

THE EPOCH TIMES

ARTS & CULTURE



HISTORY

FROM EAST AND WEST

2 Magnificent Rulers

CHANGE THE WORLD

King Louis XIV and Chinese Emperor Kangxi inaugurate a century of special relations

MIKE CAI

Europe's long fascination with ancient Chinese art and culture isn't new, as it was even mythologized in the Middle Ages. However, it was during the reign of Louis XIV that a new era began, bringing the East and West closer than ever before. Inspired by the richness of ancient Chi-

nese philosophy and art, King Louis XIV sent out six Jesuit missionaries in 1685 to explore ancient China, altering the course of history. While Louis XIV himself was a consummate model for European monarchs, his missionaries would soon meet another exemplary ruler, Emperor Kangxi. In fact, Louis wrote a letter to Kangxi in 1688:

Continued on Page 4

Two monarchs stand out in the world of the late 17th century. One was Louis XIV. Portrait of Louis XIV, circa 1701, by Hyacinthe Rigaud. The Louvre.

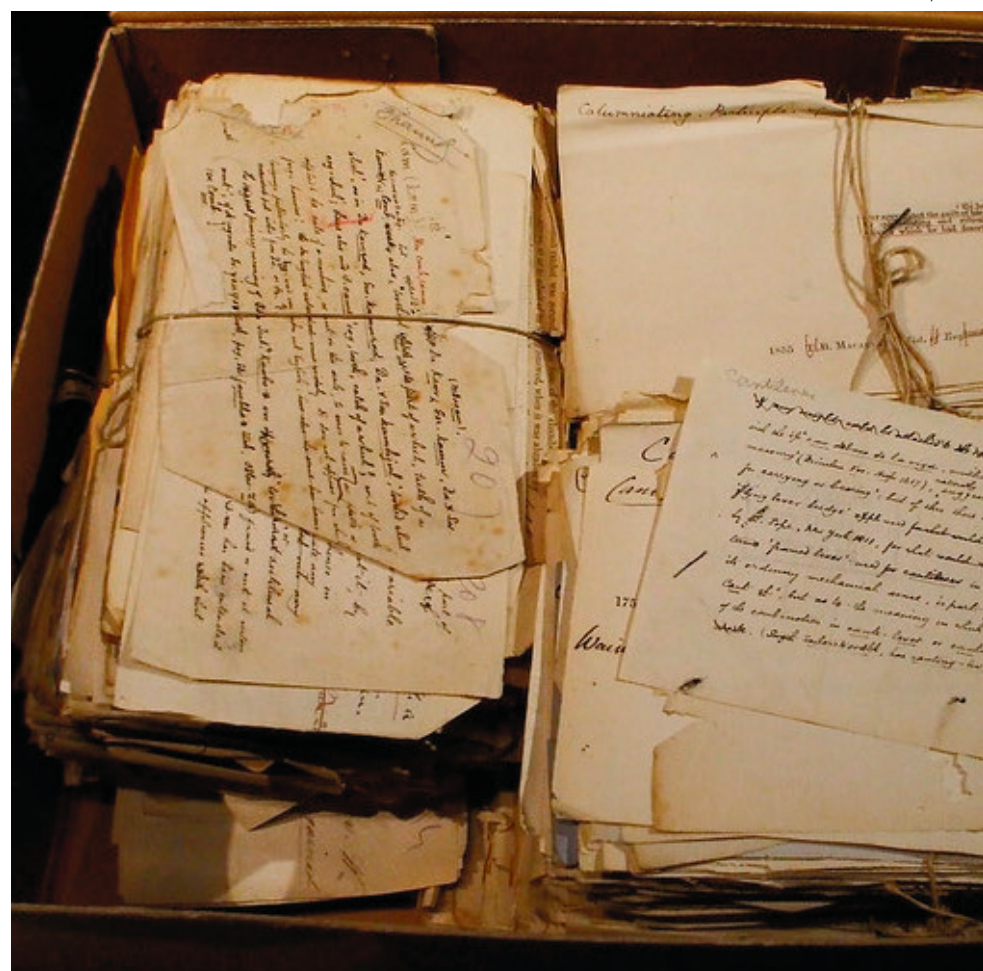


Ying and Yang by Sandra Kuck

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Volunteers compiled thousands of quotation slips to mail to the editors of the Oxford English Dictionary.

'The Greatest Enterprise of Its Kind': The Oxford English Dictionary

Now the foremost authority on the English language, the OED was a mammoth undertaking that took half a century to compile

JEFF MINICK

On June 6, 1928, 150 men gathered for a formal dinner in London's magnificent Goldsmiths' Hall. In this glittering assembly of intellectuals were bishops, peers of the realm, publishers, writers, and professors, including one J.R.R. Tolkien, who had not yet attained world fame as the creator of "The Lord of the Rings."

In his Prologue to "The Meaning of Everything: The Story of the Oxford English Dictionary" (Oxford University Press, 2003, 260 pages), Simon Winchester takes us back to that Wednesday night in June, where the diners feasted on smoked salmon, clear turtle soup, muscat salad, fine wines, and other gastronomical delights. Once they had partaken of these delicacies and toasts were offered to king and country, the men lit pipes or cigars and turned their attention to the evening's principal speaker, the Right Honorable Stanley Baldwin, Britain's prime minister.

According to Winchester, Baldwin was the ideal candidate to deliver that evening's address. He was "calm, taciturn, steady," a conservative known for his love of reading and his carefully crafted public speeches. Among his remarks that evening were these thoughts:

"I have spoken at many dinners—I have never been allowed to dine without speaking—but I have never risen under such a feeling of oppression and depression as I do tonight, partly by the weight of learning in this room and partly by the weight of the toast which I have to propose. I am expected in a few words to do justice to the merits of Professor Craigie and his co-editor and the staff, of 15,000 pages of literature, of 400,000 words, of 3,000,000 quotations, and 178 miles of type."

The prime minister concluded by saying: "There can be no worldly recompense—except that every man and woman in this country whose gratitude and respect is worth having, will rise up and call you blessed for this great work. The 'Oxford English Dictionary' is the greatest enterprise of its kind in history."

Devoted Servants

The project that had so awed Prime Minister Baldwin and countless numbers of other people, which came to be called the Oxford English Dictionary (OED), was first proposed in 1857 by the Philological Society of London. Dissatisfied with the dictionaries then in use, the Society envi-

sioned a massive work that would act as a sort of survey of the English language as well as a complete collection of its words and their meanings.

In 1879, the Philological Society worked out an agreement with Oxford University Press to assume production of the dictionary. The bridge between the two organizations was James Murray (1837–1915), a largely self-educated member of the Society who served as the chief editor until his death. Several times this arrangement nearly fell apart, largely as a result of quarrels between Murray and his Oxford associates, but both sides persevered. Meanwhile, in a specially constructed room called the "scriptorium," Murray meticulously assembled quotations and entries for the project.

Murray's standards and methods of organization remained in place even after his death, and he was largely responsible for editing the first half of the dictionary. Joining him in 1888 as editor in this endeavor was Henry Bradley (1845–1923), who, though also largely self-educated, had become a leading philologist. He took command after Murray's demise.

The third editor to take charge of this production was William Craigie (1867–1957), the gentleman mentioned in Baldwin's speech. Joining him was Charles T. Onions (1873–1965), who later joked that he had brought the last entry, *zyxt* (obsolete for "seest thou"), to the dictionary.

