

THE EPOCH TIMES LIFE & TRADITION

From living in a refugee camp to owning luxury hotels, the hotelier's story shows that the American dream is alive and well.

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Parenting: How to Crush It

BARBARA DANZA

Do people still say, “crush it?” I don’t know—I’ve been parenting for a while now.

I’m probably at least a decade behind on the popular lingo. Being cool fell off my priority list long ago.

What is on my priority list is being a phenomenal parent. Am I succeeding? Who can say? We’re all just figuring this out as we go. Childhood moves fast—switching phases in the blink of an eye. The moment you feel like you might actually know what you’re doing, your kid moves on, requiring a whole new set of parenting superpowers.

Along the way, though, we each happen upon some realizations, strategies, or truths that take this parenting gig from good to great. Here are ways I think anyone can take the monumental responsibility of parenting and crush it.

Dedicate Yourself

Few responsibilities bestowed upon us in life come close in gravity and importance to that of the role of parent. So, go all in.

Dedicate yourself fully to nurturing your family, providing a magical childhood to your children, and raising up-right, kind, and capable people who will carry on the excellent traditions, values, and lessons you’ve bequeathed to them. There’s simply no other way to approach this than with your whole heart.

Bask in the Wonder

The challenges of parenting may be great, but the rewards are beyond measure. One of the most rewarding aspects of being a parent is experiencing the world through your children’s eyes.

From the time they open them, their curious minds begin to be amazed by everything they see. Whether it’s the discovery of tiny little toes at the end of their feet, colorful images in a bedtime story,



LOPOLLO/SHUTTERSTOCK

Rein in the temptation to shower your children with too much stuff and opt instead for simple playthings that require imagination, oodles of time in nature, and as few screens as possible.

or their first taste of ice cream, the sights, sounds, and experiences of new places and new things bring new discoveries—and you’re lucky enough to come along for the ride. It’s miraculous to behold and a gift that reminds you of how much there is to appreciate in life.

Keep Things Simple

One might assume that a “magical childhood” consists of rooms full of toys, lavish vacations, and all the latest technology. What truly makes childhood magical, though, is simplicity.

Rein in the temptation to shower your children with too much stuff and opt instead for simple playthings that require imagination, oodles of time in nature, and as few screens as possible. Read books together, cook together, go for walks together, play games together, grow together and cheer your children on.

Living simply means appreciating the little things, being a responsible steward of your resources, choosing healthy, whole foods to nourish your family, and prioritizing experiences over things. The good life is a simple one.

Embrace Adventure

Bottle up that sense of wonder and head out on adventures with your family as often as you can. Whether it’s a day trip, a weekend getaway, or a week or more into the unknown, family adventures are some of the greatest joys of parenting.

When the whole family steps away from the day-to-day routine and heads off together, they can be present, in the moment. Every new place and new experience is a learning opportunity for your children (and you). You’ll bond further as a family and create memories that last a lifetime. They can be as

simple or extravagant as you wish, but the point is to just go.

Educate Your Children

Whether you send your children to a traditional school or homeschool them, you are their primary educator. Fill your home with books. Encourage their exploration of the best music and art. Teach them history—most schools miss the mark greatly. Make sure they are competent in reading, writing, and speaking. Help them understand mathematics fully. Dive deep anytime they express interest in any subject whatsoever. Encourage messes, experiments, creativity, and making.

What’s more, teach them your family’s history, the traditions that have been passed down from your elders, and the values you hold in the highest esteem.

Recognize Your Reflection

As much as you’ll teach your children, they’ll teach you. Especially when your children behave in ways that displease you, consider whether or not they are reflecting a character trait you also possess. Discipline your children with wisdom and look within for the lessons they in turn will teach you. They can be little mirrors allowing us to see more of ourselves, if we’re wise enough and brave enough to look.

Take It Day by Day

Nobody does this job perfectly, so give yourself a lot of grace and always remember that tomorrow is another day. You’ll make mistakes. You’ll have regrets. You’ll fumble along like humans tend to do.

At the end of the day, love your children and ensure that they know that no matter what happens you will continue to love them. Teach them well. Be confident that you’re exactly the right person to be their parent. Basically, crush it.

Efrem Harkham

A Journey From Rags to Riches, From Baghdad to Beverly Hills

CHANNALY PHILIPP

Efrem Harkham’s story was written across the globe, from Baghdad to Beverly Hills—by way of Sydney—from chaotic refugee camp to luxury hotels. It’s a story of rags to riches that shows the American dream is alive and well. But it’s not a tale of naked, hard-nosed ambition. Though hardship has punctuated his journey, it’s also been marked by kindness—given and received—along the way.



Efrem Harkham as a young boy.

Harkham, the chairman and CEO of Luxe Hotels and Luxe Collection Hotels, has hospitality in his blood. His mother ran a warm, welcoming home in Iraq, fragrant with the aromas of wonderful delicacies.

But peace in his native Iraq would be breached by Hitler’s propaganda. In 1942, Jewish homes, businesses, and synagogues were burned. After Israel declared its independence in 1948 and subsequently pushed back against attacks from neighboring countries, life became worse for Jews in Iraq; their businesses were taken over by the Iraqi government, and their rights were stripped away.

Harkham’s family was among the last group of Jews to leave Iraq in 1951. They could only take five pounds of personal possessions with them, including clothes and photos.

From Iraq to Israel

Israel was to be their new home. All of the new arrivals were sprayed with DDT, and, along with 100,000 others, Harkham and his family were redirected to old British military camps, where tents and sheet-metal tins awaited them. It was muddy and chaotic; disease flourished. About 700,000 Jews had arrived in Israel in the last five years, an influx that caused a food shortage. The future of the country, beset by economic woes, was uncertain.

The Harkham family would live in the camp for the next four years.

But though most of their material possessions were left behind, what they had left—faith and hope—would be the foundation for building their future.

“My parents believed that we are on earth for a reason, and that in our journey through life, God is always with us,” Harkham wrote in his new book, “Living the Luxe Life: The Secrets of Building a Successful Hotel Empire.”

They knew that not only did something better await them, but also they could make their surroundings better, little by little, for themselves and for others.

The Chicken and the Goat

Harkham’s parents were pre-occupied in different ways. His mother was in charge of feeding the family; she was given ration coupons for eggs, milk, and bread. But with the bit of money she had, she got two chickens, which meant that they could now have eggs. And then a few months later, she was able to get a goat, which meant goat milk to feed not

only the family, but also friends and family nearby.



Magical things happen when you show up.

Efrem Harkham

“Due to my parents’ examples during these years, I learned that when things are at their worst, you should try to make things better around you,” Harkham said. His father was concerned with improving education for kids in the camp, and by and by was able to get funding to build a school for more than 400 children. Somehow, even though there was a food shortage, he managed to get the kids a daily lunch—a bread roll and a small bottle of milk. For the kids, it would stave off hunger during the school day.

Perhaps everyone experiences a first moment of newfound maturity. For Harkham, it was while accompanying his mother to the market when he was 5; she was acutely stressed, as she needed to return to tend to the baby. Harkham had come along to help carry bags. He was hit by a great sense of responsibility toward her, as well as a sense of pure, selfless love.

He intensely felt the difficulties his parents were going through and wanted to spare them as much worry as possible. For example, he would wear out his shoes, getting holes in them—and never let his parents know.

It might have been easy for the family to fall into despair, given their sudden descent into poverty and difficult circum-



Efrem Harkham is the chairman and CEO of Luxe Hotels and Luxe Collection Hotels.

stances. But they relied on their faith, and Harkham took a lesson from their adversity: “As Jews, we are constantly taught the reason God tests us with adversity is because God wants us to develop to our full potential. ...We must remember that our abilities are greater than we imagine.” Over the years, the family has remained tightknit.

Passage to Australia

Meanwhile, his father was focused on getting the family out of Israel, and the trajectory of their lives shifted when the opportunity to move to Australia came up.

On their way Down Under, they had a layover in Hong Kong, where Harkham and his siblings saw their first hotels and ate in their first restaurant. “It was better than Disneyland,” he recalled.

In high school, Harkham was bullied a great deal. He told his family that the black-and-blue eyes he received over the years were the result of sports-related injuries. But things came to a head one day, when Harkham found his voice and fought back. He was cast as the perpetrator by the adults, but his bullies never bothered him again after that.

Harkham blossomed after school, joining his brother’s company as a traveling salesman (he was also studying law at the time), and then partnering with him. It was the beginning of many years of hard work and success in the apparel industry, both in Australia and, later, in the United States. At age 21, now a millionaire, he moved to Los Angeles.

It All Boils Down to Showing Up

Harkham says that much of his success can be attributed to one simple thing: showing up.

One day, he was invited to a luncheon to honor a friend, a local councilman. He wasn’t particularly in the mood to go, but he knew that “magical things happen when you show up.”

Seated next to a banker, he struck up a conversation. The banker asked him if he’d be interested in buying a discounted note for a hotel on Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills. He was in escrow 30 days later.

This is how after 14 years in the apparel industry, he transitioned to the hospitality industry, starting with owning the only hotel on the famous Rodeo Drive.

While running his hotel, Harkham—like all good businessmen—saw a void in the industry: a lack of consistency and targeted marketing, for example. He created a global hotel representation group, which would give managers and owners of individually owned hotels the tools to improve profits, whether through marketing, sales, or training. Part of what the Luxe Collection does is connect hotel members to corporate clients or travel

consortiums. In effect, the company becomes part of an extended team, helping the hotels achieve what would be difficult for an independently owned hotel to do on its own.

Harkham became known not just for showing up, but also for forging those connections—among his contacts, his staff, and his community.

It was something that President Ronald Reagan would remark on one day.

Harkham had met Reagan on a few occasions and, at his office in California, was struck by an engraved quote on the former president’s desk that said, “There is no limit to what a man can do or where he can go if he does not mind who gets the credit.”

It was none other than Reagan—the man who called for Gorbachev to “tear down this wall” and who didn’t care who would get the credit for it—who reinforced in him the idea to surround oneself with the best people possible and to set aside one’s ego.

This month, Harkham opened the Luxe Life Hotel New York, in what used to be the headquarters of Time Life magazine. There, the artists and writers of Life had lived above their shared offices; they included Charles Dana Gibson, Norman Rockwell, and Robert Capa. The architects were John M. Carrere and Thomas Hastings, who also went on to build the New York Public Library.

Perched above the doorway is a gilded statue of an angel by sculptor Philip Martiny. This “Life Angel” would be featured in the magazine, its hand over a globe of the Earth.

A Family Legacy

For all of his success in business, Harkham also has been focused on giving back through education. It was always a cherished cause of his father, who passed away last year, at age 105. It was no surprise that he was often asked the secret to his longevity; he would explain that you get back what you put in, tenfold.

Seeds continue to be planted: The family’s Hark Angel Foundation builds schools in poor communities around the world, most recently in Burma. There are other schools in Los Angeles, Sydney, and Kenya.

Reaping what you sow goes back to a simple truth that Harkham was taught very young.

In that refugee camp, half a world away, Harkham and his siblings fervently believed their parents when they told them things would get better.

In his book, Harkham writes: “Remember that if you plant poison, you get poison. If you plant great stuff, innovative thoughts, and positive ideas, it grows as such. Our minds are fertile ground, so whatever you put in is what you get out.”

Tackling Money Issues: Why Financial Wellness Matters

BARBARA DANZA

Money. It’s an aspect of life everyone must manage. For many, the stresses that come along with personal finances affect their relationships, their health, and their overall well-being.

I spoke to Brian Hamilton, the vice president of SmartDollar, a new program for employers being offered by Ramsey Solutions. SmartDollar aims to offer a way for employers to help their employees tackle their money issues.



Brian Hamilton, vice president of SmartDollar.

got to take control. It’s not about head knowledge, it’s about behavior change.

The Epoch Times: How do financial struggles affect one’s well-being?

Mr. Hamilton: Money is one of the most common causes of stress in America, with 60 percent of Americans stressing about it every day and night. People are literally losing sleep over it. And that’s just the beginning. Money stress is making people physically and mentally sick—it’s affecting how they use their health care and making them miss work. It hurts relationships and marriages, too. Money fights are the No. 2 cause of divorce in America. And when it comes to their jobs, they bring that stress to work with them, making them less productive, more distracted, and causes them to miss work more often. That costs businesses money in lost productivity and turnover.

The Epoch Times: What inspired Ramsey Solutions to offer its new SmartDollar program as an employee benefit?

Mr. Hamilton: For three decades, our CEO, Dave Ramsey, has been teaching people how to budget their money and get out

of debt so they can live and give like no one else. We’ve offered that message through financial wellness education to businesses for almost 20 years.

But in those two decades of experience, we learned that there’s a stigma around talking about money at work. There was also the problem that a physical class at work limited our ability to reach as many lives as possible. So, in 2015, we developed and launched the digital version of that product that allowed us to scale to the needs of thousands of businesses and millions of employees.

Businesses needed a financial wellness benefit that actually worked and could show them the return for the company. Employees needed the privacy and ability to access it from anywhere. Our product meets the needs of both. Today, SmartDollar is in thousands of companies, changing the lives of millions of employees across the country. But our work isn’t done.

The Epoch Times: What incentives do employers have to offer such a program to their employees?

Mr. Hamilton: Look, financial wellness benefits are the hot trend in the benefits space right now. But almost none of them focus on the right things. A lot of them actually hurt employees with things like dangerous payday advances and student loan refinancing built-in. Debt is not the answer; kicking the can down the road is not the answer. These “benefits” don’t lead to life change. And if it doesn’t teach your employees to change how they handle their money; it’s not helping them.

I mentioned how employees are stressing about money and how it impacts their health. For the business, you have to look at

ROI through the lens of engagement. What is engagement? It’s when your employees watch the videos, complete the quizzes, update their wellness scores, get into a rhythm with their budgets, and it actually changes their lives. SmartDollar users see an average financial turnaround of more than \$16,000 in the first year alone. No other benefit in the industry can touch that. If you’re a business, the incentive is that your employees show up to work without their money stress, are more focused, and are more productive as a result. Plus, employees who are secure in their finances show lower turnover rates and miss work less often. That saves your company money. That helps your bottom line.

The Epoch Times: What strategies does the SmartDollar recommend to find one’s way to financial health?

