and co-written by Tommy Wirkola, a 30-year-old Australian-educated filmmaker from Norway's far north.

In the wake of the success of "Max Manus" (released in English in 2009 under the title "Max Manus: Man of War"), Messrs. Roenning

Trond Høines/Tordenfilm; bottom,Ellen Ugelstad/Tordenfilm

From top to bottom, Erik Aavatsmark / Filmkameratene AS,Matt Carr/Getty Images, Svein ung Svendsen/Euforia Film

and Sandberg are set to film a 3-D version of the story of Thor Heyerdahl, who caught the world's attention when he sailed across the Pacific in 1947 on his Kon-Tiki raft. The film, which will start shooting early next year, is being produced by Jeremy Thomas, Oscar-winning producer of the 1987 Bernardo Bertolucci film, "The Last Emperor." Meanwhile, Mr. Wirkola is set to start shooting his take on the Hansel and Gretel story in Hollywood, with the actor Will Ferrell as one of his producers.

Espen Sandberg believes that the change in funding earlier this decade led to an outburst of creativity. "Production companies started popping up all over the place," he says. Now dividing their time between Oslo and Los Angeles, Messrs. Roenning and Sandberg have high hopes for "Kon-Tiki," which is being partly financed in Norway, but will be released around the world. Scheduled to be shot in both English and Norwegian, it "will be the first Norwegian film to go global," Mr. Roenning says.

Like Thomas Cappelen Malling, Messrs. Roenning and Sandberg, both in their late 30s, come from the world of advertising, and their Oslo production company, Motion Blur, which specializes in commercials and digital media, can seem like ground zero of the new Norwegian wave. They co-own the firm with Espen Horn, executive producer of "Dead Snow," and Harald Zwart, who has directed many films in Hollywood, most recently the No. 1 U.S. box-office hit, a 2010 remake of "The Karate Kid," starring Jackie Chan.

With a number of international successes, Norwegian filmmakers are finally set to distinguish themselves from their neighbors in Sweden and Denmark, whose own national cinematic traditions have proven highly influential beyond their borders. Eric Vogel says that Norwegian cinema had "a golden age" after the Second World War, due to a number of popular comedies, but he admits "we've been the little brother in Scandinavian films for a long time." He says: "We don't have an Ingmar Bergman. We don't have a Lars von Trier."

For 36-year-old Oslo director Joachim Trier, Norwegian cinema's subordinate position has its benefits. "Do we have an inferiority complex in Norway?" he asks. "Yes, certainly. But that can be liberating. We can concentrate on what we do as individual filmmakers."

> 'Norway seems to be a place where you can actually get films made that have more complicated subject matter and darker themes.'

Mr. Trier—who is a distant relative of Danish director Lars von Trier—is an exception to the Norwegian trend that places genre films, like horror movies and thrillers, above classic auteur-style filmmaking. His 2006 debut feature, "Reprise," about two young writers coming of age in contemporary Oslo, was a hit at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival and received glowing reviews around the world—though the film wasn't a big box-office hit in Norway. Mr. Trier is widely viewed as one of the most talented young filmmakers in Europe, and he is currently casting his follow-up feature, tentatively titled "Oslo. 31 August." He has no illusions about the importance of commercial film, a category in which few people would place "Reprise," a jagged, innovative tour-de-force that repeatedly shifts in time and tone. And although he is planning to shoot an independent-style film soon in the U.S., he is adamant about continuing to make films in Norway.

"Cinema is in a very, very commercial place," he says, noting that financing in America "goes to films that can be seen by teenagers." He adds: "The kind of personal filmmaking that I'm interested in is character-based drama. Norway seems to be a place where you can actually get films made that have more complicated subject matter and darker themes."

He seems to keep a respectful distance from Norway's genre film wave—he says that he has yet to see "Dead Snow"—but he believes that popular films can still be a breeding ground for cinematic genius, citing the influence of Hollywood studio films on France's New Wave in the 1950s and '60s. "I'm hoping that some original voices will appear. I'm skeptical—but I'm very, very curious."

Someone who isn't afraid to criticize the current emphasis on genre cinema is Norway's best-known actress, Liv Ullmann, who, after starting out her career in the late 1950s on the Norwegian stage and in Norwegian films, went on to star in several renowned Swedish films directed by Ingmar Bergman. More recently, Ms. Ullmann, who regularly returns to Norway from the U.S., where she currently lives, has also directed films and plays.

"I think it is sad," she says, speaking by phone from Boston, comparing the current wave of genre films with the legacy of great European cinema, embodied for many cineastes by the work of Ingmar Bergman himself. "If you look at this small country, and its [tradition of] great writers and musicians and painters, we could really make auteur movies." She says there has been a controversy about the direction of Norway's new film school, where students "learn a lot about technique" but "very little about who you are, or what you are about, which is very important for an auteur filmmaker."

The Norwegian Film School couldn't be reached for comment.

Like other Norwegians, including Joachim Trier, she defers to Bent Hamer, the Norwegian writer-director, who was educated at the Stockholm Film School, and is the lone Norwegian art-house filmmaker with a substantial following outside Norway. He is best known for his 2005 film, "Factotum," starring Matt Dillon, based on a novel by Charles Bukowski. Mr. Hamer's fans are often forced to admit that he is appreciated abroad rather than at home in Norway.

Based in the small city of Sandefjord, at the edge of the Oslo Fjord, Mr. Hamer, who also produces his films, says that his features are distributed in more than 40 countries world-wide but rarely sell more than 40,000 tickets inside Norway.

Eric Vogel, producer of "Norwegian Ninja," doesn't see a conflict between the two approaches to movie making. "We're a small country," he says, "And it's not like we're specialized." Everyone who makes movies in Norway "is rooting for each other," he argues, adding, "My next movie might be an art-house film."

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

Opposite page, top, scene from 'Norwegian Ninja'; bottom, Jon Øigarden as Otto Meyer in front of Mads Ousdal as Kommandør Arne Treholt. This page, from top to bottom, Aksel Hennie as Max Manus and Agnes Kittelsen as Tikken Lindebrække; directors Espen Sandberg and Joachim Roenning; filming of 'Dead Snow.'