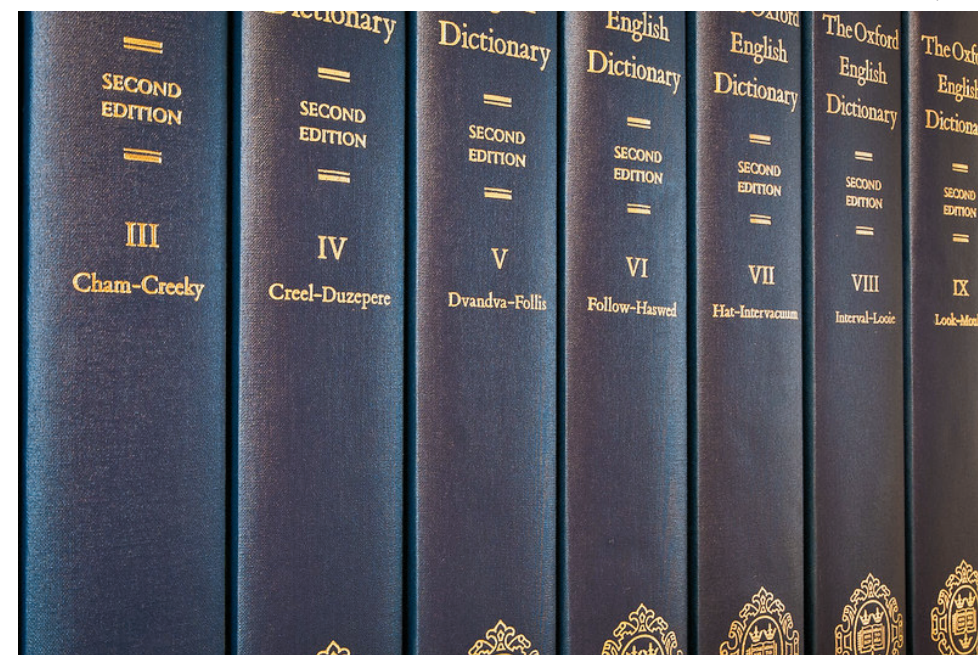
The Years Drag Into Decades

When Murray first assumed control of the project, the estimated time for completion was 10 years. When after five years the lexicographers had only reached the word "ant," it became clear that compiling the dictionary would take a bit longer than anticipated.

At least three factors accounted for this snail's pace. The first had to do with the enormity of the work itself. This was to be no ordinary dictionary but a collection, as the title of Winchester's history tells us, of "the meaning of everything."

The technology of that age also slowed the work. Entries, quotations, and all the other intricacies of definition were largely recorded first by handwritten notation and then physically filed and stored. Furthermore, the reliance of Murray and his staff on volunteers to send them entries for consideration entailed heavy and ongoing correspondence through the mail. Information that today can be sent with a tap of the finger once consumed days or even weeks.

Finally, all the editors maintained stringent standards in their pursuit of this task.



The second edition of the Oxford English Dictionary was published in 1989, in 20 volumes.

These men cut no corners, never sacrificed accuracy for haste. Whatever their differences in personality—Murray, for example, had a sharp temper while Bradley was more scholarly and reserved—all these editors were exacting and professional in the completion of their duties.

The Americans

In Chapter 7 of his history of the OED, titled "The Hermit and the Murderer," Winchester notes the vital importance of the unpaid contributors to the dictionary. He then focuses our attention on two volunteers, both citizens of the United States then living in England, who went above and beyond the hoped-for submissions.

Sailing to India from Boston in search of his brother, who had left home, Fitzedward Hall survived a shipwreck in the Bay of Bengal, washed ashore, and decided to stay put. Over the next years, he learned several languages, translated Indian texts into English, married, and went with his wife to England. Though he became a professor of Sanskrit, he was soon embroiled in controversy with other philologists, was accused of being a drunkard and a spy, left London, and spent the next 32 years in self-imposed exile in a remote English cottage.

For over two decades, Hall wrote almost daily to Murray and the scriptorium with entries, suggestions, explanations, and corrected proofs. Murray and his helpers became heavily dependent on Hall,

to whom Murray once wrote "to express with trembling the earnest desire that you will be able to give us your help for a long time to come."

William Chester Minor's case was stranger still. A former surgeon in the Union Army during the Civil War, Minor was later dismissed from service for his eccentric behavior. His family sent him to England in hopes he might recover his mental health, but in 1872 he murdered a working man—a stranger—and was committed to Broadmoor, an asylum for the criminally insane.

While incarcerated, Minor worked for many years as a valued contributor to the OED. Murray and his staff long assumed that the physician was a member of the Broadmoor staff—Minor refused all invitations to meet any of them—and it was a grave shock when the truth was learned. Nevertheless, Murray and Minor became friends, and despite his mental illness, Minor sent in his many contributions until in 1910 he was granted permission to return to America, where he lived out his last years. Readers interested in discovering more about Minor might look at Simon Winchester's "The Professor and the Madman: A Tale of Murder, Insanity, and the Making of the Oxford English Dictionary."

The Care and Feeding of a Dictionary

Over the years, Murray and his associates issued the dictionary in parts, or fas-

With the completion of the project in 1928, there were more than 400,000 entries housed in 10 volumes.

cicles. With the completion of the project in 1928, there were more than 400,000 entries housed in 10 volumes. In 1933, this ultimate authority on the English language was reissued in 12 volumes along with a "Supplement" of new words and phrases. This set was eventually issued in 20 volumes.

With the advent of the electronic age, millions of dollars were spent on the digitalization of the dictionary. According to its online history: "In 1992 the 'Oxford English Dictionary' again made history when a CD-ROM edition of the work was published. Suddenly a massive, 20-volume work that takes up four feet of shelf space and weighs 150 pounds is reduced to a slim, shiny disk that takes up virtually no space and weighs just a few ounces."

Today this grand enterprise, requiring constant revisions and additions, truly does stand as one of the great achievements in the English language—and in any other language, for that matter. The sacrifices of the editors and their staff, and the countless hours expended by the volunteers who originally collected words and supportive quotations, and analyzed material, deserve, as Stanley Baldwin said nearly a century ago, our "gratitude and respect."

The Oxford English Dictionary also stands as a monumental reminder of the importance of language and definitions to our culture. In "Politics and the English Language," George Orwell rightly warned: "But if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought. A bad usage can spread by tradition and by imitation even among people who should and do know better."

In our own time, when language is often twisted for political ends, let us hope that our present-day lexicographers fully recognize their powers and responsibilities in shaping the meanings of the words of our common tongue.

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. He is the author of two novels, "Amanda Bell" and "Dust On Their Wings," and two works of non-fiction, "Learning As I Go" and "Movies Make The Man." Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va.



Stanley Baldwin, 1923, Britain's prime minister who commemorated the completion of the first edition of the Oxford English Dictionary in 1928.

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THE EPOCH TIMES



HISTORY

FROM EAST AND WEST

2 Magnificent Rulers

CHANGE THE WORLD

Continued from Page 1

"Most high, most Excellent, most Puissant, and most Magnanimous Prince, Our Dearly Beloved Good Friend, may God increase your Grandeur with a happy end. Being inform'd, that Your Majesty, was desirous to have near your Person, and in your Dominions, a considerable number of Learned Men, very much vers'd in the European Sciences, we resolv'd some Years ago, to send you six Learn'd Mathematicians Our Subjects, to show Your Majesty what ever is most curious in Sciences, and especially the Astronomical Observations of the Famous Academy we have establish'd in our good City of Paris. ... Your most Dear, and Good Friend, Louis."

These two monarchs at the eastern and western ends of the Eurasian land mass stand out in the world of the late 17th century. In the West, Louis XIV (1638–1715) ruled France for 72 years as a member of the Bourbon dynasty and was the longest reigning European monarch. In the East, Kangxi (1654–1722) ruled China for nearly 62 years as a member of the Qing Dynasty and the longest reigning Chinese emperor. Both of them loved riding, hunting, and archery, were fond of the arts, and ushered in a golden age during their reigns. They are unique, yet they present with striking similarities.

Divine Right to Rule

Both Louis XIV and Kangxi ruled by divine right, but their reigns manifested through different Eastern and Western theologies. King Louis considered himself to be God's representative on earth, while Emperor Kangxi was considered the Son of Heaven.

The king likened himself to Apollo, who was the sun god in Greek and Roman mythology, and chose Apollo's sun as his emblem. Just as the planets revolved around the sun, the nobility and courtiers revolved around the

Sun King at Versailles. As a king who loved to dance and perform, the 14-year-old Louis debuted in the role of Apollo in the "Ballet Royal de la Nuit" commemorating his victory over the Fronde rebellions. Allegorical paintings and sculptures also depict the king as a Roman emperor in his military victories. This association with Greco-Roman antiquity accentuated his power as monarch and glorified the king's position as a divine ruler.