Mr. Hamilton: Financial wellness isn’t a math problem—it’s a heart problem. To have it, you need to change your behaviors around money. You have to say, “Enough is enough,” and commit to changing. You have to want it. You wouldn’t expect to get in shape after going to the gym just once, would you? It’s the same with financial wellness. SmartDollar doesn’t just treat the symptoms of poor financial behaviors, it attacks the root cause of them. We do this by giving employees a clear plan that’s easy to understand. We don’t do high-brow financial language that nobody understands. We have the top names in money guiding them throughout their journey, as well as all the tools they need to help them put what they’ve learned into action.

We’ve found that when employees focus on one goal at a time, putting one foot in front of the other, they build momentum to work the plan, and the result is a lasting life change. We’re not exaggerating. People are changing their family trees. People are finding hope, sometimes for the first time in their lives.

The Epoch Times: For the person reading this article and in poor financial health, what first step would you recommend they take to begin to make improvements?

Mr. Hamilton: Following Dave Ramsey’s 7 Baby Steps is the only concrete way you can move the needle with your finances. They are the foundation of SmartDollar and the journey all our users are on to finding financial wellness. If you want to get out of debt, build wealth, or live and give like no one else, you need to start your journey on the Baby Steps. Right now. It doesn’t matter whether you’re just starting out or about to retire. Anyone can work the plan.

1. Save \$1,000 as a starter emergency fund.
2. Pay off all debt with the Debt Snowball.
3. Save 3–6 months of expenses in a fully funded emergency fund.
4. Invest 15 percent of your income for retirement
5. Save for your children’s college.
6. Pay off your home early.
7. Build wealth and give.

It doesn’t matter what you make, what your current money situation is, or how old you are. It’s never too late to start. You can do this!



Family picnic in Centennial Park, Sydney, 1969, with (L–R) siblings Rebecca, David, Terry, Sophie, his father Nagi, and mother Aziza.



The newest Luxe Hotels addition, Luxe Life Hotel in NoMad, Manhattan.



The fantasy of a fairy tale not only helps them to make sense of reality, but it also stretches the imagination.

Once Upon a Time

The Importance of Fairy Tales for Children

JEFF MINICK

I hardly knew my mother's mother, who died when I was in second grade, but to this day, one picture of her face remains vivid in my memory.

Three years before her death, we were in an upstairs room of our house, and Grandma was telling me the story of "Little Red Riding Hood." Her front teeth were large, and protruded a bit, and when she came to the part where Little Red Riding Hood says to the wolf, "What big teeth you have, Grandmother," my grandmother scared the dickens out of me by then roaring, "The better to eat you up with, my dear," and snapping those teeth at me.

Whenever I reach that point in the story, while telling it to my own children and grandchildren, in my mind's eye, I don't see a wolf. I see Grandma.

That's no insult to her. It's very much a tribute both to her storytelling talents and to fairy tales.

My grandmother scared the dickens out of me by then roaring, 'The better to eat you up with, my dear,' and snapping those teeth at me.

From Campfires

to Movie Theaters

For untold generations, human beings have swapped stories about fairies and goblins, princesses in distress, witches, spells, animals transformed into people and vice versa. Some folklorists like the Brothers Grimm collected and recorded these tales. Others like Hans Christian Andersen composed their own fairy tales.

Even today, writers refashion or invent fairy tales. After all, what is Tolkien's beloved "Lord of the Rings" if not a fairy tale par excellence?

Some of these tales are as familiar to Americans as the Golden Arches of McDonald's. "Cinderella," "Sleeping Beauty," "Beauty and the Beast," "The Little Mermaid"—Disney has made a for-

ture releasing these and other films. Fairy tales have also appeared frequently on television, in series ranging from the "Shirley Temple's Storybook" of the 1950s to the more recent "Once Upon a Time."

Are Fairy Tales Harmful?

Not everyone finds value in these stories.

In "Five Reasons to Stop Reading Your Children Fairy Tales Now," Olivia Petter attacks fairy tales as "riddled with prejudicial and archaic stereotypes," claiming that they perpetuate "misogynistic characters, degrading plot lines and racial uniformity." She is especially critical of what she sees as sexism in these stories, women who stay at home, princesses who need rescuing, evil stepmothers, and witches.

She writes, "In a culture where we're getting hitched later than ever before and many choose never to marry at all, the compulsory 'let's get married and live happily ever after' narrative seems practically medieval."

Despite the fact that many women still do wish for marriage and family, there is an unintended irony in this criticism. Today's females, most of whom surely heard fairy tales when they were children or watched them in a movie theater, belong to the most independent generation of women the world has ever seen. Fairy tales, therefore, seem to have inflicted little damage on the female psyche.

And as so often happens these days, when political correctness has wormed its way into every corner of our lives, this criticism misses the bigger picture, especially the value of fairy tales for the very young.

Here are four good reasons for sharing fairy tales with our children.

Distinction Between Darkness, Light Is Sharply Drawn

Let's consider the Brothers Grimm version of "Cinderella." Unlike the Disney cartoon, Cinderella's dying mother enjoins her to "be good and pious." Her sisters "were beautiful and fair in appearance, but at heart were black and ugly." As the story progresses, we see a real struggle between good and evil. (At the end of the original tale, two pigeons



"The Emperor's New Clothes" teaches a child that human beings can deceive themselves. "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" warns against taking what belongs to others. "The Three Little Pigs" stresses the importance of a job well done. "Pinocchio" tells youngsters that lying is a bad idea.

pluck out the wicked step-sisters' eyes. Fairy tales can be violent.)

Not only do fairy tales illustrate the canyon between good and evil, but they also show children that evil can be overcome, that good can win out in the end. When I watch my small grandchildren wave their sword sticks at imaginary enemies, and I ask them to identify their opponents, they always reply, "The bad guys."

Later, when they are older, they will be able to parse moral ambiguity, but first, they must learn the basic distinction between the "good guys" and the "bad guys."

A quote attributed to G.K. Chesterton—he put down the idea, but not in these words—offers this wisdom: "Fairy tales do not tell children that dragons exist. Children already know that dragons exist. Fairy tales tell children the dragons can be killed." When Jack kills the giant by hacking down the beanstalk, when the Gretel shoves the witch into the oven, when the Red Cross Knight dispatches the dragon, children see good triumphing over evil.

Fairy Tales Fire Up Imagination

We all enjoy turning on the ignition switch of the imagination. Consider the popularity of the Star Wars movies or the many superhero movies of the last 20 years.

Children have this same need.

The fantasy of a fairy tale not only helps them to make sense of reality, but it also stretches the imagination. Just as a playground builds muscles, balance, and motor skills in a child, so too can fairy tales build up the powers of imagination and creative play in the mind.

Fairy Tales Offer Life Lessons on a Level Children Can Understand

"The Emperor's New Clothes" teaches a child that human beings can deceive themselves. "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" warns against taking what belongs to others. "The Three Little Pigs" stresses the importance of a job well done. "Pinocchio" tells youngsters that lying is a bad idea.

These tales get their messages across through entertainment rather than overt moralizing. The listening child absorbs these lessons along with the story's enchantments.

Fairy Tales Are a Part of Our Culture and Tradition

Tradition derives from the Latin "tradere," meaning "to hand on," "to hand over." When we fail to hand over a part of that culture, we are failing the young. Many young people, for example, are ignorant of the Bible, which means they will be stymied by literary or conversational references even to basics like "Sermon on the Mount" or "the widow's mite."

The same is true of fairy tales. Most of the young are familiar with such tales as "Cinderella" or "Aladdin" through movies, but how many know "The Princess and the Pea" or "Rumpelstiltskin?" By sharing these stories with our youngsters, we introduce them into the broader culture.

"Once upon a time..." When strung together, surely those are four of the most magical words in the English language.

Let's make sure our children hear them.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C. Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

How to Find More Joy in Your Life

MICHAEL COURTER

Most of the people who come to seek help from me struggle to find a balance between fulfilling their responsibilities and engaging in the activities that bring them joy.

According to a study in the Lancet, Americans work more hours and experience more stress-related illnesses than other comparable countries. It doesn't take a scientific research study for most people to understand that a lack of joy leads to increased stress, anger, sadness, and other negative emotions. People need joy, genuine relationships, and relaxation to lead fulfilling lives.

People have told me all kinds of reasons why they can't, won't, or just don't deserve to have positive experiences. These are some of the common refrains I hear when I ask people what makes them happy:

"I don't know how to have fun."

"I have too many things to do."

"I don't deserve it."

"Having fun is for kids."

These beliefs, or variations on them, keep us from having the balanced and fulfilling lives we are looking for.

'I'm Too Busy to Enjoy Life'

A lot of us are under the impression that we have to finish our responsibilities before we can "relax and have fun." There are two primary problems with this.

First, it's a false dichotomy that we don't need to enjoy fun or relaxation while we are fulfilling our responsibilities. If we think that joy is supposed to come later, we will be intentionally leaving large joyless swaths of time in our lives.

The second problem is that people simply can't be their best selves—whether as students, parents, or workers—without balance. Many of the people I work with simply collapse in front of the television once they are too exhausted to go on any further.

The average American adult spends over 35 hours per week watching television; that's more than 10 full weeks per year. In 2017 alone, the average U.S. consumer spent 238 minutes daily (3 hours, 58 minutes) watching TV, according to a Nielsen report. While this activity may be restful, it generally does not leave us feeling fulfilled.

To find joy amid the things we do every day, we need to balance two states of mind: task completion and mental presence.

The idiom "stop and smell the roses" is related to the idea of being present. When we are taking care of responsibilities, our mental state is in task completion mode and not very aware of our sensory experiences. In other words, we don't notice the roses. We also don't pay very close attention to the people around us, other than how they help us complete our tasks.

We even tend to ignore our own bodies, not noticing if we are tired or hungry or how we are feeling.

The key to breaking down the wall of this false dichotomy is to be present while taking care of our responsibilities. This doesn't mean that you will suddenly enjoy everything you have to do in your life, but it does mean you will be open to noticing when joy does come your way.



TOA HEFTIBA/UNSPASH

A lot of us are under the impression that we have to finish our responsibilities before we can 'relax and have fun.'

The key to being present while doing things is to focus on your performance—not the outcome or when it will be finished. When we are focused on getting the outcome we want, it detracts from our ability to be present and our performance. Peak performance comes when we are immersed in what we are doing. That is, we are present with ourselves, our environment, the people around us, and we are all in on our performance. We are truly present and focused. Some people also refer to this as being "in the zone."

When possible it is also useful to schedule more traditional fun activities. The same principles still apply. You have to be aware and present to really enjoy them.

'I Don't Know How to Have Fun'

Many people that I work with who struggle with depression or anger issues tell me that they don't know how to have fun and that they were never allowed to play. However, when I break down the qualities of a joyful experience, they can recognize times when this happens.

Here are three things that happen when we are enjoying ourselves. One, we don't want the experience to end. Two, we lose track of time or time seems to fly past without us noticing. And three, we are not self-conscious; that is, we are not focused on how other people are perceiving us.

Can you think of anything you do where those states happen naturally? If something you do causes you to feel that way,

Schedule time for the people and things that bring you joy. If you perceive yourself as too busy, tell yourself that finding joy is necessary to be your best self.

try and schedule more time for it. If there are people you want to enjoy time with, ask them what activities bring out these states, and see if you share anything you like to do together. Schedule time with them to do the things you enjoy.

Finally, if you can't schedule more time for things that easily make you feel joy, see if you can bring these states into your day-to-day activities. With the right mental attitude, even mundane tasks can be enjoyable. When I am doing something that doesn't require my full mental capacities, I try to enter a prayer-like state, where I focus on my joyful and fulfilling connection to the divine as I go about my day.

'I Don't Deserve to Have Joy'

Many of us impose on ourselves an injunction against joy because we feel that we don't deserve it. This normally coincides with a constant feeling of not being good enough that starts with trying to win approval from an apparently unpleasable parent. What I like to ask people with such beliefs is: "Why don't you deserve joy? What would you have to do to deserve it?" Usually, they have internalized their beliefs without thinking about it clearly.

When you try to explain what you would have to do in order to deserve joy out loud you might realize how absurd it is that you impose unrealistic standards on yourself that you would never impose on other people.

If you notice that you have emotions of guilt or fear about having joy, you need to clarify the beliefs that are causing these emotions and stopping you from leading a full life.

How to Have Joy, Step by Step

1. Make a list of things that you like to do so much that you don't want them to end, that make you lose track of time and of your awareness about how other people are perceiving you. Look for things that make you feel good and that you feel good about. Our vices might also distract us from our worries but they don't leave us feeling good about ourselves.
2. Share your list with your family and friends, and ask them what they truly enjoy. Look for things you have in common.
3. Schedule time for the people and things that bring you joy. If you perceive yourself as too busy, tell yourself that finding joy is necessary to be your best self.
4. Work through any emotions or beliefs that stop you from feeling like you deserve joy. Get help from people you trust or a professional if guilt will not give way.
5. Train yourself to be present and aware of joy, whether you are in the midst of fulfilling your responsibilities or intentionally engaging in an enjoyable activity.

Michael Courter is a therapist and counselor who believes in the power of personal growth, repairing relationships, and following your dreams. His website is CourterCounsel.com

Do you have questions about relationships or personal growth that you would like Michael to address? Send them to mc@CourterCounsel.com

The Decline of the Boy Scouts but the Rise of Masculinity?

ANNIE HOLMQUIST

The Boy Scouts of America is filing for bankruptcy. A press release announced the move, citing the need to "equitably compensate victims who were harmed during their time in scouting." The statement refers, of course, to the many Scouts who were sexually abused as young boys.

Seeking to rectify wrongs and move on in providing a high-quality program for children is commendable. But does the move come too late to save the Boy Scouts? Possibly.

Signs of struggle within the organization have been visible for several years, the attempt to allow girls into the program being just one of them.

Maintaining its appeal in the midst of such struggles was a challenge for the Boy Scouts, as enrollment numbers show. In a recent five-year span, "the number of

Cub Scouts has declined by 18.5 percent to 1.2 million, and the number of Boy Scouts and Varsity Scouts has declined 8.4 percent to 834,122," explains a recent article in *Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture*.

But that doesn't mean scouting and its activities are lost for future generations. The *Chronicles* article highlights Trail Life USA as one popular organization filling the void for boys seeking the masculine adventures and survival skills which the Boy Scouts were once known for.