Top: Stage Entertainment; bottom: Atlantis Productions

Turning Broadway flops into global hits

The export of musical theater has never been greater; The Dutch clamor for 'Tarzan'

At the top, Alexander Klaws as Tarzan in Hamburg, Germany; above, Nikki Gil as Elle Woods in 'Legally Blonde' at the Meralco Theater in Manila.

By Ellen Gamerman

WHEN THE MUSICAL "Tarzan," based on the Disney movie, opened on Broadway in New York in 2006, critics were merciless and the show closed after little more than a year. Then the musical moved to Europe and everything changed. Ten percent of the Dutch population, or about 1.6 million people, saw "Tarzan" over its two-year run, according to Disney. Today in Hamburg, German audiences erupt in applause after numbers like "Gar keine Wahl" ("No Other Way"). Disney executives now joke that Broadway was the musical's "out-of-town tryout."

The export of musical theater has never been bigger. At least 13 major productions of American or British musicals are running in Japan. "Next to Normal" will hit Oslo in September. In Manila, an English-speaking Filipina in a honey wig sings "Omigod You Guys" at "Legally Blonde: The Musical" every night.

Foreign productions of "The Lion King" have grossed nearly $2.2 billion to date, Disney says, almost three times the show's Broadway haul. "In terms of a piece of the revenue that we generate, it's just startling," says Disney Theatrical Productions president and producer Thomas Schumacher.

As producers discover that they can reap huge profits overseas—sometimes even turning a Broadway flop into a foreign hit—more American shows are enlisting foreign investors and granting international rights at premium prices. International presenters now may pay $200,000 in advance to stage a big U.S. production in a major foreign market, at least double what they were spending a decade ago in many cases, say people familiar with the business. Producers say they're seeing interest from territories that 10 years ago never thought of Broadway.

Exporting Broadway shows is a tricky proposition, however. It's not just a question of translating the dialogue and lyrics into the local language. There's also the thorny question of conveying humor and pop-culture references, and trying to gauge what audiences will respond to in vastly different cultures.

During a light moment in Disney's "The Lion King," Zazu the bird is supposed to sing a cheerful but trite tune, prompting a groan of recognition from the audience. On Broadway, that song is "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious." In Australia, it's the country's familiar "Tie Me Kangaroo Down, Sport." On a Shanghai stint, it was a ubiquitous Chinese ad jingle. In Germany, the bird sings the "Heidi" theme song, then yodels.

Just as American producers say it's impossible to predict a smash on Broadway, the global marketplace can be fickle. "The King and I" struggled on a five-month tour of Asia, despite its connection to Thai history. "Wicked" has run three years in Japan, although audiences there aren't widely familiar with "The Wizard of Oz" story at the heart of the musical. "Fiddler on the Roof" has been revived periodically on Broadway, but in Japan its focus on tradition has made it an institution: The late Hisaya Morishige played Tevye 900 times over two decades.

Shows typically appear abroad in one of three forms. The most expensive to stage tend to be "replica" or "first class" productions, which usually play in a country's native tongue; they often draw on the same creative team as the original productions but employ local casts. Most major productions of blockbuster shows in well-established markets such as Germany, Holland and Japan fall in this category. Non-replicas use the same script and score as the original but are licensed with a cheaper class of rights that bar the creative team from copying the original sets, costumes and choreography. Finally, some American shows go on tours overseas and run in English with a non-local cast, often with supertitles.

"Billy Elliot the Musical," a London import to Broadway about a British miner's son who dreams of dancing, launches its first non-English replica production next month in Seoul, South Korea. An international creative team has been in regular contact with original director Stephen Daldry to recreate the musical, in which Korean actors play working-class folk in Margaret Thatcher's England.

Superimposing the show's characters and style on Korean culture has proven arduous: The text is now in its sixth translation. Adapting the humor has been particularly delicate. When Billy misinterprets "Billy Elliot Esquire" as "Billy Elliot is Queer" in the London and New York versions, the joke is obvious, but there's no equivalent Korean wordplay. To get a laugh in that spot, Billy instead confuses the phrase with a bit of Korean profanity. Foul language carries its own problems. "Such languages are not often publicly said in Korea, so we had to think hard how to tone them down," said Moon Mi-ho, chief executive of Magistella, the Korean producer of the musical. (When the boys were reluctant to swear during rehearsals, the production had to ask the parents to tell the children it was OK to do so.)

The production picked the four actors alternating the role of Billy, ranging from ages 10 to 14, from a pool of 800 kids whose skills included judo, taekwondo and ballet (one Billy played Young Simba in "The Lion King" in Korea). The country largely lacks a tradition of "triple threats"—performers trained to sing, act and dance—so each boy needed training in at least two of those three skills. Earlier this year, the boys traveled to New York and Chicago to catch performances of the show.

A story about an English mining town might seem an odd fit for a Korean audience, but Louise Withers, the executive producer of "Billy Elliot" for Australia and Asia, said that local theater executives made a compelling case for the musical rights based on the idea of family devotion: A story about parents sacrificing to help a child overcome the odds resonates in Korea. And the background and social atmosphere of "Billy Elliot" have a lot in common with Korea's situation in the 1980s—poor mining villages, union demonstrations, workers' clashes with the government.

Magistella wouldn't disclose what it paid to license rights to the musical, but it says production costs totaled $11 million. Expenses tend to drop the more a show is reproduced, as efficiencies are built in: The U.S. version of "Billy" cost $18 million.

At a recent rehearsal at the Namsan Creative Center, located on a mountain in central Seoul, Chung Young-joo, who plays tough-talking ballet teacher Mrs. Wilkinson, said that her character's teaching style isn't one Kore-

Left to right, Takashi Uehara, Peter Blakely

ans would recognize. "Mrs. Wilkinson is so straightforward and rough, which is quite different from a typical Korean teacher, who prefers being indirect even when criticizing a student," she said.