Louis XIV was also a devout Catholic and swore to defend the Catholic faith at his coronation. However, unlike Louis, who sought religious unity under a single faith, in ancient China, Kangxi acknowledged the three traditions of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism that intersected in everyday life.

The ancient Chinese believed that mountains were close to the heavens and were sacred dwellings for immortals. For centuries,

Jean Baptiste Colbert presenting the members of the Royal Academy of Sciences to Louis XIV in 1667. "Establishment of the French Academy of Sciences and of Paris Observatory," by Henri Testelin after Charles Le Brun. The Palace of Versailles.



"The Kangxi Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour, Scroll Four: Shandong-Jiangsu Border to Confluence of the Yellow and Huai Rivers," between 1632 and 1717, by Wang Hui. Guimet Museum.



Chinese emperors visited Mt. Tai, which was known as a sacred mountain, and all three religious disciplines had major temples there. Climbing to its summit affirmed their rule from heaven, and it symbolized the connection between imperial legitimacy and divinity. Kangxi's visit was of particular significance since he was Manchu and rather an outsider to the Han Chinese. By climbing Mt. Tai, Kangxi sent a message that he was going to rule not as a Manchu conqueror but as a traditional Han emperor, and it proved that the new Qing Dynasty fitted into existing Chinese traditions. This extraordinary event was commemorated in Wang Hui's scroll painting, "The Kangxi Emperor's Southern Inspection Tour, Scroll Three: Jin'an to Mount Tai."

Emperor Kangxi and Learning From the West

While Kangxi and Louis XIV never met in person, they were indirectly connected through the French Jesuit missionaries in China. It was the missionaries who first made lyrical comparisons between the two rulers and brought firsthand knowledge. This triggered mutual discovery and inspiration as they explored each other's arts and culture, ushering in a wave of Sino-Franco exchange.

Emperor Kangxi welcomed the French king's envoys and was fascinated by the scientific knowledge that they brought; he took a profound interest in European astronomy, mathematics, and medicine. The emperor made them his personal tutors as they gave him assiduous lessons every day. Kangxi loved to teach his ministers, too, while taking them on trips to display his knowledge. He also ordered the translation of books like Euclid's "Elements" and even attempted to prove the authority of ancient Chinese works with Western science.

The king's mathematicians had explicit scientific goals; among them was the geo-

graphical study of the Qing territories and continental East Asia. Emperor Kangxi had coincidental aspirations, as he wanted to improve cartographic practice as a means of frontier control of his newly conquered territories. Thus, there were converging interests between the emperor and the Royal Academy's push for scientific exploration.

The missionaries were impressed with the emperor's diligence as he spent most of his leisure time in the pursuit of Western learning. They brought numerous Paris-made precision instruments in gilded copper—including compasses, telescopes, timepieces, and drawing tools like protractors, sectors, and rulers—to facilitate his studies.

One such instrument gifted to the emperor was a semicircle protractor with a built-in compass, used for land surveying.

Kangxi often took the missionaries to accompany him on his military campaigns, and they worked together to determine their locations relative to the capital. While the emperor and his tutors calculated latitude based on polestar altitudes, the Qing officials estimated longitude with geometric rope-measured distances. Applying this newfound knowledge in astronomy and geometry, they were able to map out new terrains.

As Kangxi's empire grew, the need to develop comprehensive and consistent mapping of the Qing territories necessitated the demand for better land surveying instruments from Europe. To meet this demand, the emperor directed the imperial workshops to manufacture their own instruments based on the Parisian prototypes, and he personally examined and critiqued their production. Thus, the Kangxi Emperor established an official imperial cartographic practice using methods from the French Royal Academy of Sciences.

Louis XIV and Chinese Porcelain

King Louis's missionaries traveled back to France bearing gifts from the emperor. Dazzled by the treasures, the king initiated a deep interest in emulating Chinese arts and culture at all levels of French society. This sentiment of admiration was echoed in a quote from Voltaire (1694–1778), who wrote: "There is no house in Europe whose antiquity is so well proved as that of the Empire of China."

Porcelain was one of the most important means by which Chinese art was introduced into the French court. Louis XIV himself collected over 3,000 pieces of mostly Chinese porcelain. The king would drink his soup from a large Chinese porcelain cup with

golden handles. It was seen as white gold at that time in Europe due to its rarity and was a sign of luxury. Cobalt oxide pigment was painted on pure white clay, resulting in an elegant blue design against a snowy white background.

The king's missionaries traveled back to France bearing gifts from the emperor.

These pieces, however, were transformed and adapted to French taste. Gilded cast bronze mounts were added to these imported porcelain wares to enhance their value and repurpose their use. The "Perfume Fountain," for instance, was reconstructed out of three different porcelain wares with mounted gilt bronze to take on a completely new function—the dispensing of perfume. A pair of ewers were made from two Chinese porcelain vases. Each vase is mounted between a gilt bronze pouring lip and foot ring connected by a handle designed with branches of flowers and scrolling acanthus leaves. These ewers, however, were meant only for decorative use.

The craze for Chinese porcelain also mani-



Emperor Kangxi in court dress, by an anonymous Qing Dynasty court painter. The Palace Museum, Beijing.

fest itself in French art and architecture. The king displayed his taste for Chinese art in his private residences and retreats at Versailles, such as the Porcelain Trianon, which was inspired by the Nanking porcelain pagoda. The porcelain house exhibited a fusion of both cultures, as the French-style rooftop was covered with blue and white ceramic tiles embellished with porcelain vases, while the interior stucco panels, woodwork, and furniture were all painted blue and white, evoking Chinese artistry.

French Baroque painting at the time also echoed the enthusiasm for Chinese porcelain, particularly the works of Alexandre-François Desportes (1661–1743), who often depicted Chinese porcelain bowls in his still-life paintings.

Enchanted by the exquisite qualities of porcelain, the French artisans sought to imitate it and discover its secretive fabrication techniques. In an effort to duplicate it, they developed an artificial soft-paste porcelain. However, they found they couldn't produce the same quality and durability without kaolin, an extremely refined white clay that was a key ingredient. It wasn't until the early 18th century that the French discovered the Chinese technique of making hard-paste porcelain, through investigations of a Jesuit missionary at the imperial kilns in China.

The Sino-Franco Exchange

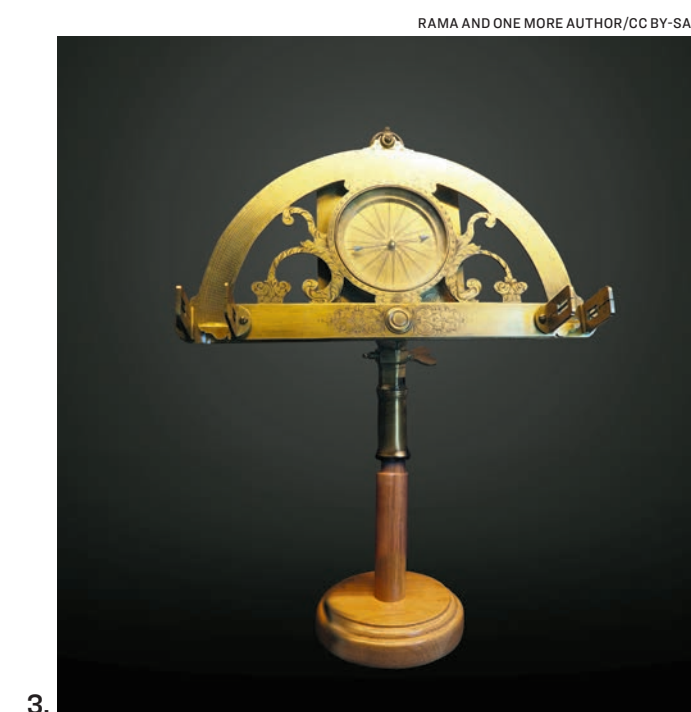
Not only were Emperor Kangxi and King Louis XIV extraordinary sovereigns in their own right, but also their legacies were marked by mutual discovery that inaugurated more than a century of special relations between East and West. Yet even well after their reigns, their successors continued this tradition of mutual discovery, which inspired reflection among intellectuals in the Age of Enlightenment that reverberated far beyond the borders of France and the Middle Kingdom.