One reason for the growing popularity of Trail Life USA appears to be its ambition to combat negative cultural trends. Unlike the Boy Scouts—and much of modern culture—it emphasizes the importance of religious activity, recognizing that boys need a "compass" that points them to truth and Christian values, while providing a pattern



Camp ranger Mark Veteto closes the front gate of the Maple Dell Scout Camp outside Payson, Utah, on May 9, 2018.

for a moral and upright life. Second, Trail Life USA seeks to keep its program male-specific. Doing so is not an attempt to disrespect females, according to the head of the organization. Instead, it's an acknowledgment that the sexes are different. Separating boys from girls and giving them unique activities provides opportunities for growth not readily available in school or

other organizations. Finally, Trail Life USA encourages the participation of an endangered demographic group: fathers. "Unlike many other youth organizations, Trail Life emphasizes troop meetings being true father-son activities, not just an activity fathers drop their sons off at." Thus, not only is Trail Life training the next generation on how to be men, it also is training

adult men to step up and accept leadership. The model of father involvement also builds in natural safeguards against some of the sexual abuse problems that necessitated the Boy Scouts' pursuit of bankruptcy.

Signs of struggle within the organization have been visible for several years.

Religion, masculinity, and fatherhood: three items that are often maligned in popular culture. Yet given the 25 percent growth in membership Trail Life has experienced in the last year, it seems that these virtues are still highly prized by some in society.

Our nation needs men who know what they believe and aren't afraid to let

those beliefs be known. We need men who aren't afraid to show their masculine side in a quiet strength that protects the vulnerable. Finally, our nation needs men who value children and recognize the responsibility a man has to provide a role model for leadership in his own home and to the little ones he is raising.

In recent years, it seems the Boy Scouts have drifted from promoting these principles, and have instead chosen to focus on political correctness. But if the growth of Trail Life USA and the decline of the Boy Scouts are any indication, political correctness is the last thing boys and their parents are looking for.

Perhaps there's still hope for American masculinity.

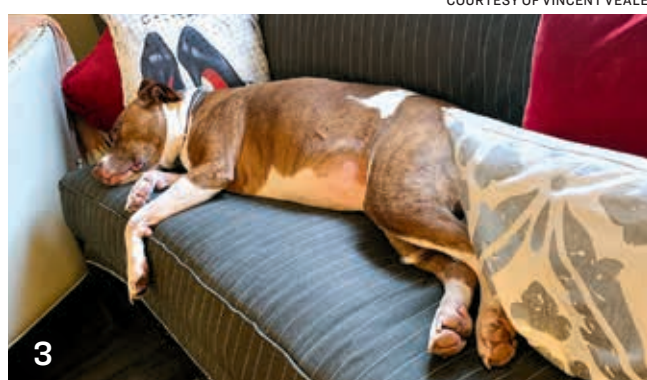
Annie Holmquist is the editor of *Intellectual Takeout*. This article was originally published on IntellectualTakeout.org



COURTESY OF PETS FOR PATRIOTS, INC.



COURTESY OF VINCENT VEALE



COURTESY OF VINCENT VEALE



COURTESY OF PETS FOR PATRIOTS, INC.

How a Navy Veteran and Abused Pit Bull Saved Each Other

ANDREW THOMAS

When you adopt a rescue animal, sometimes that animal rescues you. Vincent Veale, a United States Navy veteran, was suffering from clinical depression and post-traumatic stress, and a pit bull in desperate need of a loving home changed his life.

Veale, 59, lives in Wilmington, Delaware. He grew up in the Bronx, and vividly remembers having a

good childhood. His father, uncle, and oldest brother were both United States Navy veterans, and he himself enlisted in 1981 at the age of 21.

"The Navy was ingrained in our family," Veale explained.

Trauma at Sea

Veale served on the USS Nimitz aircraft carrier and was an aviation storekeeper. He was responsible for delivering critical supplies and parts to the aircraft on the ship.

What he enjoyed most about his job was being on the flight deck watching planes take off and return from missions. Watching the crew guide the planes in and seeing the pilots land on the aircraft carrier was particularly memorable.

Veale served in the Mediterranean Sea most of the time and had the opportunity to travel to Italy, Israel, Spain, and France. His favorite trip by far was to Paris.

"It reminded me of New York. The subway system, all the places you

1. Veale with his emotional support dog Greta.

2. Vincent Veale served in the United States Navy from 1981-1985.

3. Greta lounges on the couch.

4. Veale's emotional support dog Greta was rescued after being severely abused.

could eat, the art—to me I was like at home," Veale said.

While the Navy offered Veale the opportunity to travel, he would have to contend with the traumatic experiences that come with being an active-duty sailor. On October 23, 1983, two terrorists drove truck bombs into United States Marine barracks in Beirut, Lebanon, killing 220 Marines and 21 United States personnel.

The wounded were flown to U.S. ships off of the coast including the USS Nimitz. The trauma of seeing

his fellow service members wounded and the misery of uncertainty—it was possible he knew someone stationed at the barracks—took a psychological toll on Veale.

"I didn't know what was going to happen after that," Veale explained. "Everything was a question mark."

Keeping It Inside

Veale kept his feelings to himself and focused on his duties in order to keep his mind off the unknown. Being called to his battle station was particularly traumatizing because there were no windows.

In 1985, Veale left the Navy. He was recently married and moved back to New York, where he worked for Con Edison. His wife didn't like New York, and the couple moved to Virginia, where he worked for a power company for 16 years. Veale didn't know at the time that he was suffering from post-traumatic stress, and he found himself acting out and struggling to control his anger.

This led to problems at home and ultimately led to a divorce in 2005. He lost his home and found himself living out of his car for four years. He always had a full-time job, but couldn't afford his own place because his income went toward child support.

"I had nowhere else to go. I just had my clothes and my car," Veale recalled.

Veale ultimately found a shelter for veterans but felt isolated from others. He went to the Veterans Affairs hospital, where he was officially diagnosed with clinical depression and bipolar disorder. Two years ago, he was also diagnosed with post-traumatic stress.

Emotional Support Dog

His therapist at the Veterans Affairs hospital suggested that Veale adopt an emotional support pet. He contacted an organization called Pets for Patriots that connected him with an affiliate organization called New Leash on Life. The organization rescues dogs in Pennsylvania, and inmates train them to be service dogs.

They brought a dog named Greta to him one day, but she was initially apprehensive to engage with him. She had been abused, and someone had beaten her, likely to force her to fight in the past. Veale asked the organization to bring Greta for a second visit, and this time he was prepared—he brought some food with him.

Greta has helped Veale deal with his depression and post-traumatic stress immensely. She is always present for him, and just recently she was by his side during a depressive episode when he needed her most.

Greta has also helped Veale connect with others in his community since he needs to walk her three times a day. Initially, he would try to walk past people. However, they would stop and praise Greta, and now he has become more comfortable interacting with them. She has helped him cope with his emotions immensely.

"She can feel what I'm going through without me even saying anything," Veale said.

A Breast Cancer Survivor's Mission to Empower Women

Melissa Berry helps women maintain their identity, beauty, and confidence while undergoing treatment

ANDREW THOMAS

Not only is a breast cancer diagnosis terrifying, but the ensuing treatment can also be one of the most de-feminizing experiences of a woman's life, according to breast cancer survivor Melissa Berry.

While she was undergoing her own treatment, Berry, a fashion and beauty publicist, looked for products that could help her maintain her identity and confidence. She ended up finding a variety of different products, and started a list just for herself at first. But then her mother asked her for the list for a friend of a friend, and the list began to get passed around. In 2014, her blog Cancer Fashionista was born.

I had the opportunity to speak with Berry about her own battle with breast cancer, and how women can maintain their own identity, beauty, and confidence while undergoing treatment.

THE EPOCH TIMES: How did you react to your diagnosis?

MELISSA BERRY: I was shocked. Even though I felt like I was prepared for this moment because there was so much family history, and I knew that I was a BRCA gene carrier. It was still really shocking and I think that it took me some time to really wrap my head around the reality of that diagnosis.

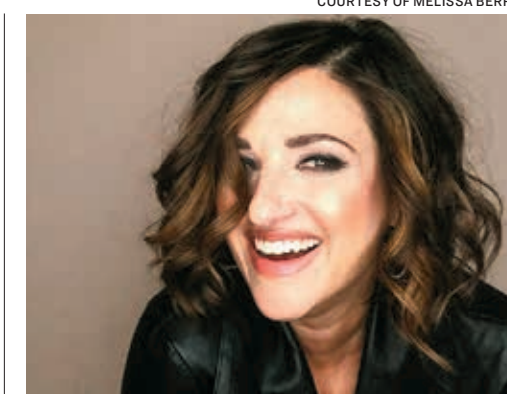
THE EPOCH TIMES: As a fashion and beauty publicist, how did your breast cancer diagnosis affect you?

MS. BERRY: I thought to myself, "How am I going to look like me?" I'm going to fashion shows. I'm meeting with beauty editors. I'm going to brainstorm meetings with the heads of luxury brands. This is the land of the beautiful people—and I thought to myself, "I don't need to look like a supermodel. I just want to look like me, and I don't want to look like I have cancer."

What I found to be so interesting is, I hit the internet and I thought, "OK, where do I get my wigs from? Where do I get my lashes from?" Many of the post-mastectomy lingerie brands looked very medicinal. The imagery looked very sad to me, and I thought to myself, "Where is the Vogue of breast cancer?" There's got to be one resource that's a go-to destination for all of these things that are meant for women going through cancer that adjust for fashion, beauty, lifestyle, wellness, and travel needs. I was unable to find everything in one place, so I decided to just start a list of the things that I liked.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What are your favorite products for before, during, and after treatment, and why?

MS. BERRY: My go-to gift is an AnaOno gift card. To me she is a true pioneer. These post-mastectomy bras are functional, but they're very beautiful. She names her bras after different breast cancer survivors and thrivers, so she just named one the "Melissa Bra" last



COURTESY OF MELISSA BERRY

Melissa Berry is a breast cancer survivor and the founder of Cancer Fashionista.

month. I have a bra named after me, which I love. She has gift cards, but she also has something called the Miena Robe and it's one size fits all and it's so clever. When you are going through breast reconstruction you oftentimes need to have drains on either side of your chest, and this Miena Robe actually has pockets for your drains and a drain belt so that you can wear the robe but you can still conceal your drains. It's just the perfect example of fashion meets function.

Another go-to gift of mine is from SaltyGirl Beauty. They are a clean beauty brand based out of Maine, and it's two sisters. One, her name is Sarah, and she is a triple-negative breast cancer survivor like me, and her sister Leah is actually an oncology nurse. So when Sarah was diagnosed with breast cancer when she was pregnant, they wanted to seek out clean products. They ended up creating their own brand called Salty-Girl beauty. One product in particular that I send everyone to is their foundation because it's clean, but it also smells like cake batter because they infuse it with vanilla. It's just a delightful gift.

I also love Violets Are Blue. This is also founded by a breast cancer survivor. I like to call a lot of these women "cancerpreneurs" because there are so many women that have created a product out of their own breast cancer experience that they never would have thought of otherwise. Cynthia Bestemann is the founder of Violets Are Blue. She was diagnosed with breast cancer, wanted to switch her deodorant, couldn't find anything that really worked, so she created her own. She also has a full skincare line now, which is wonderful.

I would say the other item that I absolutely love to tell people about is Survivor Moda. This brand makes a product called The Park Puff, and it's basically a seatbelt pillow. When you leave the hospital after your surgery most times the doctor will say when you leave and get in the car you need to put a pillow under your seatbelt. Pillows can be really cumbersome and not even very safe. So Rachel, the founder of Survivor Moda and The Park Puff, created a seatbelt pillow that is the right size and in really fun prints that a lot of women actually end up wearing even after their surgery is done because it just makes the seatbelt so comfortable.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What should one say—and not say—to someone who is undergoing treatment for breast cancer?

MS. BERRY: One thing not to say is, "Well, at least you get new boobs" because it's certainly not a way that we want to enhance our bodies. Also, unless you're a family member, I wouldn't suggest asking someone what their prognosis is. It's very private, and if they are a late stage or a three or four they may not want to discuss that with you. As far as what to say, rather than saying "How can I help you?" or "What can I do for you?" say "What day this week can I help you with your laundry?" "When can I stop by to help you with the kids?" "When is a good time for me to drop off a meal?" One of the best things that my friends from college got together and got me was a gift card to a local restaurant that delivered healthy food. Our family ate for a couple of weeks on it. It was really fantastic.

THE EPOCH TIMES: What advice do women ask most often?

MS. BERRY: It is usually about their hair. "How long did it take to grow back?" "When should I shave it?" "Does it grow back the same?" "Can I color it?" When you lose your hair it's really hard to hide it, so a lot of women want a good timeline of what they can expect and what they can do. Also to add to the list of wonderful things for women to buy for themselves or buy for a friend, there is a brand called Style Esteem. Sonya is a young breast cancer survivor. She makes the most beautiful headwraps. Some of them have jewels on them. They're beautiful metallics, and they're a great alternative to a wig.

THE EPOCH TIMES: If you wanted people to know one thing about breast cancer, fashion, and beauty, what would it be?

MS. BERRY: I never had a big sister, and I feel like when you have a big sister, you can ask her what you should wear your first date or how to kiss a boy. I think when you have breast cancer you kind of need the big sister to be like, "This is where you get your wig from. This is how you can deal with your lashes. Here's a great bra." So I like to think of myself as the big sister, and if I could share one thing with my little sisters, it's that there is life after breast cancer and you do not have to lose yourself to it. You can maintain yourself and your identity.



CAREY KIRKELLA PHOTOGRAPHY

Melissa Berry is a fashion and beauty publicist.

EDUCATION

93 Vermont Towns Have No Public Schools, but Great Education. How Do They Do It?

LAURA WILLIAMS

Earlier this month, 50 boys with learning disabilities took to a stage in Vermont, one after the other, to recite the Gettysburg Address from memory. It's a daring experiment undertaken each February at the Greenwood School and its population of boys who've struggled in public schools. Diagnosed with ADD, dyslexia, and executive function impairments, Greenwood's boys stand before an auditorium full of people (and once even a Ken Burns documentary crew) to recite powerful words many adults would struggle to retain.