The musical-export business took off in the 1980s, when British theater impresarios Cameron Mackintosh and Andrew Lloyd Webber sent shows such as "Cats" and "Les Misérables" to countries such as Norway, Hungary and Russia, going beyond the typical back-and-forth traffic between Broadway and London's West End. Following suit, American musicals began launching major replica productions. With its newly launched theatrical division, Disney sent "Beauty and the Beast" to 18 countries outside the U.S. starting in 1995.

Now, the business is expanding as many more shows of differing sizes—not just the big hits—are heading overseas to new territories. That's thanks in part to a shift in focus by producers, who in recent years have moved deeper into markets such as Asia, South America and South Africa. Foreign productions are often built into the business plan from the outset, though, as always, a show can still turn up dead on arrival.

London is another busy hub. Mr. Mackintosh is opening 35 to 40 shows world-wide in the next four years, twice the amount of a decade ago, he says. "The appetite for musical theater ... has to do with how pop culture has changed," Mr. Mackintosh says. "Who would have thought you'd be able to see prime-time TV shows like 'Glee,' or competitions to find stars for West End theaters?"

Internationally, as on Broadway, the theater industry is weathering the recession by either relying on a handful of blockbusters, or by staging smaller and more nimble productions that run at lower costs. In New York, attendance was down slightly this past season compared to 2008-'09, but total grosses stayed about the same, at around $1 billion, thanks to a rise in average paid admission. No figures are publicly reported on Broadway's international industry.

Even at home, Broadway shows today are typically designed with a global audience in mind. About one in five theatergoers were international visitors in the 2008-'09 season, the highest proportion on record, according to the most recent data available from the Broadway League.

Drew Cohen, president of Music Theatre International, which grants rights for mostly non-replica shows in territories such as Europe, Asia and Australia, says revenue from foreign licenses grew more than 10% in the past two years, thanks in part to demand for musicals also known by their movie counterparts such as "Hairspray" and "Legally Blonde."

Some theater genres fare best in particular regions: Scandinavia has become a strong customer for less mainstream, darker fare. The first foreign production of "Next to Normal," the Pulitzer Prize-winning musical about a bipolar mother, opens in September in Oslo.

Still, the global economic downturn is taking a toll, and some shows are struggling. A producer in Buenos Aires paid about $225,000 for the rights alone to the edgy musical "Spring Awakening," say people involved in the deal. Though the large production was critically praised, it closed in June after three months.

Ron Kollen, Disney Theatrical's senior vice president for international, is the theater industry's answer to a U.N. diplomat. Well-manicured, polite and rich in frequent-flier miles, he is responsible for developing new territories. (He gets a call a week from Dubai, Qatar or Saudi Arabia.)

At Disney Theatrical's headquarters at the New Amsterdam Theatre in New York, Mr. Kollen recently fielded a call from Holland, where a theater was experiencing a minor crisis: Audience members at a Dutch performance of "Mary Poppins" had begun screaming from their seats. They weren't responding to the show—they were sneaking glimpses of the Dutch team's scores in the World Cup semi-finals on their mobile phones. "It was not a pleasant experience for the cast," Eline Danker, commercial director for this and other Dutch shows handled by local producer Stage Entertainment, told Mr. Kollen on speaker phone. To avoid a similar problem, she told him "Mary Poppins" would start two hours early on the day of the World Cup final.

Taking shows around the world can give producers a chance to rethink mistakes they may have made on Broadway. Before "Tarzan" opened in New York, executives from Stage Entertainment attended early rehearsals and were intrigued, buying the rights before the show opened—and flopped. When they moved it to Holland, Disney and Stage Entertainment made some key changes. "Tarzan" was marketed less as a family show and more as a date-night romance. Disney added new choreography and significantly increased the amount of stage flying.

Stage Entertainment, based in the Netherlands and founded by Joop van den Ende (a co-founder of the television company that developed the European show "Big Brother") also tapped into local TV audiences. In Germany, Tarzan and Jane were cast via a reality-TV show; Elisabeth Hübert, one of the winners, is still playing Jane. Tarzan (pronounced "tahtzahn" in German) is now played by Alexander Klaws, a winner of Germany's version of "American Idol." The show has grossed $182 million abroad to date, according to Disney. On Broadway, it grossed about $42.7 million, according to the Broadway League. That wasn't enough to recoup its initial investment after covering weekly running costs.

Some capitals are tough markets for long-running musicals. "The Lion King" will close in Paris at the end of this month without recouping Stage Entertainment's investment, a company executive says. The show ran three years and attracted larger than expected audiences, the company says, but Paris has never had a major audience for American musicals.

Asia has emerged as a promising market for Broadway musicals, though progress moves in fits and starts. Chinese restrictions on foreign investment in entertainment have loosened in recent years, and Hong Kong is building a new theater district to compete for cultural prominence with Macau and Shanghai. Korea has gone from about 40 Off-Broadway-size houses in 1995 to 400 today, says Simone Genatt, a co-founder of Broadway Asia Co., which exports musicals to Asian countries.

Broadway Asia has presented shows in 35 different cities in mainland China, creating new shows for Asian markets or picking up existing productions and touring them. What the company dubs the first "made in China musical"—a combination of live performance and classic movie footage titled "Reel to Real: the movies musical"—opened in Beijing with English-speaking American actors last year and will have its European premiere in Edinburgh next month.

Broadway blockbusters remain the surest bet. In the Osaka production of "Wicked," performed in Japanese, the good witch Glinda is portrayed by a Japanese actress, but she wears a blonde wig. "Of course she would be blonde," said Yumiko Nakajima, 41, a theatergoer at a recent performance. "That's part of her character."

—Yoree Koh in Osaka, Japan; Laura Stevens in Hamburg, Germany; and Jaeyeon Woo in Seoul contributed to this article.

Top left, a scene from 'Wicked' in Japan; top right, the Tokyo production of the 'Lion King'; above, posters for 'The Lion King' in Tokyo and 'Beauty and the Beast' in Moscow.

❖ Art

© Corban Walker, Courtesy The Pace Gallery

'Grid Stack 2' (2007) by Corban Walker.