While the missionaries successfully introduced Western science to the ancient Chinese, the spread of Christianity was overshadowed, as the teachings of Confucius and Lao Tzu remain deeply rooted in ancient Chinese tradition. This in turn left a profound impression on the missionaries and they brought these ancient Chinese teachings back to Europe. In particular, Confucian philosophy was much admired by European philosophers to better understand heaven and nature.

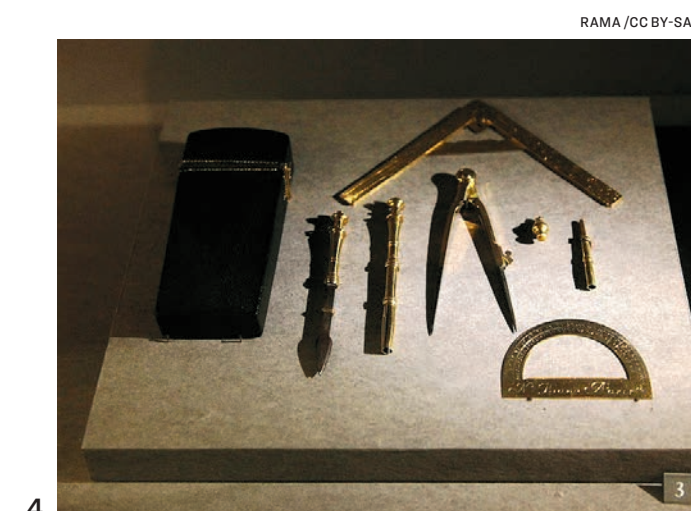
Mike Cai is a graduate of the New York Fei Tian Academy of the Arts and the University of California-Berkeley.



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3.



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1. Two rulers with much in common: Emperor Kangxi of China (L) and Louis XIV of France.

2. A pair of ewers of Chinese porcelain (porcelain made 1662–1722), from the Kangxi era, with French gilt-bronze mounts (mountings made 1745–49). J. Paul Getty Museum.

3. A graphometer, used for surveying.

4. Instruments with a leather case, manufactured at the Bion workshop in France, which were copied by the Qing Imperial Workshops. Louvre Museum.

BOOK REVIEW

A Guide to

Enhance Your Knowledge and Awaken Your Senses

ANITA L. SHERMAN

The forests have once again bestowed their enchanted magic. German forester and author Peter Wohlleben, along with author, nature enthusiast, and primary English language translator Jane Billinghurst have teamed up to offer readers new ways to appreciate the natural world.

First, I wouldn't necessarily categorize this book as promoting "Shinrin-yoku," a Japanese term for "forest bathing" coined in 1982 by the Japanese Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries to define making contact with the forest in a spiritual way. The agency did studies showing that exposure to forests has positive health benefits. No actual bathing is required—simply immersing yourself in the woods will make you feel better than navigating purely a city life.

Wohlleben and Billinghurst would not disagree, I'm sure, about the peacefulness and serenity that you can experience in taking a path less traveled. But their book is more of a guide to enhance your knowledge and further awaken your senses the next time you find yourself walking in the woods.

Learning to Be a Forest Detective

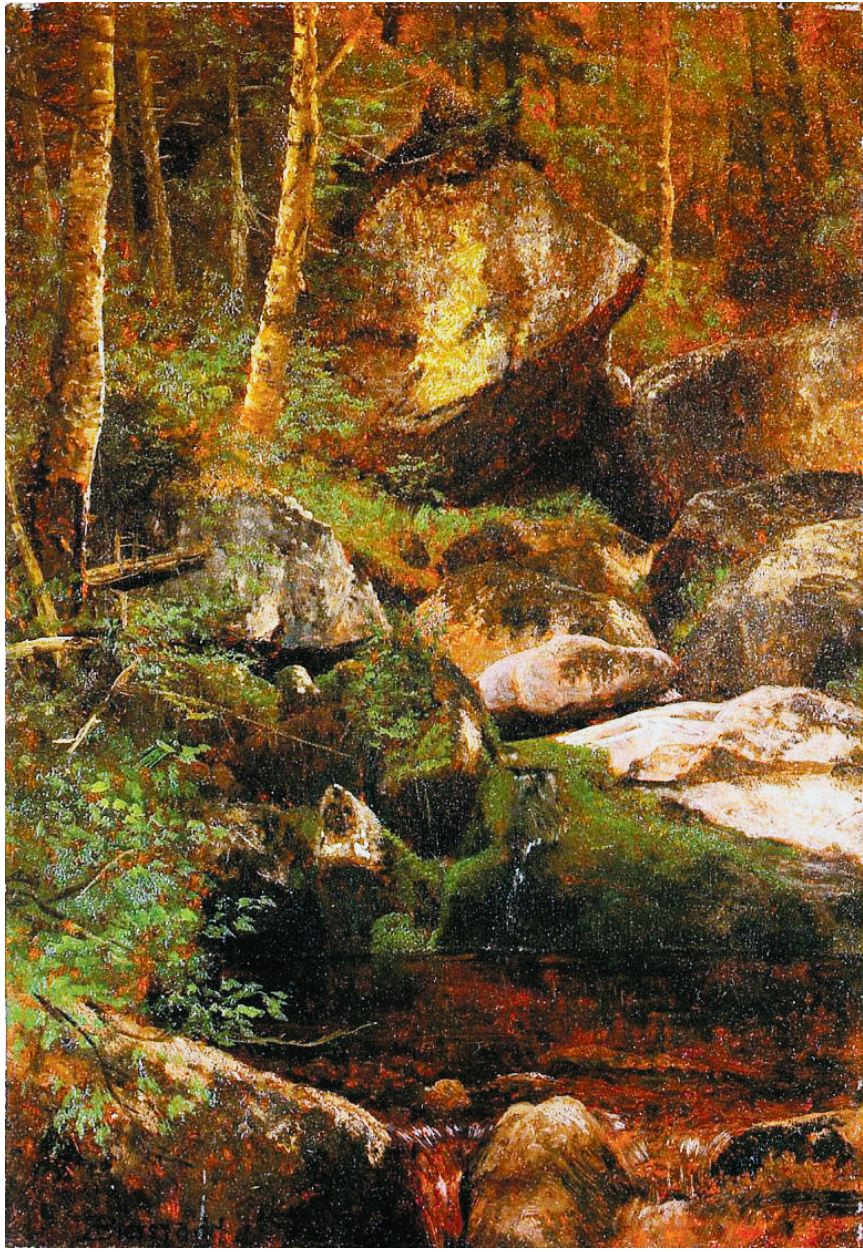
Beyond being able to identify whether a tree is coniferous or deciduous, you'll learn what lies behind the bark or beneath the path underfoot. All of these are signs of the forest's history.

Do you know that trees sleep? Do you know how expansive their root systems are? What's that bitter almond smell that some trees ooze?

The design of their branches, their ability to store moisture, and their ever upward reaching toward the sun are all explained and explored.

The forest has its own social network and hidden connections. It's fascinating to learn about the interrelatedness of trees, the creatures that find comfort in their branches and bark, the composition of the soils that support their growth, and how better to decode nature's signs.

While forests contain a plethora of wild-life—creatures that you can easily see and hear—the authors have readers taking a deep dive into all the layers that make up



"Forest Stream," 19th century, by Albert Bierstadt.

the forest floor, from lichens to all the little insects hiding under the leaves.

Clearly keen on preserving forests and educating future generations about the role forests play in the environment, the authors suggest several ways to enhance the forest experience for children, from making bark rubbings to creating musical instruments from branches.

