# WEEKEND JOURNAL.

**EUROPE** 



# **Blooming Milan**

Where to shop for classic jewelry and modern baubles

Food: A sushi class with Nobu | Wine: Buying into Beaujolais

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Barbara Tina Fuhr Editor Elisabeth Limber ART DIRECTOR Brian M. Carney BOOKS PAGE EDITOR

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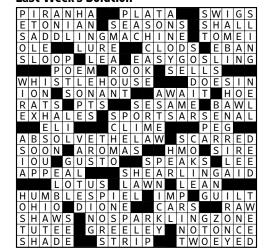
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# Without prints, is it still Pucci?

STEADY STREAM of stars, including Kate Hudson, Jennifer Lopez and Eva Longoria Parker, have been treading the red carpet in Pucci.

But you might not know it from the gowns, which are startlingly different from the mod tank dresses with swirly psychedelic patterns for which Emilio Pucci is known.

#### On Style

CHRISTINA BINKLEY

Under the hand of designer Peter Dundas, the six-decade-old fashion house is reinventing itself as an It brand. In the process, it is shifting its emphasis from kaleidoscopic cruisewear to cocktail dresses and sweeping gowns-often in solid colors—that have the provocative, body-revealing looks that Hollywood stylists love.

Mr. Dundas joined just over a year ago, and his third collection is about to be shipped to stores for fall. In that relatively short time, he has captured a new, younger audience for the brand. At its core, the image is decadent, chic party animal (of the heiress sort).

"Since Peter has come on board, he's taken it beyond 'I'm-going-towear-it-on-vacation," says Petra Flannery, a Hollywood stylist who dressed actress Zoe Saldana for the Los Angeles premier of "Star Trek" last year in a Pucci dress with a snake slithering around the torso and mesh cut-outs. She put starlet Hayden Panettiere in form-fitting Pucci for a number of public appearances, including the World Music Awards in Monaco last month.

Before Mr. Dundas's arrival at the brand, red-carpet appearances were rare. Ms. Flannery says she used Pucci only in shoots for swimwear and beachy editorial spreads.

"We were doing the same look every season," Didier Drouet, Pucci's chief executive, conceded after the brand's fall 2010 runway show

Pucci's new emphasis spurred Saks Fifth Avenue to create a space for it on its venerable third floor in New York for this fall. Mr. Dundas "really is attracting a very young customer," says Joseph Boitano, Saks' women's general merchandising manager.

But there is a risk here of losing the iconic look of the brand. It can be difficult these days to recognize a Pucci when you see it. When Carrie appeared in a swirling, gray Pucci gown in the recently released "Sex and the City 2," I wouldn't have known it was Pucci without the movie notes. Clothes that look generic may not work to build the brand's image.

Still, the Pucci family itself is loving the new look. "I hate the stereotypes of Pucci, the psychedelic pop, says Laudomia Pucci, the daughter of Emilio Pucci, who founded the brand. "Peter has shaken that up."

It's a ticklish task to dial down the target age of a luxury brand without losing its older, wealthiest customers. Mr. Boitano says Pucci is managing that by continuing to create plenty of prints and simpler dresses. On Mr. Dundas's runway. the prints are often still therethough they're sometimes dyed an unexpected color like deep burgundy, and the clothes can be so revealing that they border on lewd.

These days, the role of a designer at a brand goes way beyond making clothes. The original designer, Mr. Pucci, was a Florentine aristocrat who began by making bathing suits and reached his calling as a designer in his 40s. His wildly colored, geometric designs and simple silhouettes drew attention in the 1950s and 1960s. Marilyn Monroe was buried in Pucci. After Mr. Pucci's death in 1992, Pucci clothes were created by a succession of designers known for their use of color and patterns.

Now, Pucci, which is owned by the Pucci family and luxury conglomerate LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, is following the playbook of other European luxury brands, from Louis Vuitton to Ferragamo, that have branched into every possible product line. Mr. Drouet is busy building licensing relationships: Expect to see more Pucci handbags, shoes, fragrances, ties and sunglasses.

Mr. Drouet hired Mr. Dundas after the Norwegian designer arrived for his job interview with "a kind of a collection-sketches" that portrayed his vision of the Pucci girl wearing solids as well as patterns. Mr. Dundas had headed Ungaro for three seasons until 2007.

Before Pucci's ubersexy runway show in February, Vogue editor Anna Wintour stepped backstage to greet Mr. Dundas—a sign that the designer had reached fashion's inner sanctum.

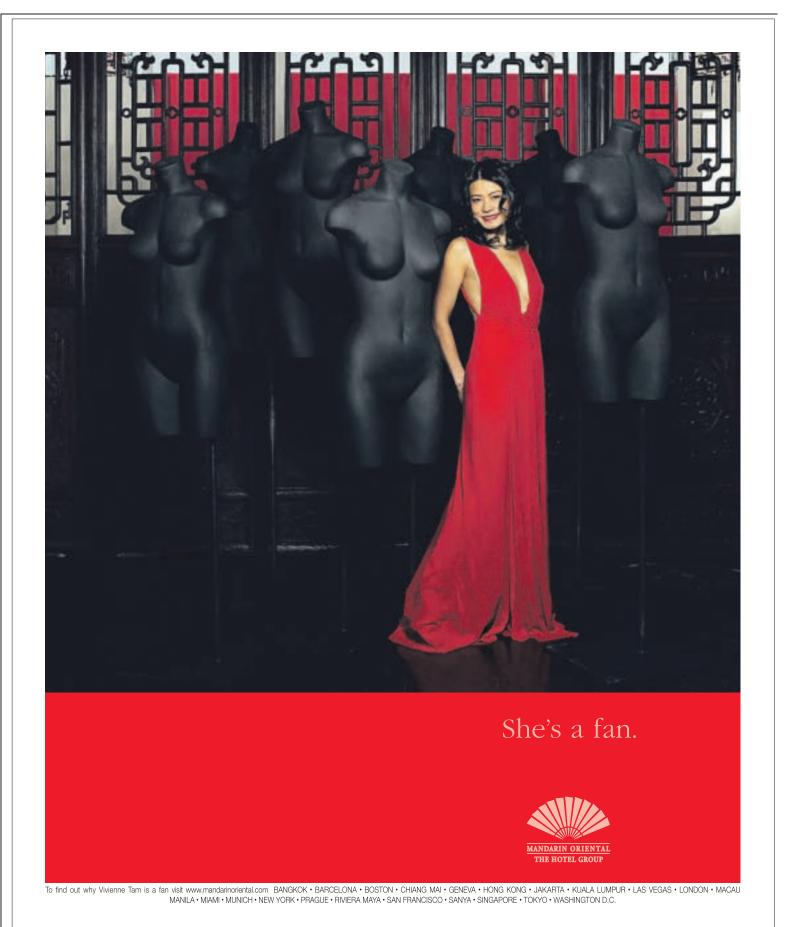
There are other signs. The 30-something designer, who declines to give his exact age, hobnobs

with the aristocratic rich from whom he seeks inspiration—he cites European heiress Eugenie Niarchos as his muse. At 1.88 meters, he has a big-handsome-Viking persona and seems to be highly popular with his clients. "And he's so nice, isn't he?" asks Ms. Flannery.

Mr. Dundas designs "from the gut," he says. "I believe in animal instincts. I believe clothes should provoke desire," he told me backstage at his show in February, wearing a clingy T-shirt by red-hot designer Rick Owens.

He hopes his clothes will expand people's perceptions of the brand. "I want to make people think of Pucci as a woman, not just as a print," Mr. Dundas said.







Nobu restaurant overlooking Hyde Park at the Metropolitan hotel, London; top right, light-handed works of art: sushi how it should be done; bottom right, half of the platter is made by Nobu-san, the other half by his butter-fingered student. But can you tell which is which?

At left, Nobu Matsuhisa in the

## Rolling sushi with Nobu

#### Jemima Sissons takes a lesson from the famous chef and learns about his dreams of pop-stardom

London AVING ONE'S FIRST ever sushi lesson with 61-year-old L L Nobuyuki 'Nobu' Matsuhisa is rather like Elton John teaching vou how to play Chopsticks on the piano or Philip Roth teaching you the alphabet: Just ever-so-slightly humbling. Yet here we are, and Nobu-san (san means Mr. in Japanese, as well as Ms., Miss or Mrs.) is being remarkably patient with his fivethumbed student, as yet again, I produce something that more resembles a slug dozing on a rice mattress, than the kind of epicurean masterpiece customers—and celebrities—pay top dollar for.

I have come to the flagship London Nobu restaurant located in Park Lane's Metropolitan hotel, to be taught the tricks of the trade in a two-hour private session from the man whom many credit with making sushi sexy. Nobu-san, who is over from Beverly Hills, where he resides with his wife, Yoko, to host a series of special "umami" dinners (see sidebar), is slim and sprightly, emanating robust good health that is helped along, no doubt, by the balmy California air.

The reverence with which his blackclad entourage treat Nobu-san give him the air of a superstar, and in restaurant terms, at least, he is. With 21 restaurants around the world, from New York to Capetown, his celebrity patrons include Madonna, Gwyneth Paltrow, Kate Moss and Harrison Ford.

Nobu-san has been unwavering in his dedication to sushi since his

early childhood in Saitama, Japan. When Nobu-san was 8, his father was killed in a car accident, and his older brother took him under his wing. One day his brother took the young Nobu-san to a sushi restaurant, and that is where his fate was decided. "When I was a kid, sushi was very expensive, not like it is now on every street corner," he says. "My older brother took me to a restaurant as a treat. I was so shocked to see this energy and taste the sushi, I said, I wanted to be a sushi chef when I grew up. I never changed what I wanted to do."

When he was 18, Nobu-san got a job in a sushi restaurant. For the first three years he cleaned fish, skivvied, and went to the fish market with the chefs. Seven years later, he emerged

as a fully qualified sushi chef.

One of his yearnings was to follow in his father's footsteps and travel. "My first dream was to be a sushi chef, my second was to live in another country," Nobu-san says. "This is because after my father died I would look at a picture of him taken on the island of Palau near the Philippines. When I missed him I thought 'I want to be like my father,' and this picture gave me my dreams."

Nobu-san opened his first restaurant in Peru, where he honed his signature style of "fusion" sushi, using South American ingredients such as coriander and chilies.

After stints in Argentina and Tokyo, he went to start a restaurant in Alaska in 1978. Fifty days after it opened, however, the whole place burned down after a fire started in the kitchen. It was uninsured, and Nobu-san lost everything. "This was the worst time of my life," he says, looking uncharacteristically glum. "But it all adds to experience." After another spell in Tokyo,

Nobu-san headed to Beverly Hills in 1987 to start afresh. There he opened sushi restaurant Matsuhisa, which quickly gained a cult following, including actors such as Robert De Niro. After years of trying to persuade Nobu-san to open a restaurant in New York with him, Mr. De Niro in 1994 finally won him over and the Nobu empire, as we know it, was born (Mr. De Niro is still a coowner, along with Meir Teper, while Richard Notar is managing partner). Nobu-san's inventive interpretation of sushi-and signature dishes such as black cod with miso sauce and yellowtail jalapeñowere instant hits.

As Nobu-san starts the uphill battle of trying to teach me to fashion a lump of rice into something dainty, I ask him if he ever set out to be a celebrity. He has, after all, appeared in the movies "Casino," "Austin Powers in Goldmember" and "Memoirs of a Geisha."

"I was never looking for the pictures, the articles, and, ultimately, I am still just a chef and love to cook," he says.

That may be but nowadays his life has something of the glitz. He is still very much in charge of his empire and he spends much of the year traversing the globe keeping an eye on things, yet you'll also find him relaxing in Beverly Hills, trying to improve on his 11 handicap on the golf course, or hanging out with his friend, the musician Kenny Gee.