Choosing talent

Nations such as Ireland already begin to line up artistic rosters for next summer's Venice Biennale

By Kelly Crow

THE VENICE BIENNALE is the contemporary art world's version of the World Cup, a century-old tradition in which countries send in their best artists to exhibit in pavilions and palazzos across the city in hopes of gaining global acclaim.

The next edition kicks off next summer, but nations like France, Britain, and Japan are already lining up their artistic rosters. The latest to join in is Ireland, which will be represented by Dublin native Corban Walker, Irish cultural officials announced today.

Mr. Walker, 43 years old, is a minimalist sculptor and installation artist known for layering and stacking industrial materials like glass, steel and LED lights into precarious arrangements. Often, his pieces like "Grid Stack" (2007) and "Float" (2008) evoke an oversized game of pick-up sticks or Jenga, where dozens of seagreen sheets of glass are placed into piles that partially overlap each other yet sit slightly askew.

Like Sol LeWitt or Josef Albers, Mr. Walker's work plays with mathematical rules of order and scale, yet he occasionally adds a distinctive twist by making pieces that stand around his own height of 1.2 meters. When basketball star Shaquille O'Neal invited him to submit a piece this spring for a show, "Size Does Matter," at New York's Flag Art Foundation, Mr. Walker papered the foundation's stairwell with vinyl-glass rectangles that corresponded to the two men's respective heights. Mr. O'Neal stands just over 2.1 meters tall.

"The everyday rules I've been given don't necessarily accommodate me," Mr. Walker said earlier this week, "so I like the idea of re-evaluating measurements."

One of his best-known pieces in Ireland is "Mapping Hugh Lane," an indigo-colored glass chamber that filled an ornate room of Dublin's Hugh Lane Municipal Art Museum last year. Just as Anish Kapoor's room-sized, red wax sculpture, "Svayambh," recently attracted crowds to London's Royal Academy of Arts, Mr. Walker's glassy blue box was difficult to circumnavigate and impossible to ignore. "It dominated the room," said Eamonn Maxwell, the director of the Lismore Castle Arts nonprofit art space who will serve as curator for Mr. Walker's project in the Irish pavilion.

Other artists tapped to participate so far include Christian Boltanski for France, Mike Nelson for Britain, Karla Black for Scotland, Sigalit Landau for Israel and Hany Armanious for Australia.

Arbitrage

Dolce & Gabbana beach sandals

City	Local currency	€
Rome	€42	€42
London	£43	€51
Brussels	€52	€52
Frankfurt	€60	€60
New York	$110	€85

Note: Prices of item DU1189-E1745, plus taxes, as provided by retailers in each city, averaged and converted into euros.

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Simon Annard

In these plays, a sense of place is paramount

By Paul Levy

London: Making a play of a film now seems to be routine, but making a site-specific theater event of a much-loved movie is still newsworthy. E. (for "Edith") Nesbit's "The Railway Children" has a special place in the hearts of British kids, both as a book and film (released in 1970). The socialist writer (1858-1924) turned out dozens of children's books, which weren't only adventure stories, but also sensitive treatments of social themes. In "The Railway Children" a family is falling on hard times because the father has been (wrongly) sent to prison. Nesbit's political stance gave an extra resonance to this as well: The fictional father's circumstances mirrored those of the Dreyfus case in France, and Alfred Dreyfus was finally exonerated the year of publication, 1906.

But the reason for seeing "The Railway Children" in Damien Cruden's production is that it takes place between two platforms in the old Eurostar terminal at Waterloo, and includes a beautiful working steam engine, the emerald green "Stirling Single." With the audience seated on either side of the tracks, designer Joanna Scotcher brilliantly creates the family's middle-class London house (complete with butler and maids), and the modest Yorkshire cottage to which they're forced to move, on moving traverse-stage panels pushed into place when needed.

They can be pushed into a siding to make room for the locomotive, and, near the ending, its tender, plus a genuine 1871 polished-wood smoking saloon carriage.

The schmaltz-sodden plot involves the two girls and a boy (in this version grown-ups, remembering themselves as children) in acts of heroism, as well as showing common sense in dealing with their own poverty. And Daddy, like Dreyfus, is cleared. The actors are more than adequate, as is the direction. Craig Vear's sound effects and Richard G. Jones's lighting are thrilling. However, this production is a vehicle for a vehicle: "Stirling Single" is the star of the show, to which you will want to take every under-10 you know. *(Until Jan. 2; www.railwaychildrenwaterloo.com)*

Mercedes Ruehl as Edna and Jeff Goldblum as Mel in 'The Prisoner of Second Avenue'; top, 'The Railway Children'.

Johan Persson

Neil Simon's "The Prisoner of Second Avenue" is the original 1971 show from which the 1975 Jack Lemmon movie was made. London's critics don't love Terry Johnson's terrific Old Vic West End revival at the Vaudeville Theatre. But I found its two American stars, Jeff Goldblum and Mercedes Ruehl, so good as the middle-aged married couple that they make you overlook the structural defect of the play—the too-short central section when it changes from being a two-hander to having the four siblings of Mr. Goldblum's character on the stage. It's a flaw because they are so fully, individually characterized that you want more of them.

Set in a claustrophobically small apartment on New York's Upper East Side in 1971 during a previous economic crisis, when cuts caused the rubbish to pile up and you could believe that the apartment could be burgled in five minutes flat in broad daylight, the "prisoner" is Mel Edison, a down-sized advertising executive. Rangy Mr. Goldblum's body language tells most of the story of his breakdown, as he changes places as the breadwinner with his wisecracking wife, the superbly comic Ms. Ruehl, but Mr. Simon's dialogue remains fresh and apt. When she suggests therapy, Mel ripostes, "I'm losing myself." Then, with exquisite timing: "I don't need a therapist, I need lost and found." *(Until Sept. 25; www.vaudeville-theatre.co.uk)*

Mel Edison is seldom violent—except for bashing the walls of his prison/apartment. In Irish playwright Martin McDonagh's black comedies, on the other hand, the violence is graphic and usually shocking—but in a surrealist way. Someone kills a small back cat passionately loved by a born killer, as in "The Lieutenant of Innishmore"; or has an "accident" with boiling oil in this Young Vic revival of his 1996 "The Beauty Queen of Leenane."