There is a lot of practical advice as well, from choosing your wardrobe to deciding when it's not a good idea to go into a forest—like when a storm is brewing. If you do find yourself in a torrential rainstorm, you'll learn which trees will provide better cover and which to avoid if there is lightning,

A Walk on the Wild Side

What if you find yourself stranded in the woods? How would you survive?

Wohlleben has conducted survival training workshops with participants armed with only a sleeping bag, a knife, and a cup. Forest food is not always friendly fare. You've got to know your mushrooms or what can happen with a belly full of blackberries. Is the water in a stream safe to drink? Which branches will make the best bed?

The book is written in a well-paced narrative and conversational style. There are times when you feel that you are walking with the authors through the woods, crossing streams, and perching on a rock with an incredible view. Or you may be down on the ground, peering under a rock, or running your hand over a bed of green and cool moss.

One chapter that particularly resonated with me was experiencing the forest at night. There is a fear factor as your eyes slowly adjust to the darkness and you hear sounds that are not immediately recognizable. Certain animals and plants glow in the dark. Eyes may peer out from a cavity in a tree.

And as the authors describe, there are the owls. "No catalog of night animals would be complete without mentioning those silent nighttime hunters, the owls. I never cease to be fascinated by the flight of owls. Their feathers are slightly fringed on the edges, which allows them to fly in absolute silence as they search for scuttling mice or sleeping birds. Owls appear and disappear like nocturnal ghosts."

"Forest Walking" is not a reference book. No need to take copious notes. It's more of an appetizer and an invitation to explore and appreciate all that the natural world has to offer. The authors hope that you'll be enticed to go outside and take a walk in the woods.

I suspect that many of you will after this enchanting and enlightening read.

Anita L. Sherman is an award-winning journalist who has more than 20 years of experience as a writer and editor for local papers and regional publications in Virginia. She now works as a freelance writer and is working on her first novel. She is the mother of three grown children and grandmother to four, and she resides in Warrenton, Va. She can be reached at anitajustwrite@gmail.com

'Forest Walking: Discovering the Trees and Woodlands of North America'

Author
Peter Wohlleben and Jane Billinghurst (translator)

Publisher
Greystone Books, April 26, 2022

Paperback
240 pages

BOOK REVIEW

A Highly Detailed Account of the Battle of Tannenberg

DUSTIN BASS

For World War I enthusiasts, Osprey Publishing has issued a new work on a specific battle of the war. Michael McNally has written a very concise yet detailed book titled "Tannenberg 1914: Destruction of the Russian Second Army."

The battle begins at the start of the global conflict, on the eastern front in East Prussia, between Germany and Russia. The battle would become a microcosm of the war, especially in terms of the Russians. McNally gives painstaking detail of decisions made before, during, and after the battle.

Before the War

The author provides insight into reasons for the animosity in Europe, specifically between France and Germany. He discusses, briefly, the results of the Napoleonic Wars and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, and the rise of the German political genius Otto von Bismarck. Looking at the situation much closer to the time of the war, McNally begins with the reasons for why the conflict took place, including the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, the demands placed on Serbia by the Austrian government, and the declaration of war by the Austrians on the Serbians. He discusses in short order each country's inevitable declarations of war on each other.

From this point, McNally practically walks the reader through the step-by-step process

of how the pivotal battle between the Germans and the Russians transpired. As is common with Osprey publications of specific battles or military moments in history, it is chock-full of tedious information. The book breaks down the chain of commands within the German and Russian armies. It also provides maps of military movements that took place throughout the battle during the month of August (symbol legend included).

The Belligerents

There is a good amount of information dedicated to the Russians, but most of the time is spent within the German ranks. McNally details the interaction between Gen. Hermann von François and Gen. Maximilian von Prittwitz. François has gone down in history as a bombastic and daring—at least more so than Prittwitz—commander. McNally discusses the disagreements between the two generals or, more pointedly, the insubordination of François. Ultimately, his insubordination works in the Germans' favor, and Prittwitz is replaced by Gen. Paul von Hindenburg. Hindenburg is a familiar name, even for those who are not World War I enthusiasts. McNally does a fine job of demonstrating the importance and the impact of impeccable military leadership. Hindenburg and Gen. Erich Ludendorff exemplify that in the book.

For much of the conflict, the Germans seem to be on their heels. The Russians have near-overwhelming numbers, but as McNally shows, time and distance prove to be determining factors. Ultimately, the numbers were not enough to win the day. The Russians were weary, and their communications—or lack thereof—proved too costly (issues that became systemic throughout Russia's time in the war).

"Tannenberg 1914" provides images from the battle, the German and Russian commanders, and maps. Regarding the maps, those prove very helpful. At times,



Gen. Field Marshal Paul von Hindenburg in 1914.

McNally does not get caught up in the dramatics.



'Tannenberg 1914: Destruction of the Russian Second Army'

Author
Michael McNally

Publisher
Osprey Publishing, Dec. 20, 2022

Paperback
96 pages

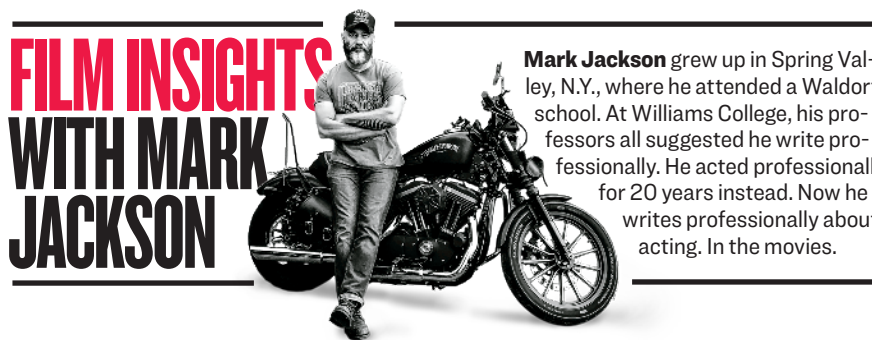
it becomes difficult to follow who is who among the many commanders in the writing and where exactly the troops are moving, whether in attack, defense, or retreat. The maps clear up any confusion the reader may have, and they also allow the reader to visualize and learn the tactics used by the armies. The final maps also reiterate just how quickly the German armies regrouped, adjusted, and soon overwhelmed the Russian Second Army.

Highly Detailed, Somewhat Dry

McNally does not get caught up in the dramatics. There is no hyperbolic language, except perhaps for quotes from the Germans and Russians. It is a straightforward account of the results from the battle. War, of course, is the great drama and therefore provides enough excitement for the reader. It is difficult, however, not to call the work dry due to its straightforwardness and its abundance of detail (though, not to imply that the details were not necessary).

"Tannenberg 1914" is an ideal work for World War I enthusiasts, especially those looking for a highly detailed account of what took place in the opening days of the war. The book will also provide insight into precisely why the Russian army fell to the wayside a few years later, a situation that helped lead the Russian people to revolt against their government (though, unfortunately, installing a much harsher regime). For the German side, the book will demonstrate how the Germans were more tactically and technologically advanced, how their communications were superior specifically compared to the Russians, and why they came close to winning the war.

Dustin Bass is the host of EpochTV's "About the Book," a show about new books with the authors who wrote them. He is an author and co-host of "The Sons of History" podcast.



FILM REVIEW

Documentary Makes a Therapist's Life Lessons Available to All

MARK JACKSON

Actor Jonah Hill ("Superbad," "Money Ball") has made a documentary about his therapist and friend Phil Stutz, who happens to be one of the world's leading psychiatrists.

"Stutz" ticks a few boxes: It's a loving homage, an on-screen therapy session, and a presentation to the world of Dr. Stutz's life's work, in hopes that putting his doctor's distinct therapy tools on display might help others as they clearly helped Hill himself navigate life. Stutz, age 75, has helped innumerable patients in a career spanning 40 years.

Jonah Hill pays tribute to this genius-level, influential, life-changing New York Jewish man who's possessed of a savant-level understanding of what makes humans tick. I say "savant" because, while he went on to get a Ph.D., he relates how his doctorate just provided a change of venue. Grown-ups had been spewing their problems to him from the age of 10. He's a born healer.