You won't, however, find him doing much actual cooking anymore. "I never cook whole days. If I do, it's in L.A.," he says, as he gently explains the importance of not wetting ones hands too much before handling the rice (mine is a sticky mess). He is busy expanding with openings of restaurants in Beijing this autumn and Budapest in September. There are also plans for Nobu hotels world-wide.

As Nobu-san deftly slices some salmon sashimi, he says ebulliently that he is expecting his first grand-child in Tokyo.

This good news is respite from what has been a testing year due to the economic downturn. "Last year was my worst year for business since I started in 1987, or maybe my worst year full stop," he says. Talks to sell a majority stake of his business through Goldman Sachs Group have been withdrawn, he says, and currently there are no plans to sell Nobu. So far this year, he says, the financial situation of the company has improved. "Nobu is my name



100% and I cannot sell my business."

In addition, Nobu-san has been under pressure for refusing to take endangered bluefin tuna off the menu at his restaurants. Celebrities including Sienna Miller and Woody Harrelson signed a petition threatening to boycott the restaurants, and one protestor chained the doors of Nobu London together with a bike lock, preventing customers from entering.

I have been told by his aides to maybe leave my probing on this matter to the end of the lesson. The restaurant group claims it is seeking alternatives, but that demand is still just as high from customers.

As I reach for the tuna for my last piece of nigiri, I ask him why he still insists on selling bluefin tuna in his restaurants. I realize I have hit a nerve. "Look," he says tensely. "We don't do anything illegal, but some groups still choose to attack us. If the government makes it illegal, I will follow. But so far there is nothing. Also, bluefin tuna is tradition in Japan." He won't be pushed on the matter further.

The lesson is coming to a close. I am trying to master the maki roll, which involves spreading some rice over a square of seaweed, followed by a slick of wasabi and some tuna, before rolling it up into a perfect

Umami, is our "fifth taste," with sweet, sour, salty and bitter. It is best described as "savoriness." or "mouthwatering." It is the lingering, pleasant taste one experiences when eating savory foods that contain the amino acid glutamate in its free form or inosinate or guanylate. These are all found in many different foods, from soy sauce, to dried bonito, Parmesan cheese to mushrooms. Japanese cooking uses many umami-rich foods, although it is a universal taste common in many foods.

"The characteristic of the umami taste is that it lasts a long time, longer than any other tastes in your mouth," says Kumiko Ninomiya, director of the Tokyo-based Umami Information Center. "It is a full tongue-coating experience."

Umami was discovered in 1908 by Japanese scientist Professor Kikunae Ikeda, who thought there was a "different" taste other than the four regular ones. He discovered that glutamate was the key to the taste of the Japanese soup kombu dashi. Then in 2000, scientists in Miami found the taste receptor for umami, which is stimulated by glutamate, giving the idea of umami (as a distinct taste) scientific credence.

Enhancing umami taste is a concept widely used by Western chefs, in creating interesting savory dishes. Heston Blumenthal, chef and owner of the three-Michelin-starred Fat Duck restaurant in Berkshire, U.K., is a great believer in using umami-rich foods, such as *ko-mbu* (seaweed) served in his famous "Sounds of the Sea" dish, a multisensory seafood dish that incorporates the smells, sounds and flavors of the ocean.

square shape with a bamboo matt. My edges don't meet, and the rice oozes out of the side. I change topics and ask if he has any dreams still to conquer. "I offered to teach my friend Kenny Gee how to make sushi for his birthday; he gave me a saxophone and has said he'll teach me how to play. Look out for the album: Nobu Gee!

And with dreams of pop-stardom on his mind, he bids me farewell and heads off for his afternoon nap, leaving me to survey-and consume-my own pitiful attempts at sushi stardom.

> -Jemima Sissons is a writer based in London.



## Buying into Beaujolais

THIS YEAR I'M going to buy big. Funds have already been secretly secreted from my main account (to hide evidence of major indulgent purchases), the credit card is ready, the limit surreptitiously increased, and space in the cellar marked "2009" has been cleared. All I need now is an online en primeur catalog, a focused morn-

#### Wine

WILL LYONS

ing of buying and I'm in—a little bit of history secured for posterity. I missed out on the great Bordeaux vintage of 2000 (just graduated and couldn't afford it), similarly the 2005 (ditto: just bought a house etc.) but I am determined not to miss out on the '09 vintage, which in the Médoc will go down as one of the finest.

But for those of you looking to cellar wine, it's worth noting that it wasn't just Bordeaux that enjoyed a superb vintage in 2009. And it isn't just Bordeaux that can make sophisticated, structured wines with a richness of fruit and freshness of acidity that means they will cellar and improve for 40 years or more. If you find the inflated prices of Bordeaux more than a little offputting, I can recommend another option: 2009 Beaujolais.

Beaujolais is curiously unfashionable. Those of you snickering at the back, you can stop laughing now. These are Beaujolais Crus we are talking about, which is light-years in quality and style from Nouveau, the easy-todrink quaffing wine that arrives without fail on the third Thursday of November. Actually, I must confess, I do have a soft spot for Beaujolais Nouveau. It's not the style of the wine, very light with very little tannin, or even the flavors, which can range from bananas to pears. It's the outlandish lengths-helicopters, high-performance cars, noisy wine bars—to which people used to go to be the first to secure a glass of the year's vintage. The wine world doesn't need Beaujolais Nouveau anymore. That particular space has been filled by southern-hemisphere New World wines that, picked in the early spring, give us our first taste of the year's vintage, and in many cases sate our thirst for light, fruity wines. No, Beaujolais Nouveau is best consigned to the chapter in the history books marked "The

'80s." In the words of Jasper Morris MW, the buying director at U.K. wine merchant Berry Brothers and Rudd, much of the Beaujolais grown on the flat land near the Saône River in southeastern France "need not concern us."

What is of interest in that region are the 10 appellations that lie on a bed of sandy, stone and granite soils that give the heavily planted Gamey grape a roundness, juicy flavor with a mineral, dry aftertaste. There are plenty of wines in the 2009 vintage that are too rich, too jammy, but Beaujolais has produced wines with freshness and acidity. These are best served with cold meats and salads, as picnic wines or as an accompaniment to cheese. I also like to to serve them on Christmas Day, when they offer light relief to an invariably fatigued palate. Stylistically, these wines sit somewhere between aged Rhône and or light red Burgundy. But comparisons are difficult as the Gamay found in Beaujolais creates wines that cannot be reproduced anywhere else in the world.

Brouilly, along with its sister appellation, Côte de Brouilly, is the largest and perhaps the best place to start among the 10 crus. Its wines are full of refreshing fruit flavors, but also have a fair amount of tannin and show earthy notes. They can last for a decade or more but show best after around three to four years. Not unlike Brouilly in terms of style is Régnié, which produces wines of good structure with plenty of red fruit character. Fleurie, meanwhile, offers a charming, perfumed, silky wine often dominated by an overwhelming scent of wild cherries. Finally, Morgon and Moulin à Vent are by far the most serious, with more tannic, meaty aromas and less of a floral and overtly fruity character. It is perhaps these wines more than any other that enjoy a comparison with Burgundy. They can also age well and stand up to most dishes.

It is worth choosing your wine by producer first, vintage second and appellation third. Among the producers to look out for are: Alain Chatoux, Julien Sunier, Jean-Paul Dubost, Château Thivin, Bernard Métrat, Domaine Grange Cochard, Domaine Louis-Claude Desvignes, Thibault Liger-Belair, Château De Raousset and Domaine les Roches Bleues. I'll certainly be buying into this vintage, I strongly suggest you

#### **DRINKING NOW**

#### Beaujolais, Vieilles Vignes, Alain Chatoux

Beaujolais, France

Vintage: 2009

Price: about £10 or €12

Alcohol content: 12.5%

Alain Chatoux's vines are on average 60 years old and grow in soil that is rich in granite and quartz, which gives his wines an intense structure. They are also juicy and have a forward, attractive nose of obvious red fruit such as strawberries and raspberries.





## Aphrodite casts her love spell

Cyprus's natural beauty, lax marriage laws are making the island a popular place to say 'I do'



Clockwise from top, the Rock of Aphrodite; a wedding at St. George's chapel in Paphos; the infinity pool at the Almyra Hotel; the House of Orpheus, archaeological site of Kato Paphos; and interior of St. George's chapel.

By Brooke Anderson

Paphos, Cyprus

HOUSANDS OF YEARS ago,
Aphrodite is said to have risen
from the sea on the rocky
shores of western Cyprus. Later, in
37 B.C., Marc Antony offered the island as a gift to Cleopatra. Indeed, romance has been tied historically to
Cyprus, and today, it has become a
popular wedding destination.

"I guess everyone has a picture in their mind of what they would like their wedding to look like and as soon as I saw the Annabelle [hotel] and the grounds, I knew this was my fairytale come true," says Debbie Williams, an administrator from Newton Aycliffe in Durham, U.K., who is busily planning her wedding in Paphos for October.

In addition to its natural beauty and stellar beaches, Cyprus's lax marriage laws have been a draw for foreigners. Since the British Mandate of 1923, Cyprus has allowed non-resident foreigners to get married in civil as well as religious ceremonies. The procedure is relatively straightforward, requiring only that the two people furnish their passports and proof of being single. Most cities in Cyprus allow couples to marry outside of the local town halls, meaning the ceremonies can take place in a hotel, on the beach or on a boat. (Turkey also allows civil marriages for foreigners, but the procedure is slightly more complicated, requiring different types of documents from their respective foreign embassies. Other European countries that allow foreigners to get married typically require that at least one person holds residency.)

"Around 75% of our clients are from the U.K. and Ireland, but last year we also arranged weddings for Polish, Russian, Canadian, Australian, Filipino and Lebanese couples," notes Lynn Simpson, a wedding planner with Skarvelis Weddings, based in Paphos. "Within the past year we have noticed a surge in interest from couples from Arab countries who are unable to marry there. In most cases this is due to differing religions or denominations and therefore illegal in their own countries. And it's only a half hour flight from Lebanon." (Flights from the Middle East to Cyprus have increased by 15% since last year, according to the Cyprus Tourism Organization.)

Maisy Khoury, a Cyprus wedding planner based in Beirut, says, "Business has been increasing steadily every year. Now, all travel agencies offer civil marriages. Today, Cyprus is known for this—it's like Las Vegas." Ms. Khoury is currently organizing a 150-guest Lebanese wedding for September to be held at the Amathus Beach Hotel in Paphos.

"With many couples now meeting via the Internet that may live thousands of miles apart, Cyprus often seems to be a popular choice as it can prove to be a halfway point for both of them," Ms. Simpson explains.

Neil Langridge from the U.K. and

his wife Angelika from Russia were married in Cyprus in December, choosing the island for its marriage procedures, and the west coast specifically for its remoteness and natural beauty. The couple had a small afternoon reception on the balcony of the Thalassa Boutique Hotel and Spa adjacent to Coral Bay, 11 kilometers north of Paphos. "After making some initial enquiries, it was clear that the administration requirements for being married in Cyprus were very simple and both the U.K. and Russia would recognize our marriage," recalls Mr. Langridge, an aircraft engineer, from Hampshire, U.K., currently based in Saudi Arabia. "The atmosphere is warm and peaceful, so it was the ideal place to plan our wedding."

The beaches of western Cyprus, with soft sand, gentle tide and kneehigh water are considered some of the best on the island. The beachfront of Paphos is a throwback to the Mediterranean seaside of the 1950s, before mass tourism brought highrise hotels, loud bars and aggressive souvenir selling. Instead, time







seems to have stood still in this unassuming resort town. The five-star hotels, just a few stories high, are hidden behind palm trees, the promenade is lined with Greek taverns and along the shore fishermen sit reeling in the daily catch until sunset.

As a quiet destination, Paphos has managed to avoid a reputation for wild nightlife like its counterpart Ayia Napa in eastern Cyprus. Instead, the appeal of Paphos is its mild climate—which tends to be slightly cooler than the rest of the island during the summer—its natural beauty and its ancient history.