Like "Railway Children" and "Prisoner," a sense of place is paramount in Mr. McDonagh's four-hander, set in Leenane, a small town in the mountains of Connemara, County Galway. Maureen Folan, described by Mr. McDonagh as "aged 40, plain, slim" and played by the beautiful, sympathetic Susan Lynch, is stuck there in designer Ultz's rain-soaked, run-down cottage, looking after her "stout, frail," demanding, manipulative 70-year-old mother Mag. The old woman was so convincingly played by Rosaleen Linehan that the first-night audience came close to hissing and booing her like a pantomime villain when she burned the note and letter from Pato Dooley, the "good-looking local man, aged about 40," whose proposal to emigrate to Boston with him represents Maureen's only hope of escape.

Maureen seems at first a model dutiful daughter. But Mag makes her a virtual slave, and the mother's spitefulness and constant complaining, so hilarious to the audience, have taken their toll on the morale of her virgin daughter. Even so, it's surprising when Maureen sets about seducing Pato, wearing a skimpy minidress, and flaunts it (and Pato) in front of Mag.

With Joe Hill-Gibbins's direction the two women achieve superlative, unforgettable performances. Scene five (of nine) is an extended letter-writing monologue in which Pato (sweetly played by David Ganly) proposes to Maureen. This is a trap in which Mr. McDonagh captures the hearts of the audience. We desperately want the couple to elope. But this is Mr. McDonagh's Ireland, where lovability and violence are invariably complementary traits of character. *(Until Aug. 21; www.youngvic.org)*

—Paul Levy is a writer based in Oxfordshire.

A battle over arms and armor

On the auction floor, antique arms and armor can still battle it out.

At Bonhams arms and armor sale April 29 in London, 94% of lots were sold, led by a Lloyd's Patriotic Fund sword, which was awarded to Lieutenant William Howe Mulcaster of H.M.S. Minerva for his service during the Napoleonic Wars. The sword sold for £60,000, well above the estimate of £35,000-£45,000.

Collecting
MARGARET STUDER

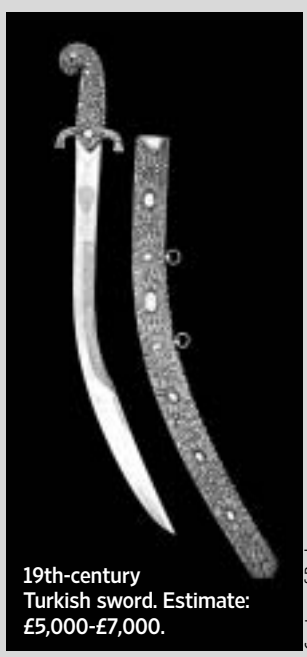
Meanwhile, on June 30, London auctioneer Thomas Del Mar's arms, armor and militaria sale in association with Sotheby's was 90% sold. Commanding top price was a Chinese Qing Dynasty bronze canon that was captured by the British in 1841 during the First Anglo-Chinese Opium War. The Hong Kong Maritime Museum paid £54,000, above the estimate of £12,000-£18,000).

"Collectors look for the exotic," Bonhams specialist Amina Ali-Shah says.

Bonhams coming arms and armor sale July 28 will have an array of European, Asian, Middle Eastern and American items including swords, guns, pistols, daggers, maces and full armor. A late 14th-century to early 15th-century Medieval sword is estimated at £7,000-£9,000; a 16th-century German or Italian steel mace at £3,000-£4,000; an 18th-century Scottish broadsword with inscriptions referring to the intrepid heart of King Robert the Bruce (1274-1329), at £8,000-£10,000; and a 19th-century Turkish sword decorated with corals and turquoises, at £5,000-£7,000.

Also at the sale, a Colt 1862 Revolver that belonged to Lieutenant Arthur Sinclair, who served aboard the CSS Alabama, a legendary Confederate Navy raider that attacked Union ships for two years during the American Civil War, is valued at £10,000-£15,000.

Elsewhere, Christie's will have an arms and armor sale in London Sept. 29. One highlight will be a rare pair of flintlock dueling pistols (circa 1814-'17) made by William Boss (estimate: £15,000-£20,000).



19th-century Turkish sword. Estimate: £5,000-£7,000.

Courtesy of Bonhams

The Heart of Darkness

By Peter Stothard

This is a story, advertised on television as a bedtime story, in which a glowering leader from the north of England is thwarted for ten years by his sunnier, southern companion in his lust to rule the whole kingdom—and how the story-teller, a sensitive idealist, becomes the victim of the northern man's unimaginably dark machinations.

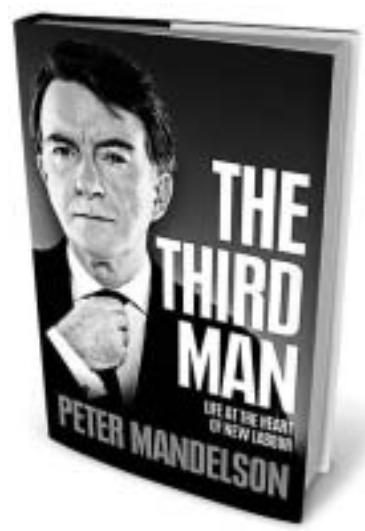
The Third Man
By Peter Mandelson
(HarperPress, £18.99, 512 pages)

In his memoir, "The Third Man," Peter Mandelson shows Gordon Brown, whom only three months ago he was supporting to remain British prime minister, as, in truth, a very vengeful troll, paranoid and dangerous to all who ever crossed him. Tony Blair, Mr. Brown's predecessor, is portrayed as lighter, quicker, but less hard-working and too weak to rid himself of his rival. Mr. Mandelson, the "third man" of the title, is the visionary communicator who once upon a time foresaw the strengths of both Mr. Blair and Mr. Brown, but who, in his own four stints as a minister, became cursed to be crushed between them. Like many successful bedtime stories, much of Mr. Mandelson's tale is written as though the author were still a child himself, a brave lost boy lashing out in large black letters, more charcoal than crayon, some of them smudged by tears.