Jonah Hill tells the story of a great healer who, due to humility, won't tell his own story.

The Tools

The film explores Stutz's life and walks the viewer through his signature visualization exercises: The Tools. Hill films Stutz in an unorthodox session that flips their classic doctor-patient setup, and the two of them bring The Tools to life in a vulnerable, funny, and ultimately therapeutic experience. Filmed in black and white, Hill's film is

true rooted in the present to be considered a true bio-doc, but it reveals Dr. Stutz's past via archival material: photos of him playing basketball in a 1970s Jew-fro hairdo and minimized Frank Zappa 'stache, with illustrating stories about the psychiatrist's childhood, family, romantic encounters, and Parkinson's disease.

Throughout the film, we're aware of how the degenerative disorder impacts Stutz

physically but never mentally. That functions to remind us that part of Hill's impetus to shoot this film was because of the limited amount of time left in which Stutz could explain his therapy style.

Raised by atheist parents, Stutz explains how his father's lack of faith was replaced by a deep need to see his son succeed as a doctor. Each story that Hill elicits from Stutz leads to an explanation of the various tools one can avail oneself of, in order to better deal with similar situations.

We see him draw various diagrams in shaky Parkinson's calligraphy, on notecards, to explain concepts like "Part X" (the resistance that manifests wherever we try to make positive changes in our lives), and "The Shadow" (the embodiment of all our negative qualities, known in other systems as "the doppelganger"). Others follow, such as "Life Force," "The Snapshot," and "The Grateful Flow."

These eyes-closed visualizing techniques are filled with enlightening pathways by which to navigate sadness, anxiety, and so on. When Stutz walks us through how they work, like I mentioned, it's got that priceless, layman friendly, common-sense wisdom that has one wondering why one didn't think of such things oneself long ago. This makes the whole experience feel like a personal therapy session. And so, instead of putting them all into a book, we have Hill's transformational documentary.

The Artifice

Approximately 25 minutes in, Hill lets us see behind the film's artifice. We're shown that we've been watching a movie-set facsimile of Stutz's office that utilizes a green screen background in order to depict a chronologically edited shoot that's not actually one session but a process that's taken place over many months. Even Hill's blond-frosted, avid-surfer-dude longish hair is a



Director-actor Jonah Hill (L) and therapist Phil Stutz discuss the tools of self-improvement in the documentary "Stutz."

The film explores Stutz's life and walks the viewer through his signature visualization exercises.

'Stutz'

Director:
Jonah Hill

Starring:
Documentary

MPAA Rating:
R

Running Time:
1 hour, 36 minutes

Release Date:
Nov. 14, 2022

★★★★★

wig hiding a much shorter hairstyle that he wanted to nix for consistency.

This revelation is all done in service to being ultra-truthful, letting it all hang out, and removing all pretenses instead of lying to the audience, in order to better shine a healing spotlight on anything hidden, repressed, and denied. While clearly uncomfortable with the challenge he's given himself, Jonah Hill admirably shares the reasons he initially sought therapy, which include a death in the family as well as his having been subjected to the ubiquitous onslaught of raving tabloid comment-section trolls and haters regarding his struggle with being overweight since he became famous. At one point, Hill places a larger-than-life cardboard cutout of his obese 14-year-old self next to him, which he's dubbed "Undesirable to the World."

Upshot

Throughout the film, Phil Stutz—who's got the quiet, magnetic screen presence of someone capable of deep inner silence, along with a laidback confidence—is a humble and willing participant. He consistently shares that life is challenging, and that despite utilizing the Stutz psychiatric tools, you'll still encounter pain, uncertainty, and the need to work at the issues for the rest of your life. The tools are not solutions but rather methods for getting through obstacles and around setbacks.

That said, there are quite a few sections in "Stutz" that you can easily rewind to, after your initial viewing, in order to use the tools as a self-help movie. And while "Stutz" is, of course, not a replacement for actual therapy, it is a great introduction to seeing what kinds of things a world-class therapist can bring to the table.

"Stutz" began streaming on Netflix on Nov. 14, 2022.

FILM REVIEW

A Homogenized Remake of a Swedish Cult Favorite

MICHAEL CLARK

This past calendar year, professionally speaking, has not worked out well for Tom Hanks. He appeared in three films ("Elvis," "Pinocchio," and now "A Man Called Otto"), and none of them come close to matching his glory days of the 1990s or early 2000s (or even his post "Bosom Buddies" 1980s upstart phase).

His uncharacteristically widely off-the-mark rendition of Col. Tom Parker in "Elvis" was (in the opinion of many, myself included) the biggest reason preventing that film from achieving greatness. The disaster that was "Pinocchio," equally despised by critics and audiences, marked a career low for Hanks.

The (semi) good news about "Otto" is that it's the best of the 2022 Hanks bunch, which is hardly fawning praise. A remake of the far superior 2015 Swedish "A Man Called Ove" (itself based on the 2012 novel by Fredrik Backman), "Otto" finds Hanks playing an initially unlikable curmudgeon lead who transforms into something closer to the lovable everyman that is the core of his legacy.

Mr. Busybody

A recent widower, Otto is angry at the world, something everyone knows yet he steadfastly denies. He can't understand why five feet of rope costs more than six. He reorganizes items incorrectly placed in the community recycle bins. He berates his soon-to-be-ex-fellow-employees for throwing him a surprise (forced) retirement party. He chastises neighbors over their failure to clean up after their pets and barks at illegally parked delivery truck drivers.

Otto might as well be named Karen.

Otto meets his match (although he doesn't realize it at the time) in the form of Marisol (Mariana Treviño), a pregnant woman and mother of two irresistibly charming girls who attempts to counter his gruff exterior with gifts of food—and she largely succeeds.

As charming as Otto is abrasive, Marisol (born in an unspecified Spanish-language-speaking country) calls him out by asking him if he is always as angry and unhappy as he appears, and he is left, unexpectedly, speechless.

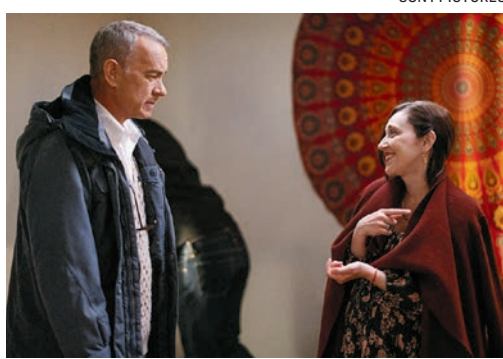
The film's a remake of the far superior 2015 Swedish 'A Man Called Ove.'

Not Intimidated

Marisol crushes Otto with kindness with just the slightest whiff of a hothouse flower, and he discovers that he cannot summarily insult or dress her down. He oh-so-slowly begins to respect her, although she regularly (and unknowingly) thwarts his many attempts at committing suicide.

This is the part of the review where I reveal (without so much spoiling) that Otto is never successful at killing himself. One can't make a movie starring Hanks, released at year's end, where his character offs himself. It's altogether forbidden.

The mere SUGGESTION that the Hanks character TRIES to kill himself multiple times is the MacGuffin; it's the distraction that tries to make the film deeper and more moving than it is.



Otto (Tom Hanks) and Marisol (Mariana Treviño) have little in common, in "A Man Called Otto."

Otto will never succeed in his mission because that would crush the message of this highly manipulative exercise. Displaying overtly negative human behavior for the sole sake of extending narrative disbelief will work for some artsy types, but not the target demographic (Mr. and Mrs. 50-plus Middle America).

To their credit, director Marc Forster and screenwriter David Magee do their level best at peeling away the storytelling onion at as slow a pace as possible. The complete story of Otto's deceased wife, Sonya (Rachel Keller), isn't fully revealed until late in the third act, and it goes far in explaining why Otto is so attached to a dog-eared paperback and one particular 25-cent piece.

The casting of Tom's son Truman Hanks as the younger version of Otto was clever, although his more experienced, eldest son Colin bears more of a resemblance to him.