Many of these young men are residents of Vermont's "tuition towns." Too small and sparsely populated to support a traditional public school, these towns distrib-

ute government education funds to parents, who choose the educational experience that is best suited to their family's needs. If the school doesn't perform up to parents' expectations, they can take their children, and the tuition dollars they control, elsewhere.

The Greenwood School is one of more than 100 independent schools in the tiny state of Vermont (population: 626,000). The whole state has just 90,000 students in K-12 schools (the city school districts of Denver and Albuquerque have more students, and some county districts are twice as large). How can Vermont sustain such a rich network of educational options?

Tuition Towns and the Families They Serve

Ninety-three Vermont towns (36

percent of its 255 municipalities) have no government-run school at all. If there were enough kids, the pot of public money earmarked for education would be used to buy a building and hire teachers. In these towns, the funds local governments expect to spend per pupil are instead given directly to the parents of school-age children.

This method gives lower- and middle-income parents the same superpower wealthy families have always had: school choice. Kids aren't assigned to public schools by zip code—instead, parents have the ability to put their kids in school anywhere, to buy the educational experience best suited to each child. If that decision doesn't work out, they can change it the following year and try a school that might better fit their child's needs.

Better Outcomes, Similar Costs

So how much money are we talking about? As far as income distribution, Vermont looks a lot like the national average. The yearly per-student expenditure of \$18,290 is high by national standards (only New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and D.C. spent more). But independent, tuition-driven schools spend \$5,000 less, on average, than public schools in the area, which is near the national average.

In many other parts of the country, even the most "progressive" ones, government-run schools consume ever more resources while doing little to address disparities of outcome. The promise of equal opportunity through public

education continues to fall short, and lower-income families are the most likely to feel trapped by the lack of choices.

A variety of schools has arisen to compete for these tuition dollars. A spectrum from centuries-old academies to innovative, adaptive, and experiential programs competes for students from tuition towns, just as for the children of independently wealthy families.

Eligibility for tuition vouchers actually increased home values in towns that closed their public schools. Outsiders were eager to move to these areas, and the closure of public schools actually made at least some people already living nearby significantly wealthier as their home values rose, according to real estate assessments.

Because parents, not bureaucrats or federal formulas, determine how funds are allocated, schools are under high economic pressure to impress parents—that is, to serve students best in their parents' eyes.

Educational Alternatives = Comparative Advantages

The Compass School, nestled on the New Hampshire border, enrolls 80-100 high school students from three states and a mix of demographics. Forty percent of students qualify for subsidized lunch (the school system's proxy for poverty), and 30 percent have special learning needs.

Nearly any public school in the country with Compass' student population (considered mid-poverty) would be aspiring to a 75 percent graduation rate and a 60 percent college-readiness rate. Compass has a virtually 100 percent graduation rate, and 90 percent of graduates are



STEVE HEAP/SHUTTERSTOCK

In Manchester, Vt., parents are given funds normally administered by local government to spend on the school (grade 9-12) of their choice.

accepted to college. And still, Compass achieves these results with \$5,500 less funding-per-pupil than the average Vermont government-run public high school.

Emergent programming for children with physical, intellectual, or behavioral challenges provides a 22-school menu of accountable, adaptive alternatives to public school remediation. Increasingly, "mainstreaming" students with these challenges has become a priority at larger high schools, which compete to serve special-needs students as fiercely as any other.

Room to Grow? Watch for More Tuition Towns

Having watched these models develop nearby, two more Vermont towns voted in 2013 to close their government-run schools and become "tuition towns" instead. The local public elementary and high schools there closed and reopened as

independent competitors in an increasingly rich marketplace of education options. We eagerly wait to see what the innovative combination of private control and public investment can bring to students in those areas.

Can Vermont's quirky school program work elsewhere? Probably. An independent evaluation by the Ethan Allen Institute, a free-market think tank in Vermont, reported:

"An expansion of Vermont's publicly funded tuition model can be an effective way to lower costs, improve student outcomes, achieve greater diversity in the classroom, and increase parental satisfaction with and participation in their children's education."

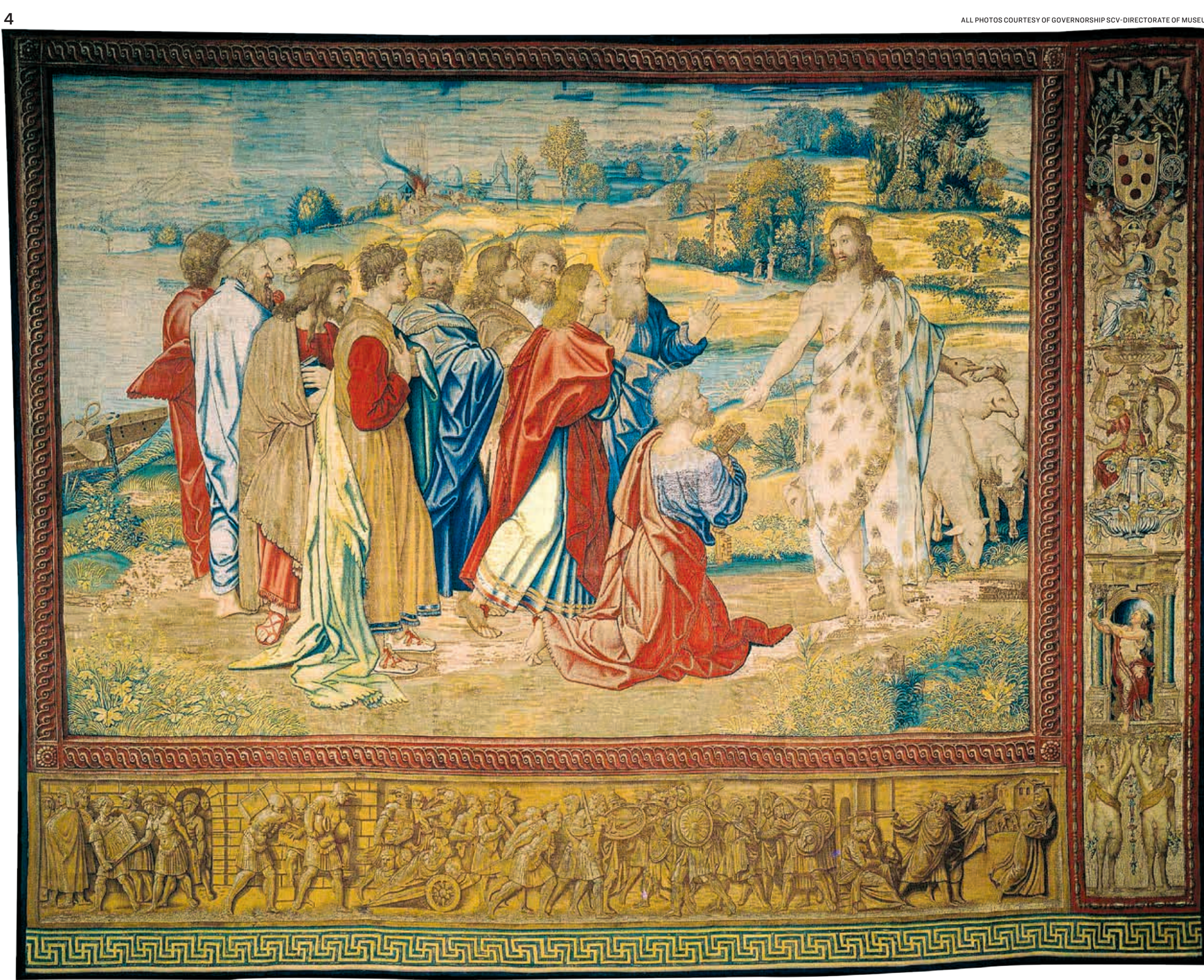
Wealthy parents will always have school choice. They have the power to choose the best opportunity and the best fit for

their individual child. Tuition towns—where all parents direct their child's share of public education spending—give that power to every family.

Vermont's empowered parents feed a rich landscape of educational choices, not just one or two. In such fertile soil, smaller, tailored programs pop up and grow to meet children where they are instead of where a one-size-fits-most default curriculum says they should be. If the family's needs change, their choices can, too.

We pour plenty of public money into educational potential. Only parents' power of choice can unleash it.

Dr. Laura Williams teaches communication strategy to undergraduates and executives. She is a passionate advocate for critical thinking, individual liberties, and the Oxford comma. This article was first published on FEE.org



Raphael's 'Acts of the Apostles' tapestries were replicated for the world's royalty: England's Henry VII, France's Louis XIV, and Austria's Charles I.

Raphael's Divine 'Acts of the Apostles' Tapestries

LORRAINE FERRIER

In universal judgment, nothing more beautiful has ever been seen in the world. ut fuit universale iudicium, sunt res qua non est aliquid in orbe nunc pulchrius
—Paris de Grassis, master of ceremonies for the 16th-century Pope Leo X, wrote in his diary after seeing Raphael's "Acts of the Apostles" tapestries.

More than 500 years later, all 12 of Raphael's "Acts of the Apostles" tapestries were recently hung as Pope Leo X had originally intended, on the lower wall of the Sistine Chapel. The last time the complete series of tapestries were hung together in the chapel was in the late 1500s, exhibition and Vatican Museums curator Alessandra Rodolfo told Reuters.

The rare event celebrated the 500th anniversary of Raphael's death in 1520. It also paid homage to the ancient custom of adorning the papal chapel with fine textiles and tapestries for noble ceremonies and important Christian liturgical traditions, Rodolfo said in a press release.

The Sistine Chapel "is of universal importance, not only for visual arts but for our faith," Barbara Jatta, the director of the Vatican Museums told Reuters. "So we really want to share this beauty with people, even if only for one week."



One of Raphael's "Acts of the Apostles" tapestries is taken into the Sistine Chapel where all 12 tapestries were hung together for the first time in 500 years.

The beauty of the tapestries can be appreciated even more since their recent renewal. The Vatican Museums conservators have, over a number of years, restored the tapestries.

The Papal Commission

In 1515, Pope Leo X commissioned Raphael to design the tapestries to depict the lives of Saint Peter and Saint Paul—the fathers of the Christian church. The art added to the chapel's existing pictorial message of how the Gospel came from Jerusalem to Rome.

The tapestry cloths were made to be hung on feast days, on the lowest part of the Sistine Chapel walls, which are painted as faux curtains. When hung, the tapestries are just below the frescoes depicting the stories of Moses and the life of Christ that were painted by renowned 15th-century artists.

Pope Leo X paid five times the cost of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel frescoes, which was 3,000 ducats. Raphael received only 1,000 ducats, and the rest was absorbed by the manufacturing of the tapestries.

Raphael and his workshop created the tapestry cartoons between 1515 and 1519. Raphael depicted the stories of St. Peter and St. Paul from the Bible's Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles for 10 of the tapestries, and he designed the Hours and Seasons on two narrow tapestries.

Raphael's designs were sent to Brussels and woven at the workshop of world-renowned tapestry weaver Pieter van Aelst. The fully colored cartoons were cut into strips about a yard wide to make transferring the designs easier. Then the cloths were finely woven with silk, wool, and precious silver and gold thread.

Seven of the tapestries arrived in Rome in 1519 and were hung in the Sistine Chapel to celebrate Holy Mass on Dec. 26, 1519, St. Stephen's Day. By 1521, all 12 tapestries had arrived at the Vatican. Raphael may have seen only these first seven tapestries hung in the chapel, as he died suddenly in 1520, at the age of 37.

Raphael: A Man of Great Art and Character

"When this noble craftsman died, the art of painting might well have died also, seeing that when he closed his eyes, she was left as it were blind," wrote historian and artist Giorgio Vasari in "The Lives of Artists."

"For in truth we have from him art, coloring, and invention harmonized and brought to such a pitch of perfection as could scarcely be hoped for; nor may any intellect ever think to surpass him," he added further in the passage.

For Vasari, Raphael's greatness wasn't confined to his art. He was genuinely a good and great man. Vasari believed that Raphael had "grace, industry, beauty, modesty,

1. "The Stoning of St. Stephen," 1517–1519, from Acts of the Apostles 7: 55–60.
2. "The Healing of the Lame Man," 1517–1519, from Acts of the Apostles 3: 6–7.
3. "The Conversion of Saul," 1517–1519, from Acts of the Apostles 9: 3–5.
4. "Christ's Charge to Peter," 1517–1519, from John 21: 15–17.
5. Frieze of the Hours, 1517–1521.

for the Sistine Chapel



Visitors gain a sneak peek at Raphael's "Acts of the Apostles" tapestries as they are hung in the Sistine Chapel prior to being open to the public.

and excellence of character as would have sufficed to efface any vice" and that he "was so full of gentleness and so overflowing with loving kindness, that it was seen that the very animals, not to speak of men, honored him."

The whole of Rome, it seems, turned out for Raphael's funeral procession to the Vatican for his funeral Mass. "The true grandeur of the procession was that immense concourse of friends, of pupils, of artists, of renowned writers, of personages of every rank, who accompanied him, amidst the tears of the whole city; for the grief was general and the Pope's Court shared in it," wrote the French biographer Quatremère de Quincy in his 1824 "History of Raphael."

And Vasari wrote: "Wherefore it may be surely said that those who are the possessors of such rare and numerous gifts as were seen in Raffaello da Urbino are not merely men, but, if it be not a sin to say it, mortal gods; and those who, by means of their works, leave an honorable name written in the archives of fame in this earthly world of ours, can also hope to have to enjoy in heaven a worthy reward for their labors and merits."

Raphael 500

Although the tapestries have now left the Sistine Chapel, they can still be seen behind glass on a rotational basis at the Pinacoteca (art gallery) of the Vatican Museums.

The Vatican Museums are just one of many world-renowned institutions that are celebrating what some are calling "Raphael 500," with exhibitions and events, marking Raphael's brilliance half a millennium after he died. Currently the exhibition "Raphael and His Circle" is at the National Gallery of Art in Washington. The "Acts of the Apostles" cartoons in the Raphael Court at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London will reopen in late 2020 after an extensive gallery and display renovation.

The titles of "Acts of the Apostles" tapestries in this article come predominantly from the titles of Raphael's cartoons in the Royal Collection Trust.

SHEN YUN PERFORMING ARTS

Audience Reactions

The Epoch Times considers Shen Yun Performing Arts the significant cultural event of our time and has covered audience reactions since the company's inception in 2006.