The city, which has been a Unesco World Heritage site since 1980, is divided into the new city and old city. The harbor area of Kato Paphos (or

downtown New Paphos), features an archaeological park with wellpreserved mosaics in the Houses of Dionysus, Theseus and Aion. The old city of Paphos, located in the village of Kouklia, about 15 kilometers from the new city of Paphos, is home to the sanctuary of Aphrodite.

The Paphos area boasts the biggest concentration of Greek mosaics in the country. Unesco also protects the Byzantine and post-Byzantine churches in the nearby Troodos mountains, as well as the archaeological site of Choirokoitia, a Neolithic settlement dating back some 6,000 years, located near the southern coast of the island and around 70 kilometers east of Paphos.

Also worth a visit, near the Aka-

mas peninsula 50 kilometers north of Paphos, are the baths of Aphrodite-a small, natural grotto surrounded by fig trees and with water flowing down moss-covered rocks.

While the island's scenery creates a romantic backdrop, it's the hotels-with experience catering to a diverse clientele-that strive to ensure the wedding is seamless.

Everyone's story is different... We had an Amercian lady, Kurdish-Syrian guy marry here in an American-style civil wedding. [They] had the service translated into Arabic. On the day before the event, they requested white doves to fly as they finished their vows," recalls Sophia Liveras Atallah, wedding and events planner at Almyra hotel in Paphos, which caters to couples on romantic holidays with spa treatment packages and secluded rooftop terraces above the bedrooms.

"It is hassle free for everyone now that Cyprus is in the E.U. and there are plenty of wedding planners who can assist with your wedding," says Sally Boyce, wedding coordinator at Annabelle hotel in Paphos, which, like the Almyra, is owned by family-run Thanos Hotels group. "These days couples are looking to have a beautiful wedding, in a beautiful location but without all the stress and without paying a fortune. Cyprus can offer all that."

–Brooke Anderson is a writer based in Beirut.

#### OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

## Kathmandu, Nepal

By Patrick Barta

#### What to see

For many visitors, Kathmandu is a stop en route to the Himalayas. But it is also filled with exotic architecture, holy sites and walking tours. Kings were once crowned in Durbar Square, the city's historic center, and it remains a hive of activity, with more than a dozen temples, shrines to Ganesh and other Hindu gods and centuries-old buildings with multitiered roofs and carved-wood lattice work. Bodhnath is probably the most interesting of several religious sites on Kathmandu's outskirts. It features one of the largest stupas in Nepal and a large following among Tibetan refugees. The surrounding area feels like a small village, complete with cafés and artifact dealers. In the evening, hundreds of pilgrims circumambulate the stupa or meditate quietly in its shadows. Nearby Pashupatinath, along the banks of the Bagmati river, is popular for cremations, much like Varanasi on the Ganges river in India. Visitors can observe the rites at riverside ghats (pyres), but they must remain respectful and avoid taking photos. Swayambhunath temple, on a hilltop crawling with monkeys, has majestic views of the city and surrounding valley; the light is ideal for photographs in late afternoon.

#### Where to eat and shop

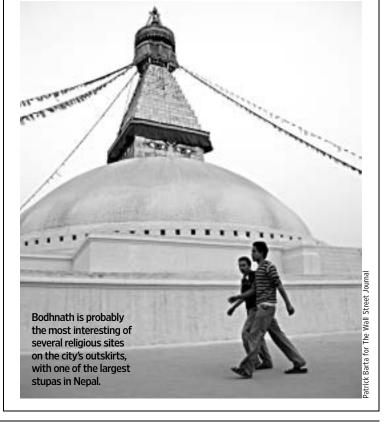
Thamel is Kathmandu's social hub—a sometimes overwhelming conglomeration of backbacker bars, curio shops and tour outfitters. For Nepali food,

Thamel House Restaurant (☎ 977-1-441-0388; thamelhouse. com.np) features mushroom curries. mutton and wild boar in a 19th-century building with a candle-lit courtyard. La Dolce Vita

(☎ 977-1-470-0612) is one of the best western restaurants, offering homemade pesto and wines by the glass. Garden of Dreams, a restored neoclassical mansion estate and gardens, has a charming European-style café serving tea and pastries in one of Kathmandu's most peaceful settings ( 977-1-442-5341; dwarikasgroup.com/Kaiser/index.htm). For shopping, try Fewa Pashmina (☎ 977-1-554-7940; fewapashmina. com), a no-frills Himalayan pashmina dealer in a suburb that's popular among aid workers and traveling executives. Buyers can order scarves and sweaters in 125 colors, including "peacock," "yellow hay" and "sunset."

#### Where to stay

Despite being one of the most luxurious hotels in town, the Hyatt Regency Kathmandu ( 2977-1-449-1234; kathmandu.regency.hyatt.com, starting at €119 per night) is reasonably priced and offers maximum comfort. Built in local style with pink and white brick, it features a spa and its own hiking trails and pathways to nearby historical sites. The Thamel backpacker district has a seeminaly endless supply of basic lodges. Among the best is Hotel Courtyard ( 977-1-470-0476; hotelcourtyard.com, deluxe rooms for €53 a night), on a guiet alleyway with large rooms, hardwood floors, Internet access and occasional group barbecues.



#### **TOURING THE ISLAND**

#### WHERE TO STAY

#### Almyra Hotel

This newly-renovated seafront fivestar hotel is just off the main promenade, and a short walk to the harbor and the archaeological park of Kato Paphos. It is popular for its spa treatments and shares its facilities with neighboring Annabelle Hotel, which is owned by the same parent company, Thanos Hotels. Rooms start at €200. www.thanoshotels.com

#### **Amathus Beach Hotel**

This sprawling five-star luxury resort is within walking distance of the old castle. It features its own golf course, a lagoon-shaped pool and hosts organized activities for children. Rooms start at €130. **☎** +357 268 83300 www.amathus-hotels.com

#### Thalassa Boutique Hotel and Spa

Thalassa Boutique Hotel and Spa, known for its great bedroom views, is adjacent to Coral Bay, overlooking the ancient ruins of the first Mycenaean settlement, Palaiocastro Maa, dating back to 1250 B.C. Double seaview rooms start at €193. www.thalassa.com.cy

#### WHERE TO EAT

Cyprus is a country that can be visited exclusively for its food. But a trip wouldn't be complete without tasting some of the island's local specialties, including the swordfish caught straight from the Mediterranean Sea and the moussaka.

#### The Seagull

This waterfront restaurant on Posidonos Avenue in Paphos specializes in fish and traditional Cypriot cuisine. www.seagullcyprus.com

#### Gina's Place

Hidden away on a small street called Agiou Antoniou, parallel to the main promenade across from Almyra Hotel, this Mediterranean bistro features wine, cheese and meat mainly from France and Italy, as well as homemade cheesecakes. www.ginasplacecyprus.com

#### Artio

An upscale brasserie on Piramou Street, this is a popular place for special occasions, including wedding receptions. **☎** +357 269 42800

is where, according to Greek

#### **WHAT TO SEE**

#### **Kato Paphos**

The most extensive archaeological park on the island, this site is filled with mosaics from the floors of Roman villas. These include the House of Aion and the House of Dionysis. The park is situated on the waterfront, at the end of the

Nearby, the well-preserved Medieval Lusignan castle, built into the water, houses a museum inside. Its rooftop offers a spectacular view of the harbor.

The Tombs of the Kings, just north of Kato Paphos by the sea, features underground vaults, caves and tombs dating back to Hellenistic and Roman times.

#### Kouklia

About 15 kilometers east of Paphos is the village that is home to Old Paphos, including the ruins of the temple of Aphrodite.

#### The Rock of Aphrodite

About 25 kilometers east of Paphos mythology, Aphrodite emerged from the sea. It is one of the most beautiful stretches of beach on the island.







# Finding jewels in Milan

The city has gradually turned into one of the world's great destinations to shop for classic gems and modern baubles

By J. S. Marcus

IN AN OFFICE filled with his latest designs, Milan jeweler Gianmaria Buccellati and his wife Rosa Maria Bresciani are talking about the subtle virtues of their hometown. Compared with Rome, says Mr. Buccellati, whom many regard as Italy's supreme creator of luxury jewels, "I would say Milan is more secretive." He invokes the city's many private gardens and secluded courtyards, but he could also be referring to his own jewelry, whose obvious splendor (a Buccellati cocktail ring can approach the size of a real cocktail) is outmatched by an extreme refinement not always visible to the naked eye.

A short walk away, on just the kind of secluded city corner that Mr. Buccellati describes, you can find the showroom of San Lorenzo, a company that specializes in silver jewelry designed by Italy's best-known architects and designers, including figures like senior furniture designer Tobia Scarpa, now in his 70s, and one of Milan's hottest industrial designers, Patricia Urquiola. Under the stewardship of its founder, Ciro Cacchione, San Lorenzo has converted experimental works of contemporary design into very wearable pieces.

Jewelry, it turns out, is everywhere in Milan these days. Over the last decade, the city has grown into a major center of jewelry production and home to a number of independent

jewelry designers with ties to the fashion and industrial-design communities. And this increased profile has inspired the city's jewelry retailers and shoppers. From the main fashion thoroughfare, Via Montenapoleone, where Mr. Buc-

Over the past decade, Milan has grown into a center of jewelry production and home to many independent designers.

cellati plans to open a new store later this year, to hidden shops in narrow streets, Milan has gradually but assuredly turned into one of the world's great jewelry destinations.

Expect to find all the big names here, including Bulgari, Cartier and Van Cleef & Arpels (which opened up a new Milan store last year), but it is the local firms, and their customized service, that will surprise you. "I can do everything for every customer," Mr. Buccellati says.

The place to start is Mr. Buccellati's temporary showroom, east of the so-called "golden rectangle," the city's luxury shopping area, where jewelry stores now compete with fashion boutiques. Although Mr. Buccellati, 81 years old, misses his previous Montenapoleone store, which he gave up a few months ago, he concedes that his current temporary space, a beautifully lit showroom with walls of silver-filled vitrines, also fulfils its purpose. "Selling jewelry is not like selling a car," he says, talking about the room's compact size. Until his new store opens, he and his firm, which includes his son Andrea, continue to see clients by appointment. New creations include engraved gold-cuff watches, a small white-gold scorpion pin with a yellowgold sting, and an enormous silver-rimmed clamshell, decorated with life-size sterling-silver sea creatures (www. buccellati.com).

Founded in 1919 by Mr. Buccellati's father, Mario, the firm was eventually split among the founder's sons after his death in 1965. The original "Mario Buccellati" firm still exists, with Gianmaria's brother, Lorenzo, as president, and an appealing store on Via Montenapoleone. (Gianmaria Buccellati's company, with lavish stores in Paris's Place Vendôme and New York's 57th Street, among others, is much larger and better known.) Lorenzo's son Luca has gone back into the family archive and come out with a new approach to classic de-

signs, including an engraved gold cuff called "Clessidra," first launched, he says, in the 1950s. "We made it more simple," says Luca Buccellati of the new version. "The earlier one was a great cuff, but it looks a little heavy. Right now, people are asking for simple engraving." (www.mariobuccellati.it).

The Milan-based firm Vhernier makes its jewels in Valenza (Italy's leading center for fine-jewelry production, about an hour's drive from Milan), but all the designs are done here. Eight years ago, the company opened up a flagship store on Via Santo Spirito, a small side street just off Montenapoleone, and its spacious rooms are dominated by a select number of the firm's designer pieces.

"Our jewels are quite big," says Vhernier's owner and creative force, Carlo Traglio, a trained lawyer and contemporary-art collector who acquired the company in 2001. Using Vhernier's stable of expert craftspeople, Mr. Traglio brought in a new aesthetic—taken from architecture, art and design, he says, rather than from classic jewelry design—which he renders in 18-karat gold and unusual semi-precious stones, sometimes combined with ordinary materials like wood. "We are mounting this one now," he says, handing over an eye-popping 63-carat tanzanite stone, which, after finding a home with diamond baguettes in a white-gold setting, will cost about €150,000. His latest interest: sugilite, a rare pinkish-purple mineral first discovered in the 1940s (www.vhernier.it).