No Surprises Here

Sorely missing from "Otto" is the element of surprise. Despite its limited appeal (a foreign language film with subtitles) "Ove" was nonetheless a welcomed, out-of-left-field, oddball sleeper.

What is most perplexing about the marketing of the movie, from an "inside baseball"

industry perspective, is its suspicious lack of press screenings prior to year-end critics' associations deadlines, most of which are on or near the final week of November.

Despite being "long in the tooth" as it were, Hanks is still a bankable draw and, although his performance here is formulaically endearing, it's bewildering why the studio didn't at the least push him, possibly Treviño, and the film itself for awards consideration.

For those who never saw "Ove" (and that's, well, almost everyone), "Otto" will dutifully suffice. It's not steak but neither is it Hamburger Helper. There are far worse ways to spend two-plus hours of your life.

Presented in English and infrequently subtitled in Spanish.

Originally from Washington, D.C., Michael Clark has provided film content to over 30 print and online media outlets. He co-founded the Atlanta Film Critics Circle in 2017 and is a weekly contributor to the Sharron Burke Show on FloridaManRadio.com. Since 1995, Mr. Clark has written over 4,000 movie reviews and film-related articles. He favors dark comedy, thrillers, and documentaries.

'A Man Called Otto'

Director:
Marc Forster

Starring:
Tom Hanks, Mariana Treviño, Truman Hanks, Rachel Keller

Running Time:
2 hours, 6 minutes

MPAA Rating:
PG-13

Release Date:
Jan. 4, 2023

★★★★★

FINE ARTS

Movin' on Up: Trompe L'oeil in 'Staircase Group'

Early American artist Charles Willson Peale tricks us, and we love it

YVONNE MARCOTTE

Perhaps today, you've come to admire paintings at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. As you walk down a hallway, you see two boys walking up a stairway, and you want to follow. You take the first step up. Then you realize you'll get nowhere on this staircase.

You almost bump your nose against "Staircase Group (Portrait of Raphaelle Peale and Titian Ramsay Peale I)," painted in 1795 by Charles Willson Peale (1741–1827). Possibly the first trompe l'oeil ("trick the eye") painting by an American artist, Peale's piece has played a joke on many who want to take a closer look.

The full-length figures in the painting are portraits of two of the artist's four sons, Raphaelle and Titian, who are named after famous artists of the Renaissance. Most portraits in Western art of that time were full-length portraits of important people: members of the European aristocracy or leaders of church and state.

In the United States, the important people were the common people of the new nation, which is hinted at by the original title of the painting: "Whole Length—Portraits of Two of His Sons on a Staircase." The artist tells the viewer that important people were the sons and daughters of the settlers and colonists, not kings and queens.

Peale presents a dynamic scene. His boys are on the move, and by presenting his children in the "Staircase Group," he signaled a new direction for art in the young country. Just as the figures climb up, Peale seems to say that American artists were on the rise.

The young men turn as if their father is calling out. "Hey, turn around, boys!" The boys look at their father mid-step. Another step by Titian at the top, and he would have disappeared up the stairs as the staircase curves around to the left.

Raphaelle, the young man below, holds a brush and palette in the "Staircase Group." Although still young, Raphaelle was already a successful artist in his own right as a painter of still lifes.

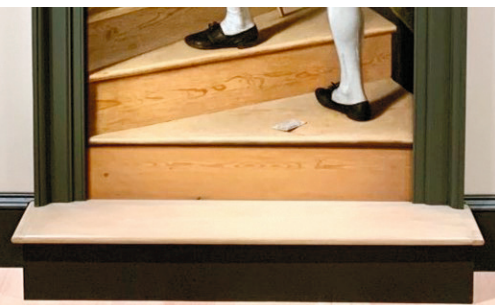
Something is on a step of the painted staircase. The artist carefully painted a piece of paper on one of the first steps: a ticket to the Columbianum, the art academy that Peale established in 1795. The "Staircase Group" was painted for a 1795 exhibition, which marked the establishment of the museum and art academy. The painting was meant to draw visitors to what became known as the Philadelphia Museum, later known as Peale's American Museum.

Illusionism

Trompe l'oeil is a technique whereby a painting seems to enter the viewer's space and



Deep shadows in the painting seem to be caused by the actual wood frame in this detail of "Staircase Group (Portrait of Raphaelle Peale and Titian Ramsay Peale I)," 1795, by Charles Willson Peale; 89 1/2 inches by 39 3/8 inches. Philadelphia Museum of Art.



An actual step is part of the trompe l'oeil effect in this detail of "Staircase Group (Portrait of Raphaelle Peale and Titian Ramsay Peale I)," 1795, by Charles Willson Peale; 89 1/2 inches by 39 3/8 inches. Philadelphia Museum of Art.

that viewer has a hard time figuring out where the space ends and the painting begins. The technique of giving the optical illusion of 3D space on a 2D surface goes back to ancient classical art, where Roman homes would have trompe l'oeil landscapes or still lifes frescoed on the walls.

The "Staircase Group" plays on our expectations of real and pictorial space. On the floor just under the frame is a real wooden step. That step seamlessly merges with the rise on the painted surface.

It's not just the actual step that contributes to the illusion, but also the frame of the painting, which is an actual door jamb in the style of an Early American doorway. In order to construct an authentic frame, conservators visited homes in the Philadelphia area to analyze door frames of colonial American houses. That frame enforces the illusion as it seems to cast a shadow across the face of Peale's younger son, Titian, as well as the deep shadows on the wallpaper in the background; however, the shadows are created with paint.

The canvas itself was constructed with tromp l'oeil in mind. In a recent conservation effort, the frame was removed to reveal that the canvas had been hand-stapled under and around (not over) its frame in order to keep the illusion of a 3D space on the flat surface.

A story comes to us that even our first president was fooled by the painting. Rembrandt Peale, another of Peale's sons, recounted the story in the article "The Person and Mien of Washington," published in the literary journal Crayon, which told of Washington's visit to Charles Peale's home:

"I observed that Washington, as he passed it, bowed politely to the painted figures, which he afterward acknowledged he thought were living persons. If this homage bestowed on the pictures was not indicative of its merit, it was, at least, another instance of habitual politeness."

Others who see the painting, like Washington, think that a space opens up in the wall of the museum with a staircase. When visitors are deceived by an illusory work, it's natural for them to see for themselves whether the painting is a real space, and they might (when no one is looking, of course) draw their fingers over the canvas in a circular fashion.

This has been a challenge for conservation efforts during the restoration process. Restorers have found that when the painting is touched again and again, circular cracks appear (called circular craquelure); this is cracking or dryness caused by extensive touching of the canvas.

Associate conservator of paintings Lucia Bay read an account of this kind of occurrence: "About 2 p.m., a husky boy stepped on the step leading to the Peale painting and brushed against the paint. Miss Anne d' Harnoncourt examined the painting and said there was no apparent damage."

Bay said that the cracks caused by touching were her "favorite kind of cracks because they show that the painting has stayed relevant to its audience somehow." She noted that without restoration, the cracks could become so obvious that they would distract from the 3D illusion. Her restorative purpose is to ensure that the moment of deception continues to occur for every generation of visitors.

Early American Educator

Peale first studied with Early American artist John Singleton Copley. Well-to-do colonial patrons soon recognized the self-taught man's talent and sent Peale to apprentice with accomplished American painter Benjamin West in London, who generously trained and supported up-and-coming artists from the American colonies.

Peale chose to focus on portraits, rather than the history genre paintings favored by West. Peale preferred to pose his clients in a casual, less formal way than was done for most portraits of the day. The figures do not fade into the background; they have clear outlines and are firmly modeled,



PUBLIC DOMAIN

The "Staircase Group" painting at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

'Staircase Group' remains an important symbol of American ascendance in the art world.



Early American artist Charles Willson Peale portrayed a nation on the rise and showed his self-confidence in this three-quarter-length self-portrait, circa 1791. National Portrait Gallery.

usually in three-quarter length, as shown in his self-portrait.

Peale returned to the colonies in 1776 and settled in Philadelphia. He made it his mission to paint portraits of the men who were shaping the destiny of the new nation: George Washington (for whom he made several portraits), Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, and Benjamin Franklin, among others. In 1782, he opened a portrait gallery of Revolutionary heroes.