This is thus an unusual memoir, also a cautionary tale of our time, a reminder of the 1990s and how widespread the wish was that something seemingly impossible might happen; that the Labour Party should finally become electable. The idea that dross might be turned to gold was highly attractive. When Mr. Mandelson began spinning Mr. Brown and Mr. Blair to the media, his wizardry was especially admired. Once famed for the previously secret tricks of his trade, he became a modernist as well as a modernizer, not the first to exaggerate and deceive on behalf of Westminster masters but the first to make it fashionable. Spin was in the air.

The key moment in the book comes in May 1994 when the Labour leader, John Smith, dies suddenly and both Mr. Brown and Mr. Blair want his job. To be a servant of two masters has been a stock tale of woe for centuries. While Mr. Brown is acknowledged as the senior, Mr. Mandelson and most of the media prefer sunny Mr. Blair. The strings pulled between Mr. Mandelson and the media in these days become a matter of obsession for Mr. Brown, of horror that his favorite conjuror's tricks have been played against him.

After a still-disputed power-sharing deal, Mr. Blair wins the leadership, Mr. Brown "hates the world," and "New Labour" wins the 1997 election. Mr. Mandelson, formally posted to the Cabinet Office, remains for practical purposes in his previous role as a spin-doctor. When the deputy prime minister faces an internal party election, he compares Mr. Mandelson to a crab in a bottle. There is a compensating letter on his "predicament" from the Prince of Wales, who notes the "vulnerable and sensitive inner core" that lies beneath the "inevitable outer carapace." Mr. Mandelson notes "how unthinkable it would have been for a fellow politician to have paused to reflect on what might lie beneath my outer shell or to grasp my 'predicament.'" This is the first knot in a long rope of pity for himself and candid critiques for colleagues.



When he gets his first ministerial department, he survives only six months. "It was my own mistakes that caused my downfall," he writes, "but the engine of my destruction was Gordon Brown." The mistake—taking a secret loan from a fellow minister—seems trivial now, but Mr. Brown as an engine of destruction rather less so. Mr. Blair's wife says of Mr. Brown, "a person who causes evil to another will in the end suffer his returns." She is "angry and upset and worried for Tony." On holiday in Corfu, Serena Rothschild (whose family, with Mick Jagger and Kate Moss, provides color in this dark tale) asks Mr. Mandelson why he has so many enemies. He cites his clinging reputation as the creature behind the curtain, the "sinister minister."

Six months later he is back in government, abusing Mr. Brown while the prime minister lies in the Queen's Bedroom at Hillsborough Castle promising to "protect" him from a second destruction. Two years on—in a scandal less comprehensible than the first—he is fired for allowing incorrect briefings to be given to the press about an Indian businessman's passport inquiry. While his closest friends desert him, Mr. Brown is "briefly warmer to me than at any time since my 'betrayal' in 1994." This is merely the warmth of the destroyer who has won. "Gordon wants you buried," Mr. Blair admits while attempting to lure Mr. Mandelson back for the next election campaign. Then comes 9/11 and the Iraq war and the sense, intensified in this version of the story, that for once, and on one issue only, Mr. Blair is free—not just to stay in power but to make decisions on his own.

"The Third Man" watches from the wings while a "cowed" Mr. Blair considers moving Mr. Brown from the Treasury but balks at the dangers. Mr. Brown wants nothing except the inheritance that for so long he has felt was his, an imminent date for Mr. Blair to retire. Mr. Blair describes Mr. Brown as "aggressive, brutal . . . like something out of the Mafiosi" but eventually has to give way. Mr. Mandelson is exiled in Brussels as an EU commissioner.

The servant and the two masters seemed to have reached the end of their show until this year's shock encore, in which Mr. Mandelson accepts a peerage from his destroyer and makes a "third return," arguably the greatest conjuring trick of all. Mr. Blair is back too—retaining "a train-spotter's interest in British politics" and a deep concern "about his own legacy." The collapse of New Labour cannot be stopped, as all three know. But the last attempt at persuading the voters otherwise permits some last black reflection on the "scars," the "mutually assured destruction," and how it became "all so wretched between us."

Mr. Stothard is editor of the Times Literary Supplement. He was editor of the Times from 1992 to 2002 and is the author of "On the Spartacus Road, A Spectacular Journey Through Ancient Italy."

Going With the Flow

By Jennifer Ouellette

Leonardo da Vinci was fascinated by watery things. He spent hours in his lab and in the field observing the turbulent dynamics of water flowing in a river, carefully documenting its quirky behavior in his illustrated notebooks. He noticed the tiny swirling whirlpools, or vortices, that formed when boulders obstructed the water's path, and the bubbles that rose through the water in fizzy spirals, and connected those with similar eddies that formed in the air. His writings contain one of the earliest scientific descriptions of a water spout at the seashore, recorded with the title: "Of wind twists and eddies involving water."

Five hundred years later, such close observation of common natural phenomena is a rarity for most of us, living in cities and suburbs, where nature is largely taken for granted and life moves in a hurry. Gavin Pretor-Pinney, co-founder of the British magazine the Idler, is an unhurried man. His gazing skyward resulted in the 2006 surprise best seller "The Cloudspotter's Guide." Now he is back, having lowered his sightline a bit, with "The Wave Watcher's Companion." Channeling his inner Leonardo, he revels in the sheer variety and hidden complexities of these seemingly simple occurences, taking us on an eye-popping journey through light waves (electromagnetism), sound waves, brain waves, mechanical waves, the shock waves that accompany explosions and, of course, the waves beloved by surfers.