On Via Montenapoleone itself, you will also find Sabbadini, whose laboratory is right above its shop. Known for its jeweled rendering of bees, the firm also experiments with new combinations of colors and materials. Earlier this year, they launched a black ostrich-leather cuff, decorated with a white-gold, diamond-studded bee; last week they launched a summer version in a wide range of colors, including, pink, red and orange. The whimsy and informality of this kind of piece is part of a growing trend in jewelry design, says the firm's co-owner, Pierandrea Sabbadini, who opened up the family's Milan store 12 years ago after his father had been selling wholesale for many years. "People today want a lot of day jewelry," he says.

Customer contact is key to Sabbadini's business, he says, and Milan's unique contribution to the international jewelry scene. "If you go to Bond Street or Worth Avenue [in Palm Beach]," he says, "You don't speak to Mr. Cartier." Italians, he says, shop for jewels the way they shop for everything else—"They always go to the same shop and they want to be coddled." Mr. Sabbadini responds by personalizing pieces (www.sabbadini.com).

The big news on the Via Montenapoleone these days is the further expansion of Milan's leading luxury-watch dealer, Pisa Orologeria, from its original multibrand store to three nearby boutiques, including a Patek Philippe shop and Europe's first Rolex flagship store, opened in 2008. (www.pisaorologeria.com).

Pomellato is the local firm on the rise, says Alba Cappellieri, a trained architect and professor of jewelry design at the Politecnico di Milano. Ms. Cappellieri, who is curating a show about titanium jewelry at Milan's Triennale Design Museum this summer, regularly sends her jewelry students to the Via Montenapoleone to check out what's new in the jewelry world. She believes that Pomellato, which has pioneered casual fine jewelry by using designer-cut stones, is "the most innovative of the Italian jewelry brands." (www.pomellato.it)

Don't stop your search for jewelry at jewelry stores. Just beyond the "golden rectangle," at De Padova, one of Milan's top names in home furnishings (Patricia Urquiola got her start here), a small but selective jewelry sec-



Gianmaria Buccellati: a brooch from the Animalier collection with rare pearls, diamonds and yellow gold, \$198,000; a cocktail ring with tourmaline rubelite, diamonds and yellow gold, price upon request; the diamond-and-gold-cuff 'watch jewel,' \$39,900; Sabbadini: multicolor 'bee' brooches with pavé diamonds wings and body invisibly set rubies, amethyst, green garnet and Ceylon multicolor sapphires, €5,500-€22,000; Vhernier: laguna rings in rose gold, siderite, yellow mother-of-pearl, turquoise, crisolemon and rock crystal, €6,300; Mario Buccellati: engraved 'Clessidra' 18-karat gold cuff, €8,500.

tion offers unusual designs, including dramatic bronze and silver pieces by Milan designer Monica Castiglioni. Venini, the famed Murano glass company, which has a flagship store in Milan's "golden rectangle," offers glass pendants by Milan designer Giorgio Vigna (www.depadova.it).

Away from Milan's fashion district, in a courtyard near the Garibaldi train station, is what many insiders consider to be the beating heart of the Milan fashion scene—the multilevel, multifunctional emporium 10 Corso Como, opened some 20 years ago by Carla Sozzani. Located around a hidden, lush garden, the complex sells everything from clothing and books, to cosmetics, soap, and fine art. A sort of taste-making fashion superstore, 10 Corso Como is also one of the city's most reliable purveyors of jewelry in all its forms, from limited-edition silver pieces by Roman architect Massimiliano Fuksas and his wife and collaborator, Doriana, to anonymous handmade costume pieces.

"I'm much more a jewel person than a bag person," says Ms. Sozzani, speaking in her office, "And I love big pieces." She especially admires the enormous Fuksas necklaces, which look like metal sculptures as much as wearable accessories. 10 Corso Como is also the place to find unique silver pieces by New York sculptor Kris Ruhs, who collaborated with Ms. Sozzani on the complex's interior.

Ms. Sozzani believes that Milan's emergence as a jewelry capital has followed a change in taste among Milanese women. Until the last decade or so, she says, "Jewels in Milan meant classic antique jewels—'family' jewels, whether they were from the family or not." Now, she says, women here "understand the importance of the piece itself." It's "very nice to wear a piece of art," she argues (www.10corsosomo.com).

The jewelry world draws a thick border between fine jewelry, which uses precious metals and precious stones, and costume jewelry, which might use everything else. Donatella Pellini, Milan's best-known costume jewelry designer, imaginatively blurs the lines between fashion, jewelry and art. Ms Pellini, known for contributing large pieces of costume jewelry to fashion designers' runway shows, now designs two lines—one in molded resin, and the other in rough-cut semi-precious stones like jade, quartz and freshwater pearls.

"I don't touch gold and diamonds," says Ms. Pellini, who does not have a background in fine jewelry. Her showroom, located in the former stables of a baroque palace west of Milan's cathedral, is dominated by a vintage Ron Arad mirrored table, which shows off her designs better than any spotlight. Adjoining is a large store, and she has a smaller store in the Via Manzoni, near Montenapoleone.

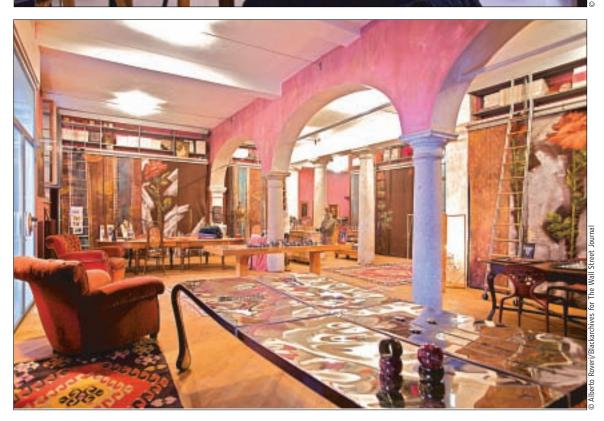
Her latest pieces, like a necklace curtain of semi-precious stones, can seem almost like clothing. And she has become an expert in using resin, which can be used either to simulate natural stones, or else incorporate photographic images of the customer's choosing.

Ask her to bring out examples from her jewelry archive, made up of outrageous pieces used in fashion shows from late 20th-century stalwarts like Christian Lacroix and Thierry Mugler. "This was for Fendi, when Fendi liked to do pasta," she says, holding up an artful plated-gold chain of penneshaped resin baubles. They are not for sale, but you can ask her to update the designs for you. "I always do special pieces for my customers," she says.

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

► Read more about the titanium show at Milan's Triennale Design Museum at WSJ.com/Lifestyle





The showroom of Donatella Pellini; above, Carla Sozzani is wearing a Kris Ruhs necklace and ring; opposite page, top left, San Lorenzo founder Ciro Cacchione with 'Seicento,' a necklace designed by Lella Valle Vignelli.

## Enjoying the nature show

IKE MANY GOLFERS, I am sometimes guilty of taking nature for granted. Hopefully, I can be excused for failing to regard the arrival of fairway befouling Canadian geese or the sullen work of the groundhogs at my home course as glorious manifestations of Mother Nature, but not for getting so wrapped up in my game that I begin to resemble the crank about whom P.G. Wodehouse's famous wrote: "The least thing upset him on the links. He missed short putts because of the uproar of butterflies in

#### Golf

JOHN PAUL NEWPORT

the adjoining meadows."

Golf newbies are useful for reminding old hands to enjoy the nature show around them. Several years ago at one of the Disney World resort courses in Florida, for instance, I was paired with a guy whose nongolfing wife couldn't stop marveling at the birds. Initially, I found her chatter distracting, but by the end I was totally on board. With her guidance that day, I saw an osprey swoop down to pluck a fish

out of a lagoon, a great blue heron lumbering into flight only 10 meters away, a flock of pelicans squabbling over who knows what and a giant turtle waddling down a fairway. I have long since forgotten my score.

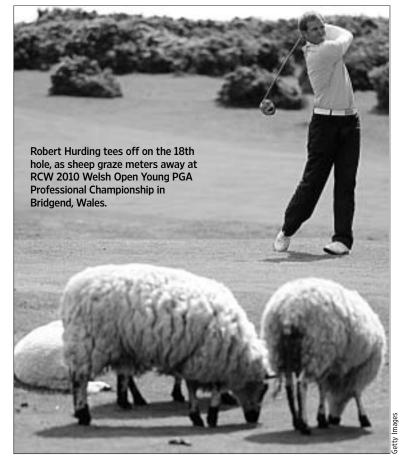
Last week, this column focused on golf-course sightings of large, potentially dangerous beasts like lions and bears, but my reporting actually turned up more stories about less threatening, more charming animal encounters, and readers this week emailed more. Some of the best involved clubs or courses have become intimately familiar with the daily or annual movement of animals. A reader from Wyoming rhapsodized about the annual spring buffalo migration across the fairways at the Jackson Hole Golf and Tennis Club. At the Sanctuary Golf Club on Sanibel Island, Florida, at certain times of the year, dozens of brilliantly white ibis do a late-afternoon flyover of the clubhouse with such punctuality that members plan cocktail parties around the event.

Officially or unofficially, some golf courses adopt wild animals. A club in upstate New York now happily coexists with a den of foxes in the cart barn, after initially trying to shoo them away. In Texas, a club on the Gulf Coast attempted to domesticate an al-

ligator as a kind of conversation piece. After feeding the gator chickens from the kitchen for several months, it became not only huge but also a nuisance, scrabbling across the grounds like an ill-bred puppy to beg for food from almost everyone. Eventually, it had to be removed.

Larceny was the theme of many stories. Crows in the southeast and monkeys in the Caribbean, it seems, are extremely clever when it comes to snatching food out of temporarily vacated golf carts. But none are as thorough as the legendary bandit raccoon of the Bay Course at MacDill Air Force Base in Tampa, Florida. It emerged from the swamp near the third tee to steal anything it could from golf carts parked there: food, watches, cell phones, wallets. It even learned to unzip golf-bag pockets. The course superintendent, Drew Castillo, frequently slogged through the swamp to recover items stored in the raccoon's stash.

Foxes apparently have a thing for golf balls, although no one knows why. At the Sugarloaf Golf Club in Maine, playful fox kits dash into the fairway to filch drives in the middle of the fairway. Workers at the course from time to time find caches of these balls, sometimes more than 100, in hol-



lowed out logs. Seagulls have also been known to fly away with golf balls, including most famously, because it was televised, the tee shot of Brad Fabel on the green of the 17th hole at TPC Sawgrass in Florida during the 1998 Players Championship.

According to the rules of golf, foxes and seagulls in such instances are considered "outside agencies," and the ball may be replaced without penalty at the spot of the theft if you actually saw or are "virtually certain" the theft take place. If, however, a ball in motion hits an outside agency, the golfer must play it where it lies. (Spectators lining the gallery ropes at tournaments are outside agencies, too; hitting them usually works in the Tour pros' favor.) A dead animal, on the other hand, is considered a loose impediment, so if your ball snuggles up against the corpse of a snake, you can move the snake (as long as the ball doesn't move in the process). Unless, of course, such a loose impediment is in the same bunker or water hazard as your ball, in which case you cannot move it before taking your shot.

It's not surprising that the rules makers have all this figured out, however complicated it may seem, because the game as we know it was first played on linksland in Scotland, riddled with rabbit holes (free drop if the ball goes in) and teeming with grazing animals that often came into play. Two of golf's original 13 rules, first written down in Edinburgh in 1744, provide for encounters with animals.

provide for encounters with animals. From the 1950s through approximately the 1980s, it seemed that golf was doing everything it could to keep nature at bay. Architects designed courses that, taking advantage of cheap earth-moving machinery, essentially blasted flat, nature-free cor-

ridors through the ambient landscape. Greenkeeping crews dumped horrific amounts of toxic chemicals on the wall-to-wall turf to keep weeds, disease, insects and even animals away. Bunkers were neatly edged and filled with artificially white sand.