The Epoch Times is a media sponsor of Shen Yun Performing Arts, and believes its mission to revive the 5,000-year civilization of China is history in the making, and in line with our mission of covering and preserving traditional arts and culture.



Shen Yun reminds us that we are, of course, beings of flesh, but also, spiritual beings, therefore composed of a body and a soul... And it reminds us that we must not let go of this spirituality that we have within us and which makes us men, in our own right, with this body and soul. It transcends us!

BERNARD LAUZIER, at Palais des Congrès de Tours, France, on Feb. 18, 2020



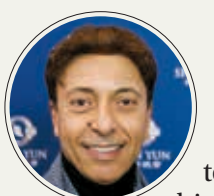
Well, the whole thing is artistic, from the color, from the dancing, the music. I mean everything about it. I think it's just so well done. It's blowing my mind, honestly. I'm really enjoying it. It's just so fluid. It has a peace to it. It's not loud, stomping, it's not R-rated or anything. It's just beautiful. It is godly, I think.

JEFF WALLING, artist, The Mahaffey Theater in St. Petersburg, Fla., on Feb. 20, 2020



Every year there's more and more energy, which is nice. The audience is engaged—just hear everyone around us! They actually get engaged. It's like you're a part of it. We feel like we're back 5,000 years ago.

GARRY LOWENTHAL, venture capitalist, at the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts in St. Paul, Minn., on Feb. 20, 2020



I think it's a great thing, what [Shen Yun is] doing, because it's really—if there are no people trying to revive the history, the history will be forgotten. And it's very important... that everybody see it, that everybody hear it. It's sad that if this particular style and cultures disappear. So keeping it alive is very very important for all the new generation that have never seen such a thing. I believe it's an important part.

SARWAT KALUBY, dance studio owner, championships organizer, and former ballet dancer, at the Thrasher-Horne Center in Jacksonville, Fla., on Feb. 22, 2020



[Shen Yun] is astonishing. It's better than I could have imagined and I imagined quite a bit actually. So it's beautiful, it's touching, and I feel like I'm being rude because I can't clap half of the time. I'm on the verge of tears, or I'm laughing, or just so touched, just really extraordinary... You know, I actually came here with a bit of a heavy heart. And as I was watching, and as I was listening, I could feel my heart healing. It was very powerful. It's really amazing.

MICHELLE VIRGINIA BURGER, business owner, Tucson Music Hall in Arizona on Feb. 22, 2020

Save Time and Money: Build the Ideal Capsule Wardrobe

Part 3
Accessories

MANY NGOM

A statement necklace, nude flats, and a leather tote—these are the key elements that will put the final touch on your capsule wardrobe. Accessories are a must. They make a simple outfit stand out; they add softness to a décolleté; they give you extra height—they make you shine every day. This is the last but by no means the least important aspect that we will dive into. Let's match some accessories to last week's wardrobes for the Diva, the Office Gal, and the Super Mom.

These accessories are all available on MatchesFashion.com



The Diva

Because the diva is not shy about making a bold statement with her accessories, her jewelry will transform all the basics she has in her wardrobe. Even her nude shoes are stylish and can be worn with every single item in the capsule—just to tell you how much of a must-have this item is. The rest of her shoes are super comfortable and timeless, in styles that can last for a decade! One simple scarf won't do for the diva, so I picked three scarves that will complete your style when summer nights get cool. As for the bags, they are chic and casual.

The Office Gal

Corporate America can be strict in terms of dress code. That's why while you stick to the dress code, you can still add your personality. The suits are trendy, the tops not boring—and the same goes for the accessories. As for shoes, it's all about classic neutral colors, but the style can have an edge. The bags are timeless; yes, they scream bold but quietly so—it's all about personality! So are the scarves. If you can't get yourself a Hermès scarf, make sure you get a silk scarf; a polyester scarf won't do. The jewelry pieces are subtle yet they support the whole look.



The Supermom

Comfortable clothes mean comfortable and practical accessories, and because the Supermom runs around all the time, she must have the latest watch! Let's start with her shoes. Sneakers, wedges, flats, booties—all very comfortable shoes that go with her preppy look. Let's add one pair of heels for when she needs to go out. Her bags are practical too, roomy enough to carry a baby's bottle or extra clothes, and her jewelry pays homage to the great mom that she is. And her scarves match her wardrobe while keeping her warm.



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FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

Week 10, 2020

There is No Frigate Like a Book

by Emily Dickinson

There is no Frigate like a Book
To take us Lands away,
Nor any Coursers like a Page
Of prancing Poetry.
This Traverse may the poorest take
Without oppress of Toll;
How frugal is the Chariot
That bears the Human Soul!

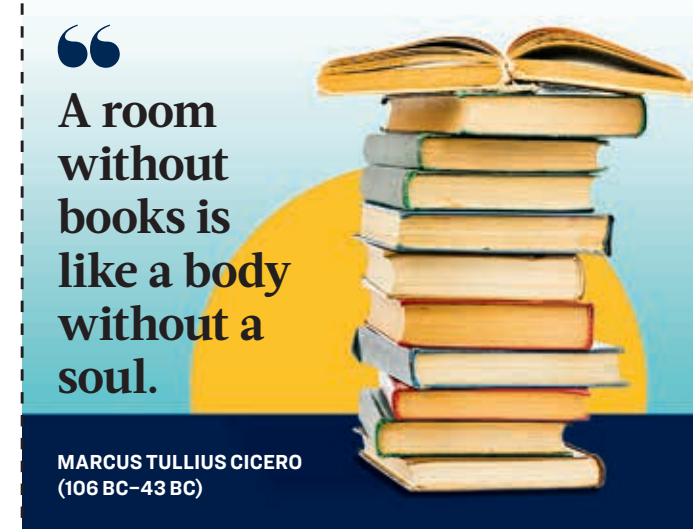


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WHAT BUILDING HAS THE MOST STORIES?

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“A room without books is like a body without a soul.”

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO (106 BC–43 BC)

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This Week in History



1836 facsimile of the Texas Declaration of Independence

TEXAS GAINS INDEPENDENCE

Did you know that the state of Texas used to be part of Mexico? Beginning in the 1820s, Americans began to migrate to Texas. When Mexico's new president, Antonio López de Santa Anna, discarded the Mexican constitution and declared himself president for life, conflict arose. A war that included the

famous Battle of the Alamo finally ended in 1846. On March 2, 1836, Texas set forth the Texas Declaration of Independence. Signed by 59 delegates, it created the Republic of Texas, officially independent of Mexico. It wasn't until 1845 that Texas became the 28th of the United States of America.

By Aidan Danza, age 13

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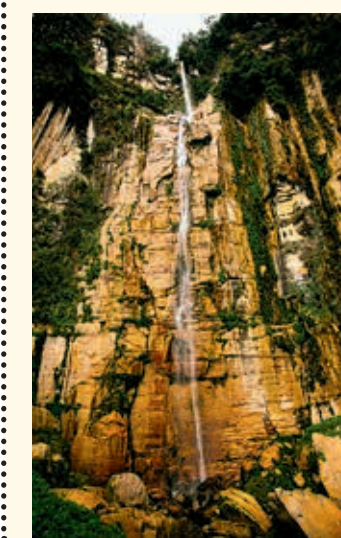
THE WORLD'S TALLEST WATERFALLS

WATERFALLS are spectacular displays of nature.

Most of the time (but not always) a waterfall is a mountain river that flows off of a cliff, in an extremely loud rumble and rush. Then the river continues at the bottom of the cliff. Some of them are extremely tiny (they can be only three inches high), but the following are extremely large and from all around the world!

YUMBILLA FALLS

—around 2,900 feet
This waterfall was recently discovered and is located in the Peruvian Andes, but still in the Amazon rainforest. This is one of a few falls located very close to each other. Its height is disputed by many, but estimates put it between 2,854 feet and 2,937 feet.



JAY/CC BY-SA 3.0

OLO'UPENA FALLS

—2,953 feet
This waterfall is located on the Hawaiian island of Molokai. A very small stream plunges over an ocean-side cliff directly into the ocean. The island of Molokai is so remote that the waterfall can only be viewed by sea or by air.



TRES HERMANAS FALLS

—2,999 feet
This waterfall is located in Peru, originating as the Cutivreni River. Tres Hermanas means "Three Sisters," and the reason why they are called this is because there are three "steps" that interrupt the flow of the waterfall. It is surrounded by rainforest, where the trees are extremely tall.



SCREENSHOT VIA C. C. JAVIER/GOOGLEMAP

TUGELA FALLS

—3,110 feet
The Tugela Falls are in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. Like the Tres Hermanas, this waterfall has tiers—five, in this case. It originates from the mountain Mont-aux-Sources. Since South Africa is so dry, the waterfall is extremely thin.

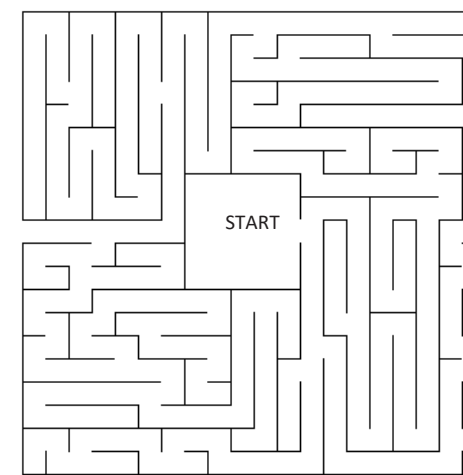


ANGEL FALLS

—3,212 feet
The gold winner of the "tallest waterfall" contest is in South America, this time in Venezuela. Like Tres Hermanas, this waterfall is also located in the rainforest. It leads into the Carrao River. In the warm months of the year, the falls evaporate before they hit the ground!

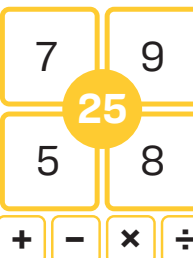


AMAZING ESCAPES!



USE THE FOUR NUMBERS IN THE CORNERS, AND THE OPERANDS (+, -, AND X) to build an equation to get the solution in the middle. There may be more than one "unique" solution but, there may also be "equivalent" solutions. For example: 6 + (7 X 3) + 1 = 28 and 1 + (7 X 3) + 6 = 28

Easy puzzle 1



Solution For Easy 1
6 + 8 = (9 - 1)
1 - 8 = (9 - 8)

Medium puzzle 1

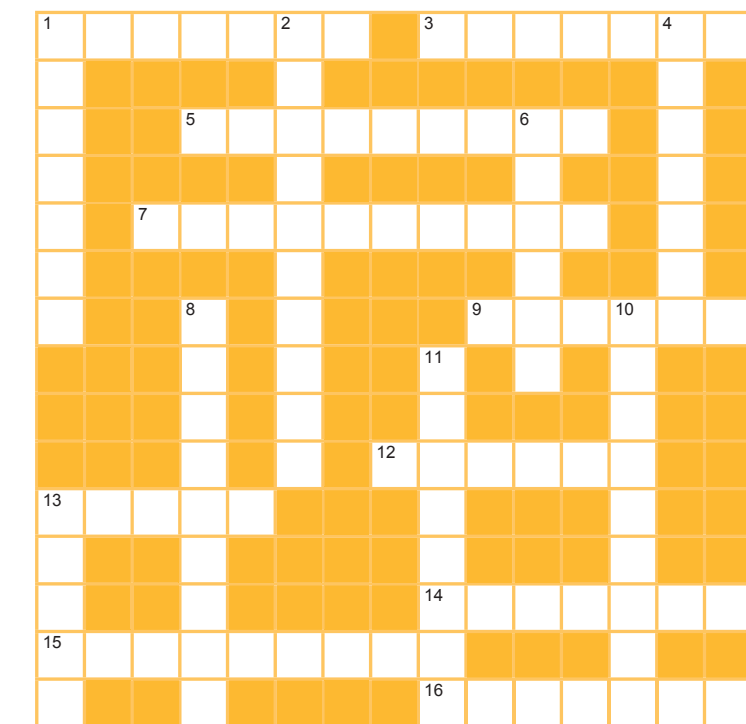


Solution for Medium 1
6 - 8 = 91 + 11

Hard puzzle 1



Solution for Hard 1
22 x (9 - 81 - 92)
81 - 92 = 9 x 22

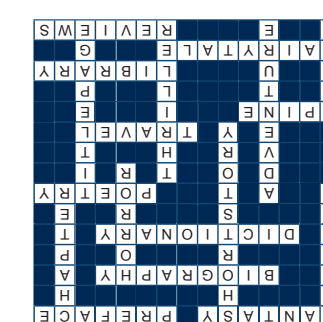


Down

- 1 Books with imagination (7)
- 2 Quick reads (10)
- 4 Writer's block? (7)
- 6 October genre (6)
- 8 Escapade genre (9)
- 10 Leading leaf (9)
- 11 Books with suspense (8)
- 13 "I, Robot" genre, e.g. (5)

Across

- 1 "The Lord of the Rings" genre (7)
- 3 Introduction (7)
- 5 Book about somebody (9)
- 7 Book that's full of definitions? (10)
- 9 Book genre with meter (6)
- 12 "Going places" book (6)
- 13 Where the binding is (5)
- 14 Where to borrow books (7)
- 15 "Cinderella," e.g. (9)
- 16 How to tell if a book is good? (7)





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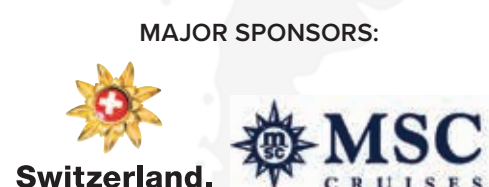
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DECORATIVE ARTS

Uncovering the Stories of Nazi-Looted Art

London's Victoria and Albert Museum looks to the Gilbert Collection

LORRAINE FERRIER

Between 1933 and 1945, Jewish art collectors in Germany and Nazi-occupied Europe were systematically forced into exile, deported, or murdered by the Nazis. The Nazis forced Jewish art collectors to relinquish their businesses, academic positions, and possessions. Many of their art collections were

confiscated, dispersed, sold, or simply destroyed. After World War II, the Allies and other European countries tried to return many of these stolen artworks. But despite these efforts, the complete provenance of many artworks in museums and private collections are still unknown. The "Concealed Histories: Uncovering the Story of Nazi Looting" exhibition at the