The subject matter is not as much of a departure from cloud-spotting as one might think. Inspiration came while Mr. Pretor-Pinney was cavorting on the rocky shores of Cornwall with his young daughter and found himself watching the motions of ocean waves instead of clouds. "You can't stare at clouds for long before realizing how much their appearance is influenced by waves,"

The Wavewatcher's Companion
By Gavin Pretor-Pinney
(Bloomsbury, 336 pages, £14.99)

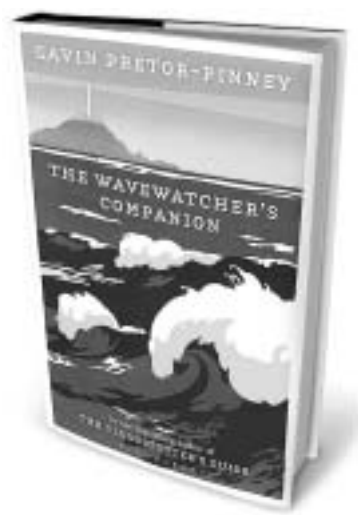
he writes. "For the atmosphere is an ocean, too, but an ocean of air rather than water." Since clouds are "borne on waves of air," he reasons, cloud spotters are technically wave spotters as well.

Like his previous book, this one employs a chatty, conversational tone, with clear technical explanations enlivened by real-world examples, whimsical asides, personal anecdotes and inventive analogies—all liberally peppered with historical and literary references to tickle the palate of discriminating bibliophiles.

We meet 17th-century Jesuit priest-turned-explorer Athanasius Kircher, who studied echoes bouncing off reflecting walls. Allusions to Robert Burns and Emily Brontë share space with the film maker Jacques Tati and the movie "When Harry Met Sally" (the scene where Harry tells a friend about his failing marriage as both men compulsively do "the wave" at a baseball game). Elsewhere physics rubs elbows with neuroscience and biology.

In essence, Mr. Pretor-Penney says, waves share some common properties: They all have some type of frequency, wavelength and amplitude. But beyond that, they divide into three distinct types: transverse, longitudinal and torsional. Snakes use transverse wave motion (oscillating side to side) to slither through the grass. Earthworms employ longitudinal waves (moving forward and backward) through muscular contractions that travel down the length of their segmented bodies. A certain three-legged cocker spaniel named Tubby found out about torsional waves the hard way: Tubby was the only fatality when the Tacoma Narrows Bridge in Washington state collapsed in 1940, wrecked by torsional (twisting) waves and resonances. Often these different types of waves combine. Gastropods—slugs and snails—use a combination of transverse and longitudinal waves to propel themselves.

In addition to offering clear and useful explanations of wave science, Mr. Pretor-Pinney shows a keen eye for minor but fascinating wave-related facts. We learn, for instance, that the only creature on Earth that can rival humans for directional hearing is a



humble parasitoid fly called Ormia Ochracea. The author tells us where to find acoustical art installations, too, like the "Harmonic Bridge" near the Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, an overpass equipped with giant aluminum tubes that act like wind instruments, resonating to specific frequencies in the random noise generated by vehicles passing over the bridge.

Mr. Pretor-Pinney even discourses on the spontaneous "stadium wave" that has become a fixture at sporting events, musing on how we momentarily relinquish our individuality to become part of "the collective will of the crowd" when we participate. This is a type of social behavior we apparently share with honeybees—who use it to ward off predatory wasps—and with amoebas, who use chemical waves to communicate when food is scarce, causing them to clump together and behave as a single organism.

The scattershot nature of Mr. Pretor-Pinney's whimsical book is both a strength and a weakness. At times "The Wave Watcher's Companion" feels disorganized and random, as he meanders from topic to topic, touching on brain waves here, animal locomotion there, perhaps dropping in an arch literary allusion before moving on to the wavy shimmer of butterfly's wings.

Then again, such casual haphazardness is also part of the book's odd charm, akin to the experience of wave-watching itself. Mr. Pretor-Pinney comments on the disorderliness of watery motions in his opening chapter, stylistically foreshadowing the chapters to come: "Like rush-hour commuters at a busy station, the little crests passed this way and that, crossing each other's paths chaotically. But unlike commuters they passed through and over each other, combining and dividing, appearing and disappearing." It turns out that contemplating the ebb and flow of harried commuters can be almost as diverting as watching ocean waves crashing on a rocky shore—if we just take a few moments to stop and look.

Ms. Ouellette is the author of "The Calculus Diaries: How Math Can Help You Lose Weight, Win in Vegas, and Survive a Zombie Apocalypse." She lives in Los Angeles.

time off


© Polly Morgan

Amberg
art
"Review of the Modern" exhibits 250 artworks from the 20th century by artists such as Andy Warhol, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Paul Klee, Wassily Kandinsky, Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Roy Lichtenstein and others.
Amberger Congress Centrum
Until Sept. 23
☎ 49-9621-4900-0
www.acc-amberg.de

Amsterdam
art
"Javanese of Great Stature" unveils five lifesize portraits of Javanese court officials from the mid-19th century, alongside a scale model of a Javanese market from the same period with 150 miniature figurines.
Rijksmuseum
Until Aug. 27
☎ 31-2067-4700-0
www.rijksmuseum.nl

Berlin
music
"Wassermusik 2010 Festival" offers open-air music and films celebrating rivers and the cultures they have influenced, including performances by Chicha libre, Gypsy Queens & Kings feat and Mahala Raï Banda.
Haus Der Kulturen Der Welt
Until Aug. 13
☎ 49-3039-7871-75
www.hkw.de

Birmingham
art
"This Could Happen to You: Ikon in the 1970s" is a survey of the artistic program from Peter Sedgley, Jeremy Moon, Barrie Cook and John Walker.
Ikon Gallery
Until Sept. 5
☎ 44-12-1248 0708
www.ikon-gallery.co.uk

Bregenz
music
"Bregenz Festival 2010" stages concerts, opera and theater productions, including "Aida" by Giuseppe Verdi, "The Passenger" by Mieczyslaw Weinberg, and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra.
Various venues around town
Until Aug. 22
☎ 43-557-4407-6
www.bregenzerfestspiele.com