In recent years, the tide has turned back to more natural courses. The new ideal in course design is to find the holes in the land's existing formations while moving as little earth as possible. Bunkers on many modern courses are more naturalistic, irregular in shape and maintained with shaggy borders. Regularly-mown turfgrass occupies a far smaller percentage of most courses' total acreage these days.

Seventeen of Golf Digest's Top 100 U.S. courses are now certified as Audubon International sanctuaries, which means that half or more of their out-of-play areas are nurtured as native habitats, including especially buffer areas around streams and ponds. The courses have also taken concrete steps to reduce the amount of chemicals used. In 2008, architect Robert Trent Jones II issued a "Green Proclamation" that challenges golf to become a leader, not a follower, in environmental stewardship.

Stricter local permitting requirements have forced many of these changes, of course, but by my accounting so has an evolving aesthetic among golfers. The simple pleasure of being outdoors has always been one of the game's greatest appealsand increasingly golfers prefer that outdoor time to be on as naturalistic a setting as possible. All else being equal, who wouldn't want to play a course with abundant bird life and foxes that occasionally sneak out of the woods to steal your ball?

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# The state of young art in Britain

By Andrew McKie

HARLES SAATCHI, AS anyone under the age of 40 may need to be reminded, made his money as an advertising man. In the early 1990s, he ploughed this into collecting and backing the work of a group of recent graduates, many from Goldsmiths College in south London, who went on to achieve fame, or at least notoriety, and in the process transformed the public view of British contemporary art.

Before Mr. Saatchi—who is as personally reticent as his discoveries were brash, adopted and promoted what became known as the YBAs (Young British Artists)—the usual reaction to contemporary, particularly conceptual, art was, at best, incomprehension, and, not infrequently, ridicule. Last year, the Saatchi Gallery, located just off King's Road in Chelsea, took first and second place in The Art Newspaper's survey of London's most-visited exhibitions. And of the city's 10 most popular shows, the top six were contemporary, and only two had pre-20th-century subjects.

From this it can be deduced that Mr. Saatchi's genius for branding and the public mood hasn't deserted him. But as the title of his gallery's new two-part show—"Newspeak: British Art Now"—suggests, he remains aware of the question that besets all trends: What's next?

The British contemporary artists whose names are best known are still those whose work appeared in "Sensation," the Royal Academy show that cemented the reputation of the YBAs in 1997; all those on the shortlist for this year's Turner Prize (restricted to artists under 50) are in their 40s, and last year's winner, Richard Wright, was 49 years old.

The artists in this show are mostly under 40, and while many are established enough to be represented by leading dealers, they remain comparatively unknown—at any rate compared with YBA luminaries such as Tracy Emin, Gavin Turk, Sarah Lucas and Damien Hirst. The casual visitor, oddly enough, may be most familiar with the youngest and least established, the 21-year-old Eugenie Scrase, who is French but works in London, and secured a place in the exhibition by winning last year's BBC television series "School of Saatchi."

She is represented by a tree trunk impaled on a buckled railing, a found piece which fits in with other conceptual installations, such as John Wynne's "Installation for 300 Speakers, Pianola and vacuum cleaner;" Fergal Stapleton's black perspex lightboxes; the hooded figures grouped in a corner by littlewhitehead, the Glasgow artists; and Karla Black's "Pleaser," painted cellophane suspended from the ceiling by thread.

All these may share the dominant aesthetic of recent contemporary work designed for public exhibition, but "Newspeak" also brings together quite different pieces on a more modest, less institutional scale. These include reimagined versions of the portrait bust, such as Jonathan Baldock's salt-dough heads decorated with cloth and hair (echoing the vaguely tribal sensibility of Ryan Mosley's paintings, with which they share a gallery) and Steven Claydon's mock-heroic demagogue, subverted by the peacock feather over one eye and the fact that the patina on the coppered surface was achieved by urinating on the sculpture.

Above all, the show features, of all things in this day and age, paintings. Some, like Scott King's screenprint "Pink Cher," Barry Reigate's vivid, frenetic canvases and Donald Urquhart's "A Joan Crawford Alphabet," combine cartoon characters or film stars with the techniques of graffiti or commercial art. Iain Hetherington's paintings of baseball caps are rendered in a thick impasto, which he places in the tradition of Gustave Courbet, while Ged





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Clockwise from the top: 'Cake in the Wilderness' (2005) by Ged Quinn; 'A Joan Crawford Alphabet' (2007) by Donald Urquhart; 'The Author of Mishap (Them)' (2005) by Steven Claydon.

Quinn constructs modern myths, referencing the siege of Waco in a vast pastiche of Claude Lorrain, subverting Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington, and presenting Spandau prison as a cherry cake in the style of Francisco Zurbaran's still lifes.

"Perhaps it's naive, but it hadn't really occurred to me that the exhibition would be seen as a dialogue about where we are now," says Mr. Quinn. "Though I know some of the artists, like Steven [Claydon] and Phoebe [Unwin], I don't really feel we're part of a group."

Saatchi's own preferences, of course, aren't the entirety of the market for British contemporary art. The popularity of Tate Modern, which opened a decade ago, has probably done as much to win the public round to modern art, as have regional exhibitions, such as the second Tatton Park Biennial in Cheshire, which opened last month and runs until September.

The exhibits there are site-specific, and for the most part conceptual: visitors can be ferried around the grounds in Clara Ursitti's "Ghost," a clapped-out Datsun customized to smell like a Rolls-Royce, while Marcia Farhquar delivers performance pieces astride a giant rocking horse. Neville Gabie, who had been artist-in-residence in the Antarctic when asked to submit a work, was inspired by "how verdant everything at Tatton is" and has installed a giant lump of ice from Greenland. "I was thinking of the icehouse and the microclimate of the greenhouse, and am using sunlight from solar panels to keep it frozen," he says. "We're hoping it will survive the run."

Such work, created with the backing of public exhibitions or very wealthy individuals, may be less prominent in the current economic climate. Its last hurrah, perhaps, came with Damien Hirst's auction of conceptual pieces on the day that Lehman Brothers collapsed in September 2008. By contrast, the artist's show of paintings at the Wallace Collection received critical brickbats.

Ged Quinn agrees that there was "a consensus that 2008 was a pretty bad year" but believes that galleries and artists are "doing all right."

"There was, I think, a view with conceptual stuff that it was about the triumph of relativism, of an acceptance of liberal capitalism, and perhaps some of the work here is political in the sense that it's trying to address that," he says. "If there is a shared approach, part of it may be appropriating images. I think I'm do-

ing it by sifting histories and mythologies."

Phoebe Unwin is reluctant to dwell on the prevailing market. "What's really significant for me is that if Saatchi buys my work—that picture [her painting 'Girl'] was done in 2005 when I was still at the Slade [School of Fine Art]—there's the chance that it may eventually be in a show like this, and get seen. But it takes time."

Nor is she convinced that there is a shared aesthetic among artists of her generation. "Looking back at 'Sensation' it all now seems to be very similar work, but that wasn't the feeling then, and of course those artists are doing very different things now. 'Girl' has taken five years to be shown, so that's why it's difficult to make a judgment about how coherent an exhibition is. You have to wait to see if there is a theme." she says.

Ged Quinn agrees. "But I suppose with Charles—because it's one collector's vision, and also because it's him—it does come with this critical message attached." The Saatchi brand of new British art, in other words, may have become more diffuse, but it continues to draw the crowds.

-Andrew McKie is a writer based in Cambridgeshire.

# The big reads of summer

Fourteen titles the book world is betting on, from literary debuts to scientific adventures

By Alexandra Alter and Cynthia Crossen

eaders will keep bumping into familiar characters this summer. The summer-reading season kicked off with the return of Rusty Sabich in "Innocent," Scott Turow's sequel to his 1987 best seller "Presumed Innocent." Next month, Bret Easton Ellis will release "Imperial Bedrooms," a shocking, brutally violent seguel to his 1985 cult hit "Less Than Zero," starring the same disillusioned, shady characters-25 years older but none the wiser.

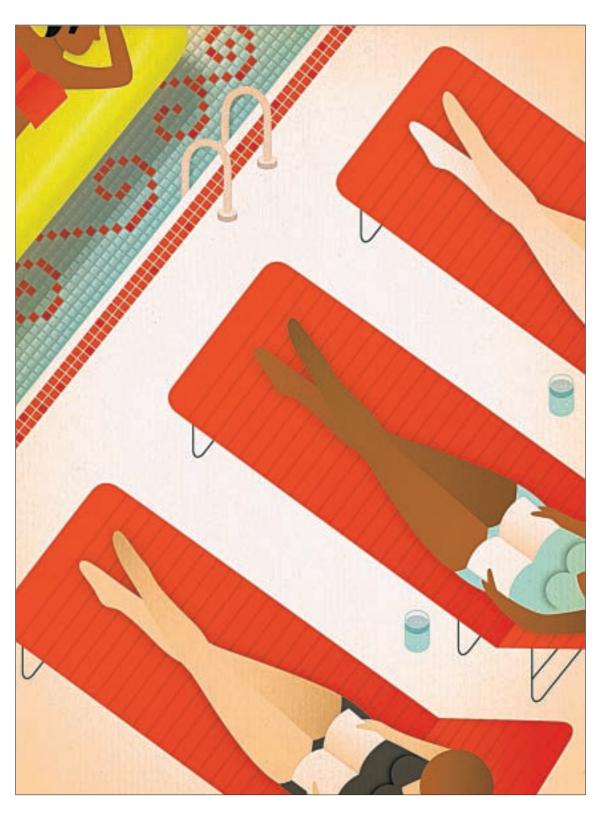
Summer staples from prolific blockbuster authors are bringing back iconic protagonists, including Stephanie Plum (Janet Evanovich's plucky bounty hunter), Daniel X (James Patterson's Earth-defending extraterrestrial). Isaac Bell (Clive Cussler's trigger-happy yet gentlemanly private investigator) and Jason Bourne (Robert Ludlum's rogue intelligence operative, whose story has been continued by writer Eric Van Lustbader).

Publishers, booksellers and literary agents hope splashy sequels will drive sales during a jittery but somewhat optimistic time for the publishing industry.

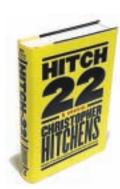
This summer's not all about repeat performances, though, A new novel from David Mitchell, a two-time finalist for the Man Booker Prize, stands apart from his previous work, which often has dizzying, intersecting narratives that span several continents and centuries (his latest is rooted in Edo-era Japan). A debut novel from Adam Ross breaks literary conventions by blending elements of mystery, romance and police procedural. And new nonfiction books cover such diverse subjects as extreme cave exploration, the history of artificial light and the search for immortality.

Big new franchises are launching, too-most notably, a post-apocalyptic vampire trilogy by Justin Cronin. The first installment, "The Passage," a 766-page behemoth that Stephen King called "enthralling," comes out in June.

Here is a selection of some of the summer's most anticipated new books, from a memoir by Christopher Hitchens to a classic courtroom drama from Richard North Patterson.

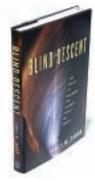


#### Nonfiction



Hitch 22 Christopher Hitchens May 20, Atlantic

Mr. Hitchens once described Margaret Thatcher as sexy in a dispatch for the New Statesman. When they later met, she spanked him with a rolled up parliamentary order and called him a "naughty boy." "I had and have eyewitnesses to this." Mr. Hitchens writes in his new memoir. Mr. Hitchens focuses on important figures in his life (including novelists Martin Amis and Salman Rushdie) and ideas that transformed him (his early infatuation with leftist revolutionary movements his decision to become an American after 9/11, his eventual break with the political left over the Iraq war). He rarely touches on his private life, and only makes passing references to his wife and daughters. Still, the secrets he spills—most notably, his memories of a boarding school romance with another boy-have already gotten the most attention and reveal another side of the essayist and critic.