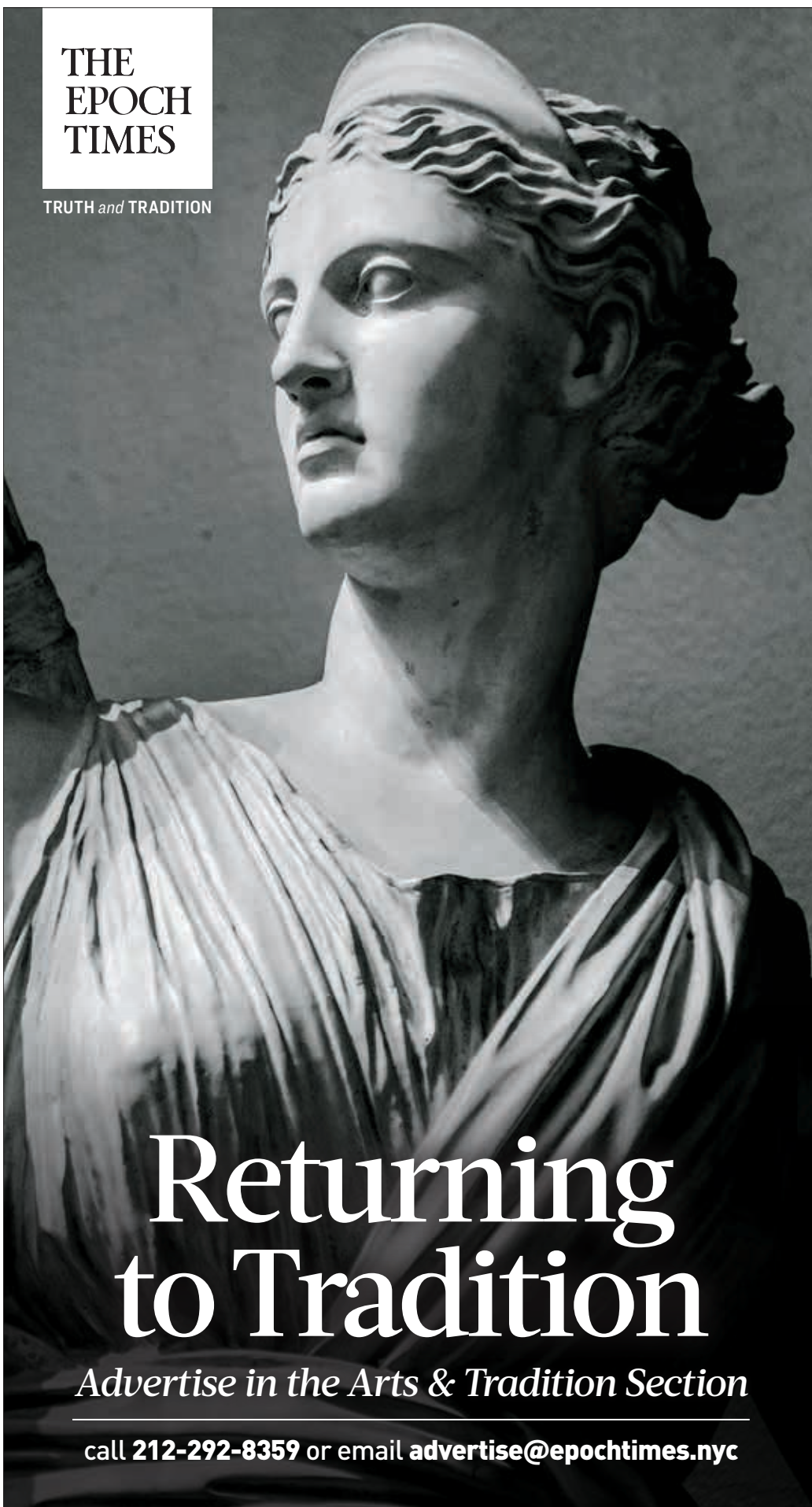
Victoria and Albert Museum, in London, exposes this dark chapter in the history of art collecting. A selection of exquisite gold boxes, pietre dure (hardstone mosaics), portrait miniatures, and micromosaics from The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection, one of the world's most important decorative arts collections, are on display. All of the objects exhibited were once owned by Jewish art collec-

tors, and the display shows how eight collectors and their families were persecuted by the Nazis. "The objects are incredibly beautiful and great examples of craftsmanship and virtuosity; ... the contrast to the histories that we tell through these objects could not be starker," Dr. Jacques Schuhmacher said in a phone interview.

(Above) A close-up of monastery gates that were once owned by Jewish art collectors who were forced out of business by the Nazis. The gates from Kyiv, Ukraine, were made circa 1784 by an unknown artist. Embossed, pierced, and engraved, partially gilded silver and iron.

Continued on Page 16

THE EPOCH TIMES
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TRADITIONAL CULTURE

A GRANDER VISION

Character-Building and Our Young People

JEFF MINICK

If you are the parent of a child under the age of 18, before reading this article take a moment and ask yourself this question: "What do you want most in life for your son or daughter?"

In her online article "George Washington's Character," Katherine Kersten compares the education and upbringing of Washington and his peers to that of today's Americans, and wonders whether we "have largely forgotten the importance of character."

During her children's early years, Kersten tells us, she belonged to a mothers group, where every year the discussion leader would ask, "What do you want most in life for your son or daughter?" She noticed that women in the group seemed baffled and a little embarrassed by the question, with most of them replying, "I just want them to be happy."

Young Americans once received an education in character building more common and more evident than today.

"I could see from their faces," Kersten writes, "that these mothers had nobler aspirations for their children. But they weren't sure how to express them. For in our society, the ideal of 'happiness'—of personal well-being and security—is driving out the ideal, and vocabulary, of character-building."

Kersten goes on to remind us that George Washington "laboriously copied 110 'Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior' into his exercise book." What is more, he tried to live by those rules. Benjamin Franklin "drew up a list of 13 virtues he wished to acquire," and like Washington, pursued that list of desires with some success.

The Emperor's Self-Help Manual

For centuries, human beings have turned to literature for character-building instruction. "Meditations" by the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 121-180) is an outstanding example of such a means of emulation. This ancient handbook of stoicism has inspired the practice of virtue in uncounted numbers of readers, including some of our Founding Fathers. The emperor's manual on how to live remains in print today and enjoys a wide readership.

In the opening of "Meditations," translated by George Long, Marcus Aurelius thanks everyone who has contributed to his moral and educational development, much like those prolonged messages of appreciation by trophy winners during the Academy Awards. From his grandfather, he learned "good morals

and the government of my temper"; from his father, "modesty and a manly character"; and from his mother, "piety and beneficence." He thanks his great-grandfather for keeping him from public schools and spending liberally on his home education. He goes on to tell the reader of his other tutors and relatives, all of whom he names in appreciation for lessons learned: "unwavering steadiness of purpose," "to love truth, and to love justice," "self-government," "to look carefully after the interests of friends," "the idea of a kingly government which respects most of all the freedom of the governed."

These family members and teachers prepared Marcus Aurelius to govern both himself and an empire. They taught him to strive for goodness and truth, and only then would he find their byproduct: happiness.

Teaching Virtue

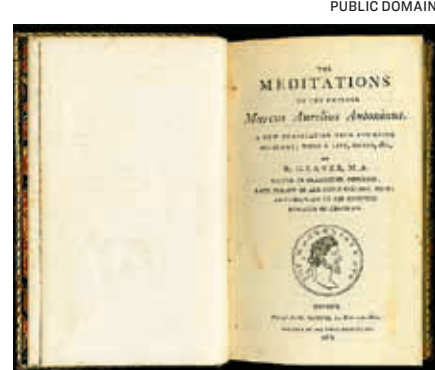
Like Marcus Aurelius, young Americans once received an education in character-building more common and more evident than today. They tended to live in closer proximity to their extended family, their grandparents, their uncles and aunts, and in communities where the inhabitants knew each other well, and so witnessed firsthand models for virtuous behavior. Many attended a church on Sundays, where ministers would exhort them to live moral lives, or else they would read the Old Book in their homes.

In addition, young people learned traditional values in their schools. Primers, copybooks, stories, and history texts frequently stressed the importance of virtue and morality, seeking to instill in their readers such principles as courage, prudence, kindness, and justice.

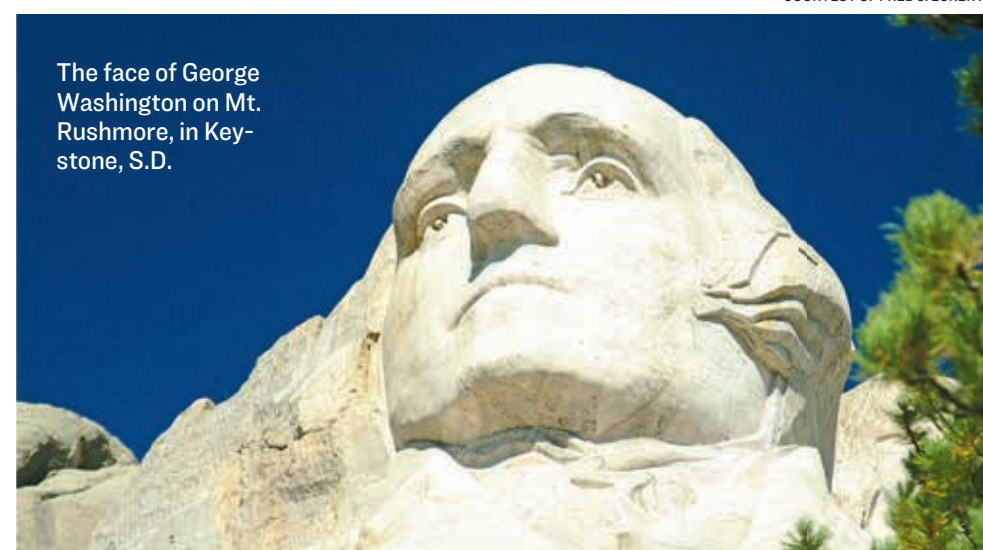
Character-Building in the Classroom

In my family's homeschooling days, I once purchased and frequently employed an eight-volume boxed set of McGuffey's Eclectic Readers, a series used throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries by 10s of millions of American schoolchildren. Though the tone and content of these readers changed over time, steering away from religion to a more secular viewpoint, the McGuffey Readers continued to advocate morality and middle-class values.

Even as recently as the 1960s, textbooks like the Open Court Basic Readers exposed school children to that footstool of values on which our civilization rests—truth, goodness, and beauty. The set I own, which I purchased used many years ago, boosts Western culture and the stories and history of the United States. In "A Trip Through Wonderland," literature aimed at first-semester second graders, readers come to know such stories as "Androcles and the Lion" and "The Camel's Nose," and poems by the likes of Emily Dickinson and Christina Rossetti. In the next vol-



Title page of an 1811 edition of "Meditations" by Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, translated by R. Graves.



The face of George Washington on Mt. Rushmore, in Keystone, S.D.



Marcus Aurelius in a chariot, celebrating his triumph over Rome's enemies in A.D. 176. Musei Capitolini.



Marcus Aurelius wrote a handbook on building character. A late 2nd-century statue of Marcus Aurelius, originally from Gabii (Italy), now in the Louvre.



At one time, the crucial component in education was forming a child's character. "The Country School," 1871, by Winslow Homer. St. Louis Art Museum.

ume, they learn about Native Americans, Pocahontas, the Pilgrims, Lewis and Clark, Johnny Appleseed, and Betsy Ross. Skipping ahead two years to "What Joy Awaits You," we find a wonderful mélange of stories, history, and poetry: tales from "The Arabian Nights" and the Brothers Grimm, accounts of Michelangelo's boyhood and Theodore Roosevelt's struggles for health, ancient myths, and "America Today."

The editors of the Open Court Basic Readers clearly had two goals in mind when they made their selections. The first was to create in students what E.D. Hirsch Jr. calls "cultural literacy," stories and allusions Americans once held in common. The selections also aimed to instill in students a nobility of character and to acquaint them with truth, goodness, and beauty.

Bad News and Good

Unfortunately, in the last century we have dismantled that ancient triad.

Relativity diminished the idea of Truth—"My truths are different than your truths" is in common usage, without any acknowledgment that "truth is truth." Beauty gave way to sensationalism in the plastic arts, to function over form in architecture, and to tattoos, piercings, and sloppy dress in the public square. Faced with a culture of pornography, family breakdown, government corruption, and the overall abandonment of values, poor Goodness drew a veil over her eyes and hid her face out of shame for her abandonment.

That's the bad news. Here's the good news: Neither our culture nor we ourselves have to continue down this path.

Let's Hit the Road

C.S. Lewis once wrote: "Progress means getting nearer to the place you want to be. And if you have taken a wrong turn, then to go forward does not get you any nearer. If you are on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road...."

We can take the right road. We have the provisions for such a journey at our fingertips—literature, art and music, manuals of instruction, exemplars of character. We needn't depend on our present culture or on our schools to set out on this journey. All we have to do is take the first step.

Like those people so highly praised by Marcus Aurelius, we grandparents, parents, mentors, teachers, and coaches can help build character in our young people and point them to a grander vision of life.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C., Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

What Our Readers Say:

- It's the only sane newspaper amidst all this insanity. STAN K., PASTOR
- It's bringing morality back to newspapers. LISSA T., BUSINESS OWNER
- It's the only paper that I know of right now that actually gives you the honest, old fashioned journalism. DRUEL, BUSINESS OWNER
- You're presenting the facts and letting the reader decide. TERRI B., BUSINESS OWNER
- Everything I read in it is fair and balanced, compared to other newspapers. JUNE V., RETIRED BANKER



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(Right)
The top of a gold-mounted hardstone snuffbox with canted corners, circa 1780, probably by Johann Christian Neuber, probably from Dresden, Germany; the cover set with an enamel miniature, 1775–1780, probably painted by Nicholas Claude Vassal, Paris.



(Left)
A 17th-century table clock, with elements assembled between 1880 and 1900, likely made by Matthias Walbaum in Augsburg, Germany. Silver-gilt, ebony and ivory; silver and gilded silver; ebonized wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl and ivory, glass.

(Right)
Snuffbox with monogram "L.M." in diamonds, 1775–76, by Joseph Etienne-Blerzy in Paris. Enameled and engine-turned gold set with rose-cut diamonds.