Davos
music
"Davos Festival—Young Artists in Concert" introduces some of the most promising new talents in classical music performing works by Mozart, Wagner, Schubert, Bartok, Rossini, Strauss, Haydn and others.
Various venues around town
July 24-Aug. 7
☎ 41-81-4132-066
www.davosfestival.ch

Emden
art
"Brigitte Waldach: Drawings and Installations" launches a museum tour of work by the German artist, presenting large-format drawings and site-specific works, including "In the Public's Private Light," created with 100 red lamps donated by the citizens of Emden.
Kusthalle Emden
Until Sept. 5
☎ 49-4921-9750-50
kunsthalle-emden.de

Ghent
art
"Stijn Cole: Artist in Residence: Sunset" showcases work by the contemporary Belgian artist, who uses video, sculpture, scale models, paintings, graphic works and mixed media in his art.
Museum voor Schone Kunsten
Until Oct. 3
☎ 32-9-2400-700
www.mskgent.be

La Roque d'Anthéron
music
"International Piano Festival" features recitals by distinguished keyboard artists such as Martha Argerich, Nelson Freire, Christian Zacharias, Boris Berezovsky and Nikolaï Lugansky.
Parc du Château de Florans
Until Aug. 22
☎ 33-04-4250-5115
www.festival-piano.com

London
film
"Film4 Summer Screen" offers a series of talks with actors and directors, alongside open-air screenings of popular films.
Somerset House
July 29-Aug. 8
☎ 44-8448-4717-15
www.somersethouse.org.uk

theater
"Against the Tide" sees Graeae Theatre and Australian theater company Strange Fruit perform aerial work on four-meter-high swaying poles, featuring disabled and abled artists as part of the Southbank's "Watch This Space Festival."
The National Theatre
July 28-30
☎ 44-20-7452-3000
www.nationaltheatre.org.uk

art
"Polly Morgan, Psychopomps" presents four suspended taxidermy sculptures by the British artist.
Haunch of Venison
Until Sept. 25
☎ 44-20-7495-5050
www.haunchofvenison.comart

design
"Roman Cieslewicz Exhibition" shows 150 works in a major retrospective of work by the Polish artist, considered one of the most influential graphic designers of the 20th century.
Royal College of Art
Until Aug. 7
☎ 44-20-7590-4444
www.rca.ac.uk

Marciac
music
"33rd Jazz in Marciac" includes performances by Diana Krall, Roy Hargrove, Marcus Miller, Wynton Marsalis, Esperanza Spalding and Gilberto Gil.
Various locations around town
July 30-Aug. 15
☎ 33-5250-8823-0
www.jazzinmarciac.com

Oberstdorf
music
"Oberstdorfer Musiksommer" is a classical music festival, featuring performances by Je Hye Lee, Tanja Becker-Bender, Giorgi Kharadze, Zheeyoung Moon, Munch Brass Connection and others.
Various locations around town
Until Aug. 19
☎ 49-8322-7004-67
www.oberstdorfer-musiksommer.de

Otterlo
art
"Gilbert & George: the Paintings" presents an unusual sculpture from 1971, consisting of six large triptychs painted in oils on linen by the British duo.
Kröller-Müller Museum
Until Nov. 21
☎ 31-31-8591-241
www.kmm.nl

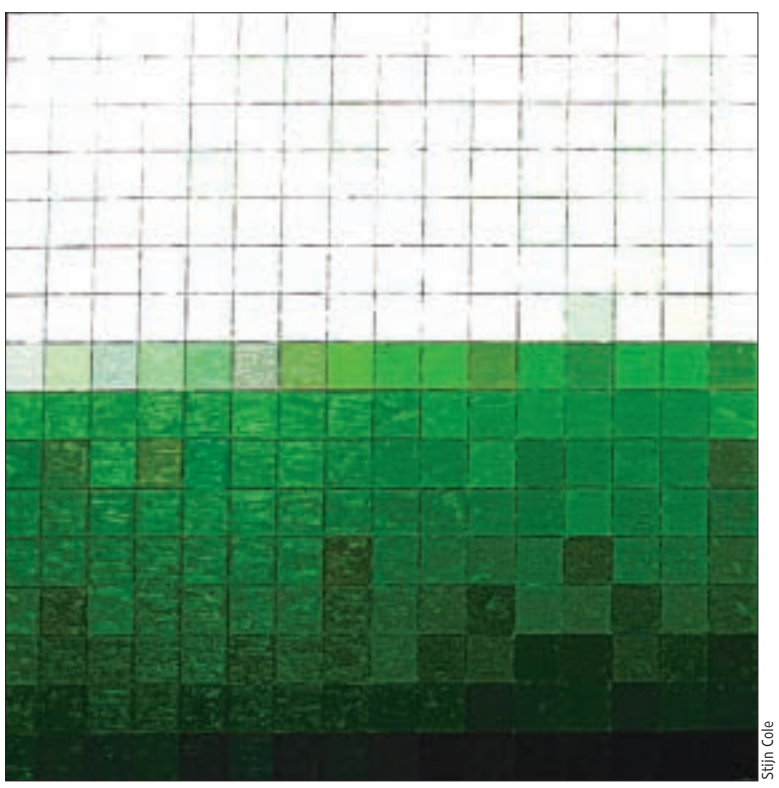
Prades
music
"Festival Pablo Casals de Prades" is a chamber music festival with 44 performances featuring music by Beethoven, Brahms, Tchaikovsky, Chopin and others.
Festival Pablo Casals de Prades
July 26-Aug.13
☎ 33-4689-6330-7
www.prades-festival-casals.com

Steyr
music
"Musikfestival Steyr" presents performances around the Austrian town, including Mozart's "Don Giovanni" and an Edith Piaf musical.
The Castle Moat Schloss Lamberg
Altes Theater Steyr
Until Aug. 14
☎ 43-7252-5322-90
www.musikfestivalsteyr.at

Source: WSJE research


© www.jazzinmarciac.com

Esperanza Spalding will perform '33rd Jazz in Marciac'; top, Polly Morgan 'Systemic Inflammation' (2010) on show in London; at right, 'Colorscape' (2009) by Stijn Cole on show in Ghent.


Stijn Cole