**Blind Descent: The Quest to Discover** the Deepest Place on Earth

There are at least 52 ways to die in a cave.

James Tabor June 15, Random House

according to James Tabor. Among them: flash floods, asphyxiation from carbon dioxide, getting attacked by rabid bats, getting struck by lightning while crossing a

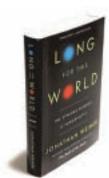
stream, getting struck by lightning while talking through a cable telephone and falling to your death after animals chew through your rope. Mr. Tabor, author of "Forever on the Mountain," delves into such subterranean terrors through the story of two explorers' race to reach the bottom of the earth. An American spelunker leads a risky and ultimately deadly expedition to a cave in southern Mexico, while a Ukrainian caver braves a freezing super cave in the Republic of Georgia.



**How Did You Get This Number** 

Sloane Crosley July 1, Portobello

The hype surrounding Ms. Crosley's 2008 debut "I Was Told There'd Be Cake" might have doomed her as a one-hit wonder. The book of autobiographical essays earned comparisons to Nora Ephron and was picked up for development by HBO. But in her new essay collection Ms Crosley, at 31 years old, proves she still has plenty of material. With self-deprecating charm, she describes her misadventures in Manhattan real estate, her worst childhood pet (Herb, a depressive stingray that ate goldfish) and how she ended up taking a solo trip to Lisbon to mark her approaching 30th birthday (she closed her eyes and spun a globe).



Long for This World: The Strange Science of Immortality Jonathan Weiner

June 22, Ecco

If aging is a disease, why shouldn't humans conquer it, as they did smallpox or polio? Why can't biotechnology give us the gift of, if not immortality, at least a few hundred extra years? Mr. Weiner, who won a Pulitzer Prize in 1995 for "The Beak of the Finch," examines the dreams and schemes of immortality throughout history, such as the mad grafting of monkey testicles on aging men in the early 20th century. Yet as life expectancy has steadily risen, some scientists wonder why eternal youth is beyond our grasp. With humor and a bracing mix of skepticism and indulgence, Mr. Weiner dissects the theories of gerontologists while pondering whether, except for you and me, immortality would be a good thing for the world.



**Brilliant: The Evolution of Artificial Light** Jane Brox

July 8, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

Fire has blazed in hearths and torches for half a million years, but 40,000 years ago, humans began to make lamps; today, the only corners of the earth that aren't illuminated at night are the oceans and the poles. With grace and authority, Ms. Brox traces the ascendance of artificial light and considers its effect on human culture and psychology. Ms. Brox shows a conundrum: A car-storage area in Great Britain, unoccupied and poorly lit, is frequently burgled. When the police finally caught a thief, they asked, "Would better lighting help?" "Sure," the burglar said, "I could get in and out a lot faster and not get caught."

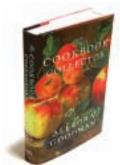
#### **Fiction**



The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake

Aimee Bender June 1, Doubleday

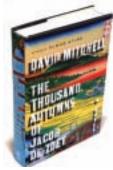
Rose, the young protagonist of Aimee Bender's melancholy new novel, can taste feelings in food. She tastes her mother's dissatisfaction with her life and marriage in a lemon cake, can tell if a farmer was angry when he picked parsley and detects a chef's grief in a lamb shank. Critics compared Ms. Bender's 1998 debut short-story collection, "The Girl in the Flammable Skirt," to the works of Flannery O'Connor. Early reviews of "The Particular Sadness of Lemon Cake" have held it up as proof that Ms. Bender, who is better known for her short stories, has come into her own as a novelist.



**The Cookbook Collector** 

Allegra Goodman July 6, Dial Press

Ms. Goodman has called "The Cookbook Collector" "a 'Sense and Sensibility' for the digital age." Two sisters, of widely different temperaments seek love and happiness in contemporary America, where, instead of landed gentry, there are dot-com millionaires. One of the sisters becomes a millionaire (on paper), while the other, a graduate student in philosophy, is literally a tree hugger. When the tech boom goes bust, and planes fly into the World Trade Center, the sisters find that love can be wondrously, or tragically, accidental. Ms. Goodman is a romantic realist who dazzles with wit, compassion and vegan recipes



The Thousand Autumns of Jacob de Zoet

David Mitchell May 13, Sceptre

David Mitchell's densely plotted novels veer between sci-fi and historical fiction and unfold across multiple continents and several centuries. His latest novel is more constrained, but no less ambitious. It takes place in 18th-century, isolationist Japan, on an artificial island off of Nagasaki. The Dutch merchants living there are forbidden from learning Japanese or setting foot on the mainland without permission, but Jacob de Zoet, an ambitious young clerk manages to charm his hosts. He falls in love with a Japanese midwife who is sent to a nunnery and navigates the ranks of both his trading company and the Japanese political hierarchy. The novel, Mr. Mitchell's fifth, is being published in 10 countries and has already debuted at No. 1 on the London Sunday Times best-seller list.



A VISIT From the Goon Squad

Jennifer Egan June 8, Knopf

Jennifer Egan's unpredictability makes her tough to categorize. Her 1995 debut novel, "The Invisible Circus," was a family drama set in the 1960s; her 2006 novel, "The Keep," was a Gothic thriller. Her newest, "A Visit From the Goon Squad," is a genredefying work that lies somewhere between a novel and collected short stories. One chapter is written as a PowerPoint presentation; another takes the form of a magazine celebrity profile. A single cast of characters unites the book, among them a punk rocker turned music producer, his kleptomaniac assistant and a washed-up guitarist who proposes a "suicide tour" to revive his career by ending his life.

**Super Sad True Love Story** 

Finally, a funny book about the financial

crisis. Mr. Shteyngart's satirical novel

takes place in New York, post-financial

apocalypse. U.S. banks and auto compa-

nies have been nationalized, the publish-

ing industry has collapsed and riots erupt

after China sells its U.S. Treasury bonds.

Lenny Abramov, the novel's hapless, love-

sick protagonist, is an out-of-place, out-

of-shape romantic who struggles to keep

his younger girlfriend entertained as she

incessantly texts and shops online on her

"apparat," a wireless communication de-

vice citizens of the future wear around

their necks to stay constantly connected.

In the Name of Honor

June 29, Henry Holt

Richard North Patterson

With a blurb from U.S. Sen. John McCain

("compelling and gripping"), "In the Name

of Honor" may well put Mr. Patterson

back on the best-seller lists, where eight

of his previous novels landed. The honor

in the title is the ideal of the traditional

military officer: Do what's right even if it

hurts. Then a young, respected army of-

ficer, back in the U.S. from Iraq, shoots

his former commander at the Virginia

base where they both live. The shooter's

dynamic lawyer decides to gamble on a post-traumatic-stress-disorder defense,

a tough sell in a military tribunal. This

being Patterson, secrets are embedded

in secrets, lies within lies, and the guilty

don't always get what they deserve.

Gary Shteyngart

Sept. 2, Granta



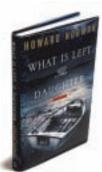
Mr. Peanut

Adam Ross June 10, Jonathan Cape

The three antiheroes of this first novel contemplate murdering their wives, or perhaps they have already murdered them-until the end you're not sure. One of the husbands is the infamous Cleveland doctor, Sam Sheppard, who was tried twice for the murder of his wife (once convicted, once acquitted). Each of the three stories is part romance, part mystery and part police procedural. The author has said that he idolizes Alfred Hitchcock; Mr. Hitchcock once said that in his movies. "I show how difficult it is and what a messy thing it is to kill a man." "Or a woman," Mr. Ross might add.



Mr. Petterson, a Norwegian, burst onto the word "love" doesn't do justice



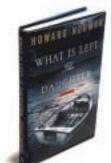
What Is Left the Daughter

**Howard Norman** 



Per Petterson

international literary scene with his 2003 novel, "Out Stealing Horses," which was translated into more than 30 languages. Critics and prize committees loved its austere beauty, its restrained unraveling of a man's past. In "I Curse the River of Time," Mr. Petterson tells another poignant, harrowing and sometimes comic story of a man coming to terms with his dying mother, his failures (job, marriage) and his failures in the eyes of his mother: "You squirt!" But mother and son are bound by feelings and memories for which even the



July 6, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt It starts with a double suicide: Seventeenyear-old Wyatt Hillyer's parents, both of whom have fallen in love with the same woman, jump off different bridges on the same night. But in this novel, as in all of Mr. Norman's incandescent fictional worlds, this unlikely tragedy is only a catalyst for a subtler and more intricately beautiful story about love, jealousy, war, prejudice, survival and a library. Mr. Norman picked up some literary awards for his 1994 novel "The Bird Artist." His writing, sometimes described as quiet, can briefly lull you into thinking he's not paying enough attention to his plot. Then, wham!

▶ Read interviews with authors Aimee Bender and Christopher Hitchens, and a profile of thriller writer Michael Koryta, at WSJ.com/Books.



A lightning-wielding psycho and mutant 'virals' are among the bad guys

By Tom Nolan

n the coming months, the miscreants found in new thrillers and mysteries will be on the run from forces of good—or enforcers of justice-that include a wheelchairbound forensic criminologist, a master art-restorer/assassin and an Idaho sheriff.

In the middle of this month, devotees of Alan Furst's darkly atmospheric spy thrillers set on the margins of World War II will welcome the arrival of "Spies of the Balkans" (W&N), which takes readers to 1940 and a port city in northern Greece aswarm with spies. Greece and Italy are at war, and the Greeks have repulsed Mussolini's forces—but now a Nazi invasion seems imminent. It is a typically Furstian setting, suffused with menace. And, as ever, a reluctant hero emerges, a Greek police official who takes on the delicate, dangerous job of arranging passage for German Jewish refugees through Greece to a safe haven in neutral Turkey.

A week after Mr Furst's new thriller, Justin Cronin ups the ante: The future of the planet is at stake in "The Passage" (Orion). The book comes freighted with hype—the movie rights were sold three years ago for \$1.75 million, before the manuscript was finished. Hollywood salivated over this first title in a proposed trilogy that combines suspense, horror and science fiction in the story of a top-secret military experiment gone catastrophically wrong. As mutant "virals" stalk the human race, a 6-year-old girl in Memphis exhibits uncanny abilities that may or may not be enough to save the world.

Not all the mystery and thriller writers with books coming out have well-established names. Irish writer Tana French is a relative newcomer. but she quickly developed a following with her tales of the Dublin Murder Squad in "In the Woods" (2008) and "The Likeness" (2009). In her third novel about the police team. "Faithful Place" (Hachette Books Ireland), due on July 1, the puzzle concerns the justdiscovered remains of a young Irish woman who disappeared in 1985. As undercover cop Frank Mackey investigates, he revisits events and relationships from his own past.

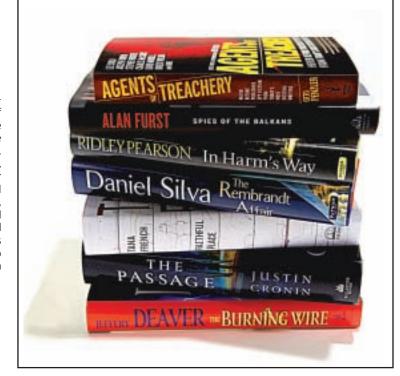
There is more European intrigue. past and present, later next month with Daniel Silva's "The Rembrandt Affair" (Michael Joseph). One of the author's recurring protagonists, the "master art restorer and assassin" Gabriel Allon is on the trail of a painting that first went missing from Holland some 70 years ago.