Bottom of the snuffbox. Chased gold with agate, lapis lazuli, carnelian, bloodstone, turquoise, and imitation pearls.

“The objects are incredibly beautiful and great examples of craftsmanship and virtuosity; ... the contrast to the histories that we tell through these objects could not be starker.”

Jacques Schuhmacher, provenance researcher



Enamel miniature on copper, in a two-colored gold frame, 1791, by Carl Ralph Huerter, England.



Silver stacking beaker, 1603–1609, by Hans Kellner; Nuremberg, Germany. Cast, chased, tooled, stamped, embossed, and engraved silver.



Enamel miniature on gold, circa 1645–50, by Paul Prieur of Paris.

DECORATIVE ARTS

Uncovering the Stories of Nazi-Looted Art

London's Victoria and Albert Museum looks to the Gilbert Collection

Continued from Page 13

Schuhmacher is the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert provenance and spoliation curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum. He uncovered the personal stories of the Nazi persecution behind these objects in his role as the UK's first full-time museum provenance researcher. The exhibition shows his progress so far.

Collecting Beautiful Objects

In the past, museums and collectors were interested in the history of an object only if it came from a prestigious collection, Schuhmacher explained. “So normally, when a curator acquired an object at the Victoria and Albert Museum, they only recorded from whom the museum received the object, and that did not change in 1933 when the Nazis seized power. And it also did not change in 1945 when the Allies defeated the Nazis and the extent of the Nazi looting became apparent.”

Interestingly, just after the war, the person responsible for the restitution of Jewish libraries—John F. Hayward, “who was intimately



Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert emigrated from London to Los Angeles in 1949.

familiar with the history of Nazi looting”—even he did not ask specific provenance questions, Schuhmacher said.

As art collectors, husband and wife Sir Arthur (1913–2001) and Rosalinde Gilbert (1913–1995) were no different. The Gilberts were acutely aware of Nazi crimes. Born in London to Eastern European Jewish immigrants in 1913, they first made money in fashion in the 1930s. Then they immigrated

to Los Angeles in 1949, where Arthur became a wealthy real estate developer enabling the couple to build a world-class art collection. “They were motivated by the object—they were mesmerized by the objects. They wanted to own them and add them to their

collection. And like many other collectors, they simply did not ask detailed questions,” Schuhmacher said. Yet they were aware of the Nazi atrocities; the Gilberts generously supported charities that commemorated victims of the Holocaust, he added.

Even if collectors had asked questions, the answers may not have been forthcoming, as art dealers had little information about the objects they were selling. Since the 1990s, museums and art collectors ask about the previous ownership of any object they're interested in, especially the history of an object between 1933 and 1945.

One of the most important events on Nazi-looted art was the Washington Conference on Holocaust-Era Assets held Nov. 30 through Dec. 3, 1998. Art officials and 44 governments agreed on a set of 11 principles to address Nazi-looted art in their collections.

Investigating Nazi-Era Provenance

“The significance of the Washington conference cannot be overstated,” Schuhmacher said. After

the conference, museums around the world began to proactively look at their collections, identifying art that had belonged to Jewish families.

“What I find interesting is that UK museums did not take this as an opportunity to talk about this topic to their visitors and communicate the difficulties in conducting this research to them.” “Concealed Histories: Uncovering the Story of Nazi Looting” is the first exhibition of its kind in the UK.

Provenance exhibitions are very common in Germany and in the United States, Schuhmacher explained. In Germany, practically every museum has put on a display about objects in their collections that were once in the hands of the Nazis. But German museums often had Nazi-looted art delivered to their doorstep by the Gestapo in wooden boxes labeled as “Jewish Property.” Whereas UK museums acquired objects after they had passed through several art dealers, so it's more challenging to clarify those objects' provenance, he said.

“Museums struggled enormously with this research, especially because it was carried out by curators who performed this research in addition to their normal tasks ... cataloging objects and organizing exhibitions. “A museum like the Victoria and Albert has millions of objects, ... [and] I would say a large number of them have significant gaps in their provenance. So where do you even start? So they started identifying objects with a gap. But a gap doesn't necessarily mean that there is a problem with the object; it just means that there is a gap,” Schuhmacher said.

No definitive list of Nazi-looted art exists for museums to compare

their collections to. To clarify, such provenance requires archival research, an understanding of the history of Nazi looting, and a familiarity of the relevant archives in Germany and other European countries, he added.

“Sometimes archives don't hold the answers to the questions we're trying to resolve. It's possible that the documents that we are looking for do not exist, or that they were destroyed during the war.

“The point is to be open and transparent about this provenance and put it on display for everyone to see and to make it clear: This is what we know about it, and this is what we don't know about the object,” Schuhmacher said.

In “Concealed Histories: Uncovering the Story of Nazi Looting,” Schuhmacher and the Gilbert Collection curator Alice Minter have created a display that does just that.

Puzzling Provenance

Schuhmacher tells us what he's learned about two of the eight objects exhibited and the plights of the Jewish people who once owned them. He is optimistic that exhibition visitors may be able to provide clues to the gaps in the provenance of some of these objects, such as a pair of monastery gates that once belonged to an Orthodox church in Kyiv, Ukraine. The gates are thought to have been gifted to the monastery by Catherine the Great of Russia.

Gilbert bought the gates in 1973 from London-based art dealer S.J. Phillips. The gates were previously owned by the famous American collector William Randolph Hearst.

Schuhmacher wrote to Hearst

Castle and found out that Hearst had bought the gates in 1935 from a Jewish art dealership with branches in Frankfurt and Berlin, called J. & S. Goldschmidt. But the circumstances of the sale are unclear and troubling, as in 1935 the Nazis issued the infamous Nuremberg Laws, making the persecution of Jews in Germany legal.

Schuhmacher delved further into the history of the company and found that in 1933 (when the Nazis seized power), the owners had to hand over their gallery space in Berlin to a Nazi association of German artists. In 1937, the Goldschmidts were told to dissolve their company by the Nazi authorities as part of a wider program to remove Jews from the art business. Both Goldschmidts had already left Germany: Julius moved to London; Arthur moved to Paris, subsequently escaping to Cuba when the Nazis invaded France.

Another puzzling provenance is that of a stunning 18th-century German snuffbox, created by Dresden goldsmith Johann Christian Neuber, which the Gilberts purchased in 1987 with no provenance attached to it. Schuhmacher searched published sources and also archives in the Netherlands and Germany. He found the box listed in a 1912 catalog published by German collector Eugen Guttmann (1840–1925), who was born to Jewish parents but had converted to Protestantism. Guttmann founded the Dresdner Bank, which had branches across Germany, and this “wealth enabled him to put together a collection which was as magnificent as the Gilbert Collection,” Schuhmacher said.

Schuhmacher was then able to contact a descendant of Guttmann

named Simon Goodman, the Anglicized version of Guttmann, who had written “The Orpheus Clock: The Search for My Family's Art Treasures Stolen by the Nazis.”

There was an enormous gap in the provenance of the snuffbox—from 1912 to 1987—which was particularly concerning because of what happened to Eugen Guttmann's son Friedrich and his wife Louise. The couple had inherited the bulk of Eugen's collection when he died in 1925. They lived in the Netherlands, where they were safe from Nazi persecution until 1940 when the Nazis invaded. Because the Guttmann collection had been published, it was well-known to Nazi art dealers, and they descended on the couple's home in 1942 and seized the collection.

The Nazis meticulously created an inventory of everything that they seized from the Guttmanns, but this box is not on the inventory, Schuhmacher said. It's not known what happened to the box. The Guttmanns could have sold the object between 1912 and 1942, or the object could have been in the collection when the Nazis seized the art, but they didn't list it. In 1943, Friedrich and Louise were put on a train to Italy, or so they were told, but the train took them to the Theresienstadt ghetto and they were both murdered.

To find out more about “Concealed Histories: Uncovering the Story of Nazi Looting,” visit VAM.ac.uk. The exhibition ends on Jan. 10, 2021.

The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection of decorative arts are on long-term loan to the Victoria and Albert Museum and can be seen in The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Galleries.



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32 pages

LINDA WIEGENFELD

Although Rare Disease Day is relatively unknown, it's worth taking time to think about, and it's worth having our children think about it, too. The observance, held on the last day of February (this year on Leap Day), is intended to bring widespread recognition of rare diseases and to challenge us into action to overcome them. I know how important this day is from the experience of having a loved one with a rare disease. Knowledge is power.

As a retired teacher, I thought about how children would react to a disease (rare or not) or to other physical and/or mental challenges. Here are some excellent books to increase awareness and sensitivity.

'Rare Is Everywhere'

Author Deborah Katz begins the book by asking what rare means: Rare is to be different in a special way. She then shows a rare animal alongside its everyday counterpart. (Did you know there are pink grasshoppers?) Included are rhymes about each animal that explain the difference between that special species and the "normal" one.

The text is a wonderful addition to anyone's collection, but it's the visual experience that will really move children, and the glossary gives more scientific facts about the animals.

All proceeds from the sale of this book will be donated to the Rare Disease Foundation.

'Meet Maya Cat: A Story About Acceptance'

This is the purrfect book to help children understand differences. Maya, a real cat, has abnormally set eyes and so looks different from other cats. Fortunately, Maya was rescued by the Odd Cat Sanctuary in Salem, Massachusetts, which aims to help kittens and cats with challenges. They found her a permanent home with Lauren Beader and Harrison Makofsky.

Maya's new owners posted about it; the cat became an Instagram star, and now has a

book that is written and illustrated by the new owners. The illustrations are fun and the story simple. Basically, the book shows what a joy Maya is, and teaches love and acceptance while supporting animal rescues.

All proceeds from this book will be donated to the Odd Cat Sanctuary and to Special Olympics Massachusetts.

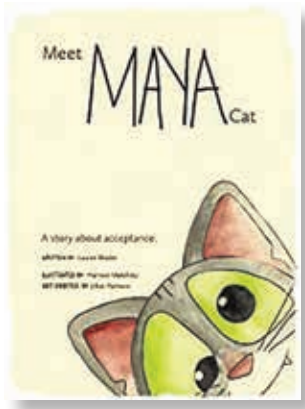
'A Different Kind of Dragon' The author of this book, Derek Nelson, uses anthropomorphism to create an interesting story about dealing with differences and how this might affect a child's self-confidence. Nelson wrote his book as a tribute: He has children with hemophilia, a chronic condition in which one's blood doesn't properly clot.

The book introduces a nonexistent genetic disorder in a fictional species—dragons. Drax, a dragon, cannot breathe fire and thinks he is not worthy of being a dragon. Ridiculed badly, he feels that he needs to find a new home. As he flies away, he hears a distress call from a fellow dragon and finds Daphne in a cave, surrounded by a force field, imprisoned by the Stone Giants. A dragon's fire is useless in this situation.

The rest of the book is an exciting adventure. Drax discovers that blue lightning flashes from his mouth and, with Daphne's help, is able to defeat the Stone Giants. Of course, Drax's difference is greatly appreciated, and all come to the realization that it's better if everyone is not the same.

'Just Like Me! A Book About a Girl With a Rare Disease'

The little girl in this book was inspired



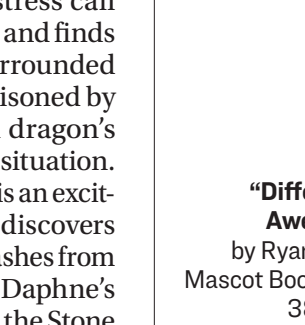
"Meet Maya Cat: A Story About Acceptance"
by Lauren Beader (story) and Harrison Makofsky (illustration)
CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform
30 pages



"We'll Paint the Octopus Red"
by Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen
Woodbine House
25 pages



"A Different Kind of Dragon"
by Derek Nelson
Kindness Crowd
32 pages



"Different Is Awesome"
by Ryan Haack
Mascot Books, LLC
38 pages



"Just Like Me! A Book About a Girl With a Rare Disease"
by Anne Rugari
Braugler Books, LLC
22 pages

by the daughter of author Anne Rugari. Gina was diagnosed with Krabbe disease, a type of leukodystrophy, just weeks after she was born. Outside of having to visit the doctor more often, her life is typical for a child.

Gina loves to be on stage and does not shy away from her disease. And although she is in a wheelchair, she is very popular, doing most of the things that other children do.

At the end of the book, Gina is shown as a teenager attending her prom. She is spinning all around the room and holding hands with her friends. The lovely illustrations help the reader really feel Gina's happiness.

The epilogue notes that Gina did lose her battle with Krabbe disease, which will help readers see why more research is needed.

'Different Is Awesome' Children often have the attitude that if you are disabled, you can't live a good life. Author Ryan Haack does a great job showing that this is not true.

A little boy brings his older brother, born with one hand, for show-and-tell. The older brother, Ryan, tells the class all the things that he can do. Ryan also says that sometimes he has a hard time figuring out how to do things, but he keeps trying different ways until he succeeds.

This book is positive. The young boy is proud of his older brother, without any feelings of embarrassment because his sibling is different. It features the older boy setting a good example for those in his class by showing the advantage of thinking outside the box. He can do whatever he wants to do, just in a different way.

The lesson: Life throws everyone curveballs, but the more resilient you are when standard answers don't apply, the more

successful you will be in life.

The book ends with the younger boy realizing that everyone in his class is different. The labels of tallest kid, curly blond hair, red hair, birthmark, and so on, are in boldface to emphasize that we are all unique.

Note: The book's author is named Ryan, and like the main character was born missing his left forearm.

'We'll Paint the Octopus Red'

Six-year-old Emma is reluctant to share her parents with the new sibling who is about to be born. Yet her anticipation grows as she makes a list of all the things they could do together. Emma is ready to be a great big sister.

However, when the baby is born, Emma's dad tells her that the baby is a boy with Down syndrome. Dad's eyes are red. Emma asks what the baby's limitations will be, and her dad says that the baby will be able to do everything, but he will be on a different timeline. They will need to be patient.

Then Emma and her dad visit Mom holding the baby. Stephanie Stuve-Bodeen's book ends with Emma telling her brother how she will help him paint an octopus red. I dare readers to read this book for the first time without tears in their eyes.

The back of the book concludes with a set of commonly asked questions about Down syndrome with answers for children.

For more information on rare diseases, visit The National Organization for Rare Disorders website (RareDiseases.org) for its extensive database of resources and organizations that deal with rare diseases.

For more children's books reviews about diseases, see The Epoch Times article "Children's Book Review: A Look at Disease."

Linda Wiegenfeld is a retired teacher with 45 years' experience teaching children. She can be reached for comments or suggestions at LWiegenfeld@aol.com

FILM INSIGHTS WITH MARK JACKSON



Mark Jackson grew up in Spring Valley, N.Y., where he attended a Waldorf school. At Williams College, his professors all suggested he write professionally. He acted professionally for 20 years instead. Now he writes professionally about acting. In the movies.

The American Beatles: The Band

MARK JACKSON

"Once Were Brothers: Robbie Robertson and The Band" is a scant but potent biopic and rock testimony about arguably America's most talented band (The Band), with heavyweight directors Martin Scorsese and Ron Howard executive producing. The Band has been described, talent-, vision-, and influence-wise, as America's version of the Beatles. The documentary's the tale of a group of men doing what alpha males love best, which is be in a top-flight band, or on a world-class sports or special operations military team, and through teamwork transcend their individuality. Inspired by lead guitarist and main songwriter Robbie Robertson's 2016 autobiography, "Once Were Brothers" is the coda to 1978's concert film about The Band, "The Last Waltz." Both films are haunting.

Four Canadians and a Southern Boy These mostly Canadian musicians (Levon Helm was from Arkansas) were originally hired as a backing band by Bob Dylan in 1966 when he famously jettisoned his storied folk music career on the American and European "Dylan goes electric" tour, to massive outrage. They all then settled down in Woodstock, New York.

The entire Berkshire-mountain, East-Coast counterculture groundswell area was crawling with long-bearded ex-Ivy Leaguers "tuning in, turning on, and dropping out"—the ripple effect of Karl Marx's "The Communist Manifesto."

In that setting, this predominantly Canadian band laid the foundations for America's Roots Rock, establishing our Americana music for us. Often, world-class non-American artists create art about America better than Americans can (witness British director Steve McQueen's "12 Years A Slave"), due to having a wider perspective. These Canadians wrote the indelible American song "The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down."

The Band's music felt like genuine folk art from early North American history, and the pioneer spirit of America in particular. Martin Scorsese says he heard 19th-century American literature in The Band's music. Band contemporary Van Morrison says, "I got the impression there was a lot of mythology in there," and yet someone else refers to it as "John Steinbeck set to music."

What The Band did best was put lumps in throats and tears in eyes about lost American things. There's probably never been a song about lost love as haunting as "It Makes No Difference." It's so sad that it's

'Once Were Brothers'

Director
Daniel Roher

Starring
Robbie Robertson, Levon Helm, Rick Danko, Richard Manuel, Garth Hudson, Dominique Robertson, Bruce Springsteen, Eric Clapton, David Geffen, Taj Mahal, Ronnie Hawkins, Van Morrison, Martin Scorsese

Rated
R

Running Time
1 hour, 40 minutes

Release Date
Feb. 21

★★★★★

The Band's music felt like genuine folk art from early North American history.

DISTRIB FILMS US



"Balloon" shows the lengths people will go to in order to escape from communist regimes.

FILM REVIEW

A Harrowing, yet Family-Friendly, and Educational Thriller

IAN KANE

Whereas World War II has seen hundreds of cinematic recreations, from the 1945 Academy Award-nominated "The Story of G.I. Joe" all the way up to 2019's excellent "Midway," there have been fewer films about the post-war era. Recently there has been a surge of films that cover the end of the war

and its aftereffects, such as 2020's "Waiting for Anya" and the haunting "Those Who Remained." Director Michael Herbig's "Balloon" adds to that number.

"Balloon," based on a true story, is set in the late 1970s when the Berlin Wall separated two starkly different ways of life. Since 1949, Germany had been literally split in two. The western

portion, called the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany), is presided over by the Allied countries of America, Britain, and France. On the other side is the German Democratic Republic (East Germany), which is ruled over with an iron fist by the Soviets.

Under communism, life in East Germany is grueling, similar to living in the utterly wretched Soviet gulags. Meanwhile, its Western counterpart is thriving economically, culturally, academically, and so on.

Communism and socialism are all about centralized state power that erodes individual rights and freedoms, even the right to own property. Thus, in East Germany, the secret police (or Stasi) control almost every aspect of people's everyday lives within the surveillance state.

"Balloon" focuses on two particular families that want out of East Germany—the Wetzels and the Strelzyks. But the border between the two countries is heavily patrolled, and border guards have orders to shoot would-be escapees,



(L-R) Rick Danko, Levon Helm, Richard Manuel, Garth Hudson, and Robbie Robertson; archival photo from "Once Were Brothers: Robbie Robertson and The Band."

actually a little bit horrifying; the pathos is so potent. As Bruce Springsteen eloquently puts it: "It was a sound you've never heard before, but like they've always been here."

Ultimately, the failed experiment of 1960s commune living crumbled, and the Dionysian sex, drugs, and rock and roll of the counterculture took its toll on most of The Band members. Robertson, the only member with a traditional work ethic and family, lives on to tell the sad tale.

Robertson Versus The Band

Robertson basically stars in and hosts a prolonged interview, along with interviews by the rest of the group: Richard Manuel (keyboards, vocals), Rick Danko (bass), Levon Helm (drums, vocals), and Garth Hudson (keyboards, horns).

"Once Were Brothers" has many never-before-seen archival, vintage photos of The Band headed to the local woody swimming hole, jamming in the rustic basement, rare home movies, and insightful storytelling. Also interviewed are Bob Dylan, Eric Clapton, Dominique Robertson (Robbie's wife), Ronnie Hawkins, Bruce Springsteen, Taj Mahal, and so on.

Over the years, Robbie Robertson has been portrayed as the self-serving, self-promoting bad guy who walked roughshod over his brothers. "Once Were Brothers" would appear to be a final attempt by Robertson to clear his name and tell his side of the story, but this is ultimately Robertson's ode to his band of brothers, and as such, it is moving, tragic, and yet also celebratory. Here's the deal with Robertson: In addition to his mother's Canadian, Six Nations Reservation (half Mohawk) heritage, it turns out that his dad was a Jewish gangster. hilariously, Robertson relates the confusion that his extended Jewish gangster family had, when he finally met them, in trying to make sense of his career choice: words to the effect of, "You don't want to go into furs and diamonds? Music?? Ohhh—show business! OK, we understand that!"

So, could it be said of Robertson that he was a little bit gangster? That shrewd business acumen was literally in his blood? It could indeed, at the risk of stereotyping. He had more ambition and self-promotional talent than his erstwhile bandmates. He had vision; he wanted to work with Ingmar Bergman, and above all, he had a powerful work ethic.

Bruce Springsteen mentions that Helm, Danko, and Manuel were "three of the greatest white singers in rock history," and while they all put ingredients into the stew

and stirred the pot, as the main songwriter, Robertson got "head chef" billing. And he also got paid more. One can see how that could quickly turn acrimonious.

Levon Helm, the most vociferously bitter band member, insisted The Band was unique in that it was an outfit that was truly larger than the sum of its parts, and that therefore all involved should have gotten a bigger piece of the financial pie.

However, Robertson was up early writing songs, and the rest of the band would roll in, in the late afternoon, still groggy from various drug and alcohol stupors. It's therefore also easy to see how Robertson could feel entitled to getting the lion's share. He also had a family to feed.

Degeneration, Destruction

Eric Clapton, renowned for spectacular drug binges even by rock star standards, recognized early on that Manuel and Helm were more likely to engage in his own insane amount of drinking, whereas Robertson was even-keeled.

Helm, Danko, and Manuel ended up junkies. Many drunk-driving car crashes ensued, as related by Dominique, Robertson's wife, who went on to become an addiction therapist. Robertson himself, though no angel, was the only band member to try and lead a traditional life, get married early on, and start a family.

Brothers

There's no love like brotherly love, and there's no hate like brotherly hate. Cain and Abel—enough said. Men who go on an adventure together become brothers; they love each other madly, and often the hate is just as strong—witness the massive feud between John Lennon and Paul McCartney.

As Robertson says of the group and the story of their legendary Woodstock utopia in the homely pink house (as in the 1968 landmark album "Music From Big Pink"), "It was so beautiful, it went up in flames." In Robertson's words:

"But we stood together
Like we were next of kin
And when the band played Dixie
Dixie marchin' in
Once were brothers
Brothers no more
We lost our connection
After the war
There'll be no revival
There'll be no encore
Once were brothers
Brothers no more."

so things look pretty grim. Instead of a land crossing, the two patriarchs of the families, Peter Strelzyk (Friedrich Mücke) and Günter Wetzl (David Kross), devise a plan to fly over the guards' heads instead—in a hot air balloon. Not just any balloon, but one that they plan to make themselves. But can they construct one that is sturdy enough to transport themselves, their wives, and their combined four children?

In addition to running clandestine tests on their homemade burner, the two families travel miles in order to acquire the fabric that they hope will suit their needs. This meticulous planning phase happens over almost two years. Eventually, the moment of truth arrives, and they all board their homemade escape balloon. They manage to ascend quite high, but as they encounter some low clouds, moisture weighs down the balloon and even manages to extinguish its burner. The balloon loses altitude quickly and crashes lands just inside East Germa-

ny, not far from a border barrier. They narrowly escape. This failure frightens the Wetzels so much that they give up further attempts at escape. The Strelzyks, however, want to try again. They procure even sturdier fabric, and tell the store clerks that they're putting together tents for camping trips. They also convince the Wetzels to give it another shot.

'Balloon'

Director
Michael Herbig

Starring
Friedrich Mücke, Karoline Schuch, David Kross

Rated
NR

Running Time
2 hours, 5 minutes

Release Date
Feb. 21

★★★★★

More proficient and efficient in the construction of their second balloon, the two families gather for what could be their final voyage—for good or ill. With

desperation etched into their faces, they embark on a do-or-die mission. Will they realize their dreams of freedom this time around?

"Balloon," a gentle parable in this retelling of actual events, is a fascinating look at the stark disparities between life under a free market and a socialist economy. The film also shows how families are stronger when they're united. Together against the odds, the Strelzyks and Wetzels face not only poverty and the loss of individual freedoms and rights but also the omnipresent threat of the hyper-oppressive Stasi.

The excellent acting, direction, and pacing of the film converge well, painting a tapestry of living history that reminds us all too well of socialism's defective economic policy and the despair and death that comes with its counterpart: a fundamentally flawed ideology.

Ian Kane is a filmmaker and author based out of Los Angeles. To see more, visit DreamFlightEnt.com

THEATER REVIEW

The Irish Grande Dame of Theater

DIANA BARTH

NEW YORK—Lady Augusta Gregory is a famous name in theater, but not much is generally known about her. Director Ciaran O'Reilly has set out to right that wrong by creating a potpourri of elements that bring the lady and her early 20th-century achievements to the fore.

Raised comfortably in Ireland, she went on to marry a man 35 years older than herself, because they shared the same interests: literature and the arts.

They traveled widely, in far-off, exotic places, finally settling down in Gregory's elegant estate of Coole Park in Galway.

They had a beloved son together, who sadly died in combat during World War I. But after her husband died, Lady Gregory followed her interests in theater. At Coole Park, she was able to gather around her young, as yet untried, play writing talents. These young men were to later constitute the cornerstone of the new Irish theater: names such as William Butler Yeats, John Millington Synge, and Sean O'Casey.

Lady Gregory is portrayed here in "Lady G: Plays and Whisperings of Lady Gregory" by actress Una Clancy, who holds the stage readily in a tour-de-force performance.

She is joined by three other stalwarts of the Irish

Rep company: the valuable and versatile Terry Donnelly, the vital and energetic John Keating, and the elegant James Russell. These last three play all the other roles who constitute the important figures in Lady Gregory's life.

Another plus is the inclusion of two of Lady Gregory's own plays.

After much struggle and discussion, Lady Gregory co-founded with Yeats what has come to be known as one of the giants of theatrical organizations: the Abbey Theatre, which still exists today. In fact, Terry Donnelly of this cast boasts the Abbey among her ample credits.

Notably, the Abbey produced J.M. Synge's "The Playboy of the Western World," which, in 1911, it brought to the United States. The Abbey went on to produce O'Casey's major works, including "The Shadow of a Gunman," "Juno and the Paycock," and "The Plough and the Stars."

All these, and more, became major components of what is considered classic international theater.

Lady Gregory's Plays

This production boasts unique touches. At intermission, cast members pass through the audi-



Una Clancy as Lady Gregory, the great benefactress of Irish theater, in "Lady G: Plays and Whisperings of Lady Gregory."

ence handing out small portions of the type of cake that Lady Gregory would serve on the Abbey's opening nights.

Another plus is the inclusion of two of Lady Gregory's own plays. She began writing at the age of 50 and penned 40-odd plays.

Included are "Workhouse Ward," which deals with two old codgers in a poorhouse,

one of whom refuses to move out to be with his sister, as she will not take in the two of them. These ever-quarreling frenemies prefer to remain together rather than face the loneliness that separation would bring.

The second play, "McDonough's Wife," deals with Mr. McDonough's wife dying in childbirth. When the townspeople re-

ALL PHOTOS BY CAROL ROSEGG

James Russell (L) and John Keating in Lady Gregory's play "Workhouse Ward."



Terry Donnelly (L) and Una Clancy appear in "McDonough's Wife," written by Lady Gregory.



fuse to honor her remains (as she is considered an outsider), McDonough insists on paying her the greatest respects possible, at last atoning for his ignoring her while she lived.

In addition to the strong cast and Ciaran O'Reilly's attentive direction, it's apparent that for all involved, including set designer Charlie Corcoran, costume designer David Toser, and lighting designer Michael O'Connor, this production is a labor of love.

And, without question, it has brought to fuller attention the achievements of Lady Augusta Gregory.

Diana Barth writes for several theater publications, including *New Millennium*. She may be contacted at diabarth99@gmail.com

'Lady G: Plays and Whisperings of Lady Gregory'

Irish Repertory Theatre
The W. Scott McLucas
Studio Theatre
132 W. 22nd St.
New York

Tickets
212-727-2737
or IrishRep.org

Running Time
2 hours, 15 minutes
(15 minute intermission)

Closes
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