Across the Atlantic, late July also sees the publication of Jeffery Deaver's latest addition (the ninth) to his Lincoln Rhyme series. "The Burning Wire" (Hodder & Stoughton) finds irascible criminologist Rhyme—as Deaver fans know, he was made a quadriplegic by an on-the-job injurytracking a particularly insidious killer. A psychopath has figured out how to commandeer New York City's electrical grid, using it to kill in spectacular fashion, with lethal arcs of lightning, or more subtly, with a charge from a computer or lamp. As Rhyme investigates, pressed by the mounting terror in the city, readers familiar with Mr. Deaver's past work are likely to flinch when a familiar villain, the Watchmaker, is glimpsed.

August sees the third outing of Ridley Pearson's Idaho sheriff Walt Fleming in "In Harm's Way" (Putnam), with Sheriff Fleming dating a woman who is a crime-scene photographer, but who then becomes elusive. At first he is dismayed and confused—but then Fleming begins to suspect that she may be connected to a string of high-profile murders.

For readers with a taste for foreign intrigue but little time in the summer to settle down for a long read, June brings "Agents of Treachery" (Vintage), a collection put together by editor Otto Penzler of 14 never-before-published tales of espionage and derring-do from such masters of the form as Charles McCarry, Lee Child and Stella Rimington. Here's a thought: Read one of these stories and then get out of the sun.

> -Mr. Nolan is the author of "Three Chords for Beauty's Sake: The Life of Artie Shaw," just out from Norton.



## Read More Than Respected

#### By Martin Rubin

Over the course of a literary career that spanned an astonishing eight decades, Somerset Maugham (1874-1965) wrote some of the 20th century's bestloved novels (e.g., "Of Human Bondage"), a cluster of hit plays in London's West End ("The Constant Wife"), ground-breaking travel books ("The Gentleman in the Parlour," about Southeast Asia), an eloquent intellectual memoir ("The Summing Up"), and some of the finest short stories in the English language ("The Letter," "Rain," "The Outstation"). Such was his success as a writer that, in his later years, he became almost as well known for his opulent manner of living as for his work.

Thus, for some, Maugham will forever be identified with his legendary home on the French Riviera, between Monte Carlo and Nice. As Selina Hastings declares with characteristic panache: "The Villa Mauresque and Somerset Maugham, Somerset Maugham and the Villa Mauresque: for nearly forty years the two were inextricably linked, the house the richest thread in the fabric of the legend, visited, photographed, filmed, described in countless articles, regarded with awe as the glamorous and exotic backdrop for one of the most famous writers in the world."

Famous, yes. But respected? In "The Secret Lives of Somerset Maugham," Ms. Hastings draws on thorough research and recently

released documents to trace Maugham's busy life—his stormy -marriage, his attentiveness to his daughter, Liza, his world-wide travels, his literary quarrels, his generosity to younger writers, his often furtive homosexuality—but she also pays a great deal of attention to his literary output, where the emphasis belongs. It irked Maugham, she says, that Bloomsbury and other highbrow literary circles tended to dismiss him or ignore him altogether.

#### **The Secret Lives of Somerset Maugham**

By Selina Hastings (Random House, 626 pages, \$35)

"As much as his middlebrow reputation," Ms. Hastings writes, "it was his success, and the affluence that came with that success, that in the eves of Bloomsbury placed him beyond the pale." Maugham himself characterized his position on more than one occasion: "I know just where I stand, in the very front row of the second rate.'

Ms. Hastings ranks Maugham rather higher than that. She singles out his ability to create indepth portraits of both men and women, fully realized in all their fragility, ruthlessness, fury, confusion and longing-characters often conveyed to the reader through the fluent words of an ironical, sympathetic and knowing narrator. Cyril Connolly, the English critic, hailed Maugham as

"the last of the great professional writers," someone who took pains to construct his stories properly and get his sentences

It was precisely such studied professionalism that seemed to put Maugham at odds with the modernist vogue, with its experimental forms, its language games, its emphasis on the purely aesthetic. And vet in 1934 Desmond McCarthy—a member of the modernist-leaning Bloomsbury set-wrote a perceptive pamphlet about Maugham arguing that "he has a sense of what is widely interesting, because, like Maupassant, he is as much a man of the world as he is an artist."

A man of the world indeed, not least of the Far East and the Malayan archipelago to which he traveled so often. Its rubber plantations, colonial outposts and local clubs, Ms. Hastings notes, serve as the settings for many of his best-known stories. These stories, she writes, "of incest and adultery, of sex-starved missionaries and alcoholic planters, of footsteps in the jungle and murder on the veranda, are what remains in the minds of many as the very image and epitome of Maugham's fictional territory."

Maugham has been the object of biographical attention before, of course, but "The Secret Lives of Somerset Maugham" (despite its needlessly salacious title) is in a class of its own. Anyone who has read Ms. Hastings's biographies of Evelyn Waugh and Nancy Mitford will know that she writes beautifully and has a talent for shaping a narrative; she is also adept at combining sympathy for her subjects with a tough-minded sense of their less pleasant traits and actions.

In Maugham those traits were far from hidden. His wit easily turned acrid and cruel and was

deployed against family and friends alike. He said of his wife, Syrie, whom he divorced in 1929, that she had made his life "utter hell," "[opening] her mouth as wide as a brothel door" in her money demands. His late memoir, "Looking Back" (1962), made her out to

be wanton: The child she bore, he claimed (falsely), was not really his. It is clear from Ms. Hasting's account that, despite his polished manners, he was a man profoundly antinomian in his beliefs and in certain aspects of his life.

Among the new material released by Maugham's estate is a long interview given to a family friend by Liza before her death in 1999. Liza says there that her mother was very much in love with Maugham, despite their bouts of anger, and remained friendly with him, at times, after the divorce. It had hurt her mother tremendously that the marriage ended because of

Maugham's affections for a man (Gerald Haxton) and not a woman.

Mr. Hastings attributes Maugham's guarded and secretive attitude toward his homosexuality to the trial and imprisonment of Oscar Wilde when he was a young medical student in London al-

ready struggling with his sexual identity. While accepting that he was predominantly homosexual in his make-up, Ms. Hastings never reads that fact into his work or limits his achievement to that of a "gay writer" as such. Maugham was extraordinarily

perceptive about the lives of women and the ordeals of their romantic lives. His enjoyment of sex with women was enthusiastic, Ms. Hastings says, and it is notable that the women who come off best in his fiction are those who are free both in their expression of sexuality and in their practice of it. In this way and many others. Ms. Hastings's uncommonly absorbing and judicious biography allows us to see the writer in full. It is the first truly rounded portrait of a fine writer and a complicated man.

Mr. Rubin is a writer in Pasadena. Calif.

### **Confidential Conundrum**

#### By John O. McGinnis

There is an obvious tension between a democratic public's need for information—its right to know-and the government's need, at times, for operational secrecy. A broad sense of what officials are doing is at the heart of any democracy: Collective wisdom in the long run tends to thwart government's bad schemes and improve its better ones. But secrecy is essential to statecraft.

#### **Necessary Secrets**

By Gabriel Schoenfeld (Norton, 309 pages, \$27.95)

By keeping our enemies ignorant of our intentions, and hiding our knowledge of their own, we help to keep the country safe. Any administration—President Barack Obama's is no exception—will find itself engaged in a perpetual struggle with reporters over the fate of its classified material.

Gabriel Schoenfeld brilliantly illuminates this dilemma in "Necessary Secrets." His inquiry, he confesses, was prompted by his visceral anger at the New York Times for revealing, in 2005 and 2006, two highly classified national security programs: One tried to spy on the communications of terrorists by monitoring phone calls passing through U.S.; the other tried to follow the terrorist money trail by accessing international bank records.

The decisions of the Times's editors, Mr. Schoenfeld notes, were made less than five years after 9/11, when he had himself wiped the dust from the Twin Towers off his car. In Commentary magazine, Mr. Schoenfeld argued that the government should prosecute the Times for its revelations. In "Necessary Secrets" he does not back down from this position, but he broadens his range of reference. "Necessary Secrets" is less a polemic than a dispassionate history and analysis of leaks—the publication of facts that the government claims a right to hide.

It is a complicated history. Mr. Schoenfeld shows that government officials themselves have leaked secrets from the earliest days of the American republic. After George Washington dismissed Edmund Randolph, his secretary of state. Randolph relied on secret diplomatic correspondence to write a pamphlet vindicating his conduct. Then, as now, one of the great obstacles to protecting information was the tendency of state officials to disclose secrets to advance their own interests.

It was only in the 20th century, Mr. Schoenfeld says, that newspapers became a sluice-gate for secrets. During World War I the New York Times revealed that the government was constructing steel nets under New York Harbor to catch German submarines, something the Germans would naturally be pleased to learn. Three decades later, and even more rashly, the Chicago Tribune reported that

the Navy had known ahead of the Battle of Midway the precise strength of Japanese forces in the area, clearly implying that the U.S. had covert access to Japanese plans. Yet the Roosevelt administration (understandably) declined to prosecute the Tribune, because a trial might have revealed even more secrets and drawn more attention to the

**During World** War II and much of the Cold War, Mr. Schoenfeld notes, most of the press acted responsibly. Only relatively recently, he says, has a patriotic press morphed into an adversarial one, First, Watergate made the

breach.

media distrust government claims of confidentiality, because the Nixon administration so often used secrecy to cloak illegality. Second, media competition grew as outlets multiplied, making each news service ever more eager to break stories. The Times may have gone ahead with its long-held article about the government's surveillance program in part because its own reporter was about to reveal his scoop in a book.

The costs of such revelations are high, as Mr. Schoenfeld demonstrates. In the case of the Times stories, it is easy to imagine members of al Qaeda rerouting their finances or communications to avoid U.S. monitoring. But the effects of leaking go beyond the damage to individual programs. The threat of leaks reduces the willingness of foreign intelligence services to collaborate and, within our own government, encourages the president to restrict access to

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GARRIEL WONDERFELD

important plans, isolating him from the critiques he needs. The disclosure of secret programs will of course subject them to public scrutiny; but the possibility of a leak means less internal "scrubbing" for the programs that remain under wraps.

In "Necessary Secrets," Mr. Schoenfeld does not say exactly how we should balance free speech and the need to shroud certain government actions. He instead tries to shame the press back into a sense of responsibility. It is an admirable effort but probably a futile one, given intensifying press distrust and media competition.

Even so, Mr. Schoenfeld's history points to a couple of useful strategies. After egregious disclosures, Congress often defines a narrow category of information, like the names of intelligence agents, and singles out the cate-

gory for punishment. Prosecuting the news media under such statutes is less damaging to free speech than indictments under general espionage statutes, which may broadly block information in the public interest. Congress should protect more such categories, like covert programs aimed at preventing attacks by weapons of mass destruction.

As Mr. Schoenfeld shows, government officials who break their oath of confidentiality can themselves be punished. Mr. Obama's Justice Department has in fact brought prosecutions against officials for revealing classified information during the Bush administration. If made with sensible discretion, such indictments can deter the leaking of truly dangerous material without the chilling effect on the media that flows from making reporters felons.

As it happens, the Justice Department has recently subpoenaed one of the Times reporters whose story prompted Mr. Schoenfeld's book. The government's investigation, this time, has to do with yet another storyabout a covert action to disrupt Iran's nuclear program. To the surprise of national-security hawks and the chagrin of the Fourth Estate, the Obama administration may turn out to be better than its predecessor at acting to preserve secrets.

Mr. McGinnis teaches at the Northwestern University Law School

### \* Top Picks

## Art pleasures in Baroque gardens

HANNOVER: Herrenhausen, one of the world's best-preserved baroque gardens, was once a place of pleasure where the 17th-century elector and his court could stroll and enjoy a heady mix of art, nature and philosophical discourse. And that is exactly what the new art festival called KunstFestSpiele is trying to achieve in a 21st-century context over three weeks in June. Elisabeth Schweeger, who has a reputation for cutting-edge productions, didn't want just another festival. Instead, she says, she aimed to recreate the sense of intellectual excitement that characterized the art-besotted world of Herrenhausen's baroque forbears.

The trick is in the mix of old and new. Take the famous "Hedge Theatre," Europe's first open-air performance venue, where 17 largerthan-life gilded statues overlook the stage. Instead of baroque opera, Swiss artist Roman Signer presents a serendipitous performance involving a helicopter, several buckets of water and a kayak (June 18). Music lovers aren't short-changed, however. The Ensemble Resonanz concert combines new music by contemporary composers Georg Friedrich Haas, Bernhard Gander and Wolfgang Rihm with the early baroque sounds of Giovanni Gabrieli, Girolamo Frescobaldi and Carlo Gesualdo (June 24).

One of the undisputed highlights of the festival in the baroque gardens and two extant buildings is Claudio Monteverdi's opera "Orfeo" (June 4-6). In Alexander Charim's new pro-



'Orfeo' soloists ensemble Kaleidoscope.

duction, Orfeo and Euridice are a contemporary couple in a world of drugs and suicide. French tenor Carl Ghazarossian (Orfeo) brings persuasive power and passion to the role and a voice of lyrical purity and astounding range. His counterpart, Norwegian soprano Isa Gericke, is all youth and innocence. This is more than a baroque opera in modern getup. Swedish conductor Olof Boman leads the

baroque ensemble Kaleidoskop on historic instruments, adding dissonant new music to create an exciting sound mix.

In his installation "Caprificus," Thomas Goerge puts a bed on a high platform giving a virtual Ernst August of Hannover the perfect focal point for viewing his ancestors' famous gardens. Below, a giant fig commemorates the exotic plants they

coddled in the orangery. Visitors can enter the fig in a symbolic act of fertilization. Meanwhile, British conceptual walking artist and photographer Hamish Fulton invites festival guests to join him in an art walk through the gardens (June 27).

—Mariana Schroeder

Until June 27 www.kunstfestspieleherrenhausen.de

## 'Pearl Fishers' offers great performances, grand imagery

**LONDON:** Only two of Georges Bizet's operas have lasted; though "Carmen" is a masterpiece, "The Pearl Fishers" has two flaws. In 1863, Bizet didn't know that, as in modern-day Sri Lanka, Ceylon's pop-

ulation was mainly Buddhist, with a Tamil Hindu minority. The result of this ignorance is a terrifically politically incorrect plot of benighted people worshipping savage gods.

Its second failing is the libretto,



by a pair of jobbing librettists who, when they heard the score, apologized to Bizet "for not giving him one of their best efforts," as George Hall writes in the program notes for the English National Opera's superb new production. The ENO's policy of performing in English compounds this fault, as Martin Fitzpatrick's translation not only misses what music there is in the original French words, but also contains many lines where the natural stresses of the English are uncomfortably at odds with the stress in the music.

Director Penny Woolcock fills the stage with water imagery. During the prelude, divers descend from the top of the stage and swim up again—the first time I have ever seen this effect work in the theater (it's thanks to Jennifer Schriever's lighting). Waves swell under designer Dick Bird's amazing sets—the Act I shantytown on stilts looks

Alfie Boe as Nadir.

more like a Brazilian favela than a seaside slum, but it's still magical.

Twenty-something conductor Rory Macdonald proves there's more in the score than the famous tenor-baritone duet. He gets great performances from Alfie Boe as Nadir, the pearl fisher who has made an oath to his best mate, Zurga, the village headman (a role sung with melting beauty by Quinn Kelsey). The pair once glimpsed a divinely beautiful holy woman, Leïla, and have promised each other not to pursue her. Hanan Alattar sings Leïla's coloratura sweetly and accurately rather than powerfully, which makes the role more poignant. Nadir sins, Zurga goes ballistic—you can guess the rest: pure romantic tosh. Ms. Woolcock writes in the program that she's tried to make the production relevant to "climate change and rising sea levels." Fortunately, this isn't evident in this supremely pleasurable production. -Paul Levy

Until July 8 www.eno.org

## In Turin, Merz's weird and wonderful numbers and materials

TURIN: In the 1960s, a diverse group of Italian artists suddenly seemed to be experimenting in similar ways. Eventually named "Arte Povera," or poor art, by an Italian art critic, the movement used just about every material imaginable in just about every form possible. Arte Povera proved a great precursor to the free-for-all approach of much of Europe's contemporary-art scene, and this past decade young artists and the art market have brought it

newfound attention.

One of the movement's key figures, the Turin artist Mario Merz (1925-2003), made his mark in the 1970s by turning free-flowing images on canvas into igloos, and by incorporating images of numbers into his art. Merz's ability to combine rough materials with mathematical imagery gives his work a weird and wonderful tension. After his death, his caretaker foundation, the Fondazione Merz, took over a 1930s

Turin heating plant and created a marvelous space for special exhibitions, meant to highlight Merz's work, as well as that of other Arte Povera artists. "Mario Merz: Pageantry of Painting" explores a lesser-known period of Merz's career in the late 1970s and '80s, when he introduced figurative painting into his cabinet of curiosities.

Created with both brushes and spray paint, these giant canvases, often exhibited in large bed-frame-like settings, are a revelation. They seem to combine improvisatory techniques with a precise final impact. "Benito Cereno," a 1983 canvas incorporating a few neon letters, shows a primordial lizard mysteriously subdued, it seems, by the eerie blue "A" and "B." Some works also allude to the human body, like "Gambe" (Legs), from 1978, which rests a crooked canvas on a pile of branches. —J. S. Marcus

Until Sept. 26 www.fondazionemerz.org



Portrait of Zinovii Grzhebin by Yuri Pavlovich Annenkov. Estimate £800,000-£1.2 million.

# Spotlight is on Fabergé

 $\overline{R}$  USSIAN ART WILL dominate the London auction scene next week.

The agenda is packed—Bonhams (June 7), Sotheby's (June 7 and 9), Christie's (June 8 and 10) and MacDougall's (June 7, 10-11). On offer will be a wealth of paintings, icons, porcelain, silver and other precious objects.

## **Collecting**MARGARET STUDER

Numerous items by Fabergé promise to attract particular attention (clocks, jewelry, cigarette cases, animal figures and more). "The Fabergé market is currently enjoying unprecedented growth," Sotheby's Russian expert Jo Vickery says.

Flowers are among the most sought-after Fabergé objects. Sotheby's will showcase an exquisite Fabergé jeweled and enameled study of a wild pansy in shades of violet and yellow, with its stem resting in a rock crystal pot (estimate: £200,000-£250,000). The wild pansy, circa 1900, was given by Queen Alexandra of England to her friend the 1st Lady Iveagh. "Their beauty lies in the clever illusion of simplicity, as if a freshly cut wild sprig has been dropped into a little pot of water," the catalog suggests.

ter," the catalog suggests.

Meanwhile, a delightful Fabergé piece at Christie's will be a jeweled hardstone model of an alert, colorful turkey, with gold feet and diamond eyes, from 1908-17 (estimate: £60,000-£80,000).

Towering over porcelain offerings at Sotheby's will be a monumental pair of vases from 1841 from the Imperial Porcelain Factory. Measuring 67.5 centimeters in height, the elaborate vases, decorated with rural scenes, come from an aristocratic German family and are appearing at auction for the first time (estimate: £800,000-£1.2 million).

Portraits are a magnet. On the cover of Sotheby's important-paintings sale is a portrait y Yuri Pavlovich Annenkov of legendary publisher Zinovii Grzhebin, who played a vital role in Russian intellectual life in the early 20th century. The portrait from 1919 shows the publisher in a thoughtful moment as he peruses a document (estimate: £800,000-£1.2 million). On the cover of Bonhams' catalog is a 1966 bold portrait in striking red of Russian writer-artist Olga Andreeva looking pensive, by Erik Bulatov (estimate: £80,000-£120,000). time off

#### **Berlin**

#### art

"Who Knows Tomorrow" displays the work of five contemporary African artists in a collaborative exhibition with four other Berlin venues.

Neue Nationalgalerie Until Sept. 26 **☎** 49-30-266-4232-60 www.smb.museum

#### **Brussels** festival

"Visionary Africa" presents performing and visual artists from Africa, including Rokia Traoré, Angélique Kidjo, Didier Awadi and Germaine Acogny.

Palais des Beaux Arts Until Sept. 26 **32-2-5078-444** www.bozar.be

#### Copenhagen

#### art

"Warhol after Munch" showcases four major print works by Edvard Munch alongside 30 of Warhol's large, colorful

#### London

#### music

Aerosmith tours Europe for the first time since 2007, bringing its catalog of rock classics and hits to Greece for the first time.

June 15, The O2, London June 18, Romexpo, Bucharest June 20, Karaiskaki Stadium, Athens

June 23, GelreDome XS, Arnhem June 27, St. Jordi Arena, Barcelona June 29, Bercy Arena, Paris July 1, O2 Arena, Prague More European dates at www.aeroforceone.com

#### art and antiques fair

"Art Antiques London" gathers international dealers and collectors to show antiques and art from Europe, the Middle East, China and Japan.

Kensington Gardens June 9-16 ☎ 44-20-7389-6555 www.haughton.com



June 11, The Village, Dublin June 14, New Morning, Paris

June 16, Paradiso, Amsterdam June 17, Southbank Centre, London www.bettyelavette.com

Madrid

#### **Paris**

"Dynasty" shows 80 contemporary works in a dual exhibition, displaying art by 40 artists in two separate venues at the same time.

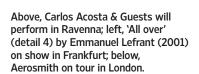
> Palais de Tokyo Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de June 12-Sept. 5 ☎ 33-1472-3540-1 www.palaisdetokyo.com

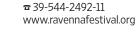
#### Ravenna

#### festival

"Ravenna Festival 2010" presents music and performing arts by renowned artists and ensembles from around the world, including Keith Jarrett, Rokia Traoré and the musical "Evita."

Fondazione Ravenna Manifestazioni June 9-July 13





#### **Rotterdam**

"Tour Experience" offers a large inter-active exhibition celebrating the Tour de France in anticipation of this year's start of the race in Rotterdam.

Kunsthal Rotterdam Until Aug. 29 **☎** 31-10-4400-301 www.kunsthal.nl

#### Rouen

"Rouen: City of Impressionism" examines Rouen's influence on Impressionism with more than 100 paintings, including work by Monet, Pissarro and Gauguin.

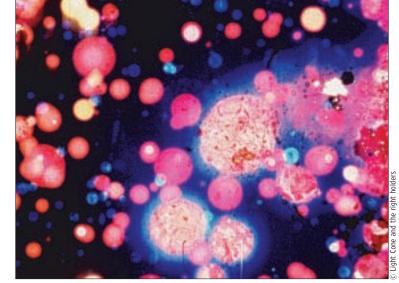
Musée des Beaux-Arts Until Sept. 26 ☎ 33-2357-1284-0 www.rouen-musees.com

#### **Zurich** festival

"Zürcher Festspiele 2010" stages opera, including Bizet's "Carmen," classical concerts, dance, drama and art at various venues in the city.

Zürcher Festspiele June 18-July 11 **☎** 41-44-2699-090 www.zuercher-festspiele.ch

Source: WSJ research



interpretations of them. Louisiana Museum of Modern Art Until Sept. 12 **☎** 45-4919-0719 www.louisiana.dk

#### **Edinburgh**

"The Glasgow Boys—Drawing Inspiration" features more than 30 drawings by the group of avant-garde artists that included Sir James Guthrie, Joseph Crawhall and Arthur Melville.

National Gallery Complex Until Sept. 5 **☎** 44-1316-2462-00 www.nationalgalleries.org

#### **Emden**

"Brigitte Waldach" presents the latest installation by the German artist and

Kunsthalle Emden June 5-Sept. 5 **☎** 49-4921-9750-0 kunsthalle-emden.de

#### **Frankfurt**

"Celluloid: Cameraless Film" showcases film work created and manipulated by hand from the 1930s to the present, featuring 21 international artists.

Schirn Kunsthalle Until Aug. 29 ☎ 49-69-2998-820 www.schirn-kunsthalle.de