Peale was a Renaissance man, as his curious nature had him exploring the wonders of the natural world. His museum included not only art but also science. He called it "a world in miniature," and it is now acknowledged as the first American museum. Peale saw the need to promote education in the arts and sciences in the colonies so that people could have the knowledge and information to make wise decisions. To make his museum open to everyone, the artist and educator set the price of admission at an affordable 25 cents.

Peale trained his children to be artists and naturalists, as he himself was trained. Raphaelle's works were displayed in the Columbianum, located in Philosophical Hall next to the Pennsylvania State House, now known as Independence Hall. The Columbianum was the first real American art school, an antecedent to the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, which Peale also helped to found 10 years later.

A Bright Future

Peale's trompe l'oeil set the stage for others. Later American artists such as William Harnett would follow in Peale's footsteps and master trompe l'oeil in still lifes, but the "Staircase Group" remains an important symbol of American ascendance in the art world. During a time in the history of a young country ready to do great things, Peale depicted this potential in the lively and energetic stances of his teenage sons.

According to the Philadelphia Museum's website: "By portraying Raphaelle confidently walking up the steps, Peale implied that art in the United States was progressing and its future was bright."

OPERA

A Witty Retelling of 'Cinderella'

ARIANE TRIEBSWETTER

Once upon a time lived a girl called Angelina. Her wicked stepfather and stepsisters treated her as a servant and called her "Cenerentola" ("Cinderella"). One day, she met a prince. He loved her and she loved him. They married and lived happily ever after.

This is the story of Cinderella or, rather, a witty retelling of the classic fairy tale. "La Cenerentola," the 1817 opera with a few comedic twists, was composed in less than three weeks by Gioachino Rossini.

Here, there is no evil stepmother, no fairy godmother, no pumpkin, no midnight curfew, and no glass slipper. Instead, there is an evil stepfather, a philosopher, and a bracelet.

A Clever Retelling of 'Cinderella'

The story follows virtuous Angelina, nicknamed "Cenerentola" by her stepfather Don Magnifico and his two daughters, Clorinda and Tisbe. Forced to be the family servant, Angelina dreams of a brighter future where her kind nature is recognized. One day, a beggar enters Don Magnifico's house and Cenerentola offers him bread and coffee. He is actually the philosopher Alidoro, Prince Ramiro's adviser.

Two other characters join the story: Prince Ramiro is disguised as a servant, and Dandini (the prince's trusted valet) is disguised as the prince. Ramiro is looking for someone to marry and wants to freely observe prospective brides. Angelina and Ramiro fall in love without her knowing his identity.

Cenerentola goes to the ball with the help of Alidoro. The prince falls in love with Angelina, but she tells him that she already loves a valet. When Angelina discovers his true identity, she gives him one of a pair of matching bracelets, declaring that if he really loves her, he will find her.

The story ends with the prince finding Cenerentola when he recognizes her bracelet. All ends well, and Cenerentola rejoices at her happiness.

But this story is much more than a clever fairy tale. It is incredibly funny.

A Witty Score

Essentially, Rossini's "La Cenerentola" is a comedy. There are all types of comedic elements in these two acts, which are guaranteed to make the audience laugh.

For one, the score is filled with comedic

The other title of 'La Cenerentola' is 'La bontà in trionfo' ('Goodness Triumphant').



Rosina Pico as Cenerentola in the original production. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington.



THE METROPOLITAN OPERA

characters. The stepfather's comedic turns stems from his cluelessness, and the stepsisters are funny through their ignorance of their ridiculous personalities.

The disguises are another comedic element, as the audience is aware of the characters' true identities. One example is the entrance of the prince in the choir ensemble piece "Come un'ape ne' giorni d'aprile." Then, in a falsely gallant aria, Dandini pretends to be infatuated with the two daughters, sending them swooning.

Another highlight is the Act 1 finale, when the prince and servant share notes on the stepsisters in a witty duet, "Zitto, zitto," which transforms into a quartet when Dandini declares that one of the sisters can marry his valet, much to their disgust. The vivacity and rapidity of this ensemble are pure delight.

Another tongue-in-cheek aspect of this opera is the play on the Italian language, accentuated by Rossini's music. For example, when Dandini, disguised as Ramiro, explains the reason for his visit, he ends every sentence with "ato." This repetition pokes fun at his pretended pomposity and the stepfamily's gullibility.

This humor is further accentuated when the stepfather declares that Dandini is very eloquent. The sextet in Act 2, "Siete voi?" is another example of this, with a delightful play on the rolled consonant "r."

Beyond the laughs, "La Cenerentola" contains a brilliant score.

Goodness Triumphant

The other title of "La Cenerentola" is "La

bontà in trionfo" ("Goodness Triumphant"). Instead of a fairy godmother who helps Cinderella, Rossini replaces magic with real-life characters and shows how virtue, kindness, forgiveness, and true love win.

Throughout Rossini's music and Jacopo Ferretti's libretto, the comedic characters typical of the opera-buffa style (comic opera) perform with dramatic realism. It is a tragedy-comedy where pathos, sentiment, and mystery combine to form one of Rossini's most sublime works.

One example of this dramatic tension is in Act 2: When the prince goes to Angelina's home, he is accompanied by thunder and an energetic ensemble. The score can also transmit joy, as the arias and ensembles are filled with puns and witticisms.

Rossini uses the bel canto opera style, in which vocal virtuosity is a must, with extensive use of coloratura (fast notes) and ornamentation. Here, singers are required to maintain a beautiful sound while singing effortlessly through fast high notes. Bel canto here transmits silliness in the case of Don Magnifico, or excitement in the case of Angelina. In her famous final aria, "Non più mesta," her coloratura runs signify the triumph of goodness over mediocrity.

"La Cenerentola" is a timeless score, filled with comedy as well as great depth and compassion. It leaves the audience with a joyful, happy ending.

Ariane Triebswetter is an international freelance journalist, with a background in modern literature and classical music.

Don Ramiro (Juan Diego Flórez) recognizes his princess, Angelina (Joyce DiDonato), in The Metropolitan Opera's 2014 production of "La Cenerentola."

PROFILES IN HISTORY

George Moses Horton: The Slave Poet

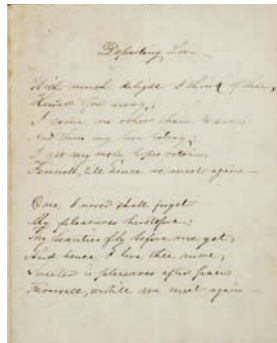
DUSTIN BASS

The work, titled 'The Hope of Liberty,' was published in 1829.

Approximately 67 years before the end of the American Civil War, George Moses Horton was born. He grew up a slave to the Horton family in North Carolina. While working on the tobacco plantation, his mind freely traversed the world of verse and rhyme. Using old hymnals, he taught himself to read, while also learning the poetic structure of stanzas.

Horton did not officially learn to write until his 30s, but his adaptation to the written word was so pronounced that he could construct his own poems and memorize them without writing them down. Eventually, those poems would be written down by others. But before they ever reached pen and paper, he found not only an audience of listeners but also buyers. When his master, James Horton, would send him to Chapel Hill for work-related business, he would venture to the University of North Carolina. Students, enthralled with his verses, would purchase lines from him for their own romantic purposes.

His name and literary gift spread throughout the school, Chapel Hill, Chatham County (where he was from), and the state of North Carolina. He hoped his fame would assist in raising money to buy his freedom. As he continued to sell his verses, Caroline Lee Whiting Hentz, a novelist and professor's wife, began transcribing his poems and getting them published. Soon, Horton had assembled enough



George Moses Horton's poem "Departed Love," digitized from the original by the Southern Historical Collection in the Wilson Special Collections Library at the University of North Carolina.

poems to publish a collection. The work, titled "The Hope of Liberty," was published in 1829 and was the first book published by an African American in the South. It was also the first work to ever be published by a slave, and specifically a slave who protested his slavery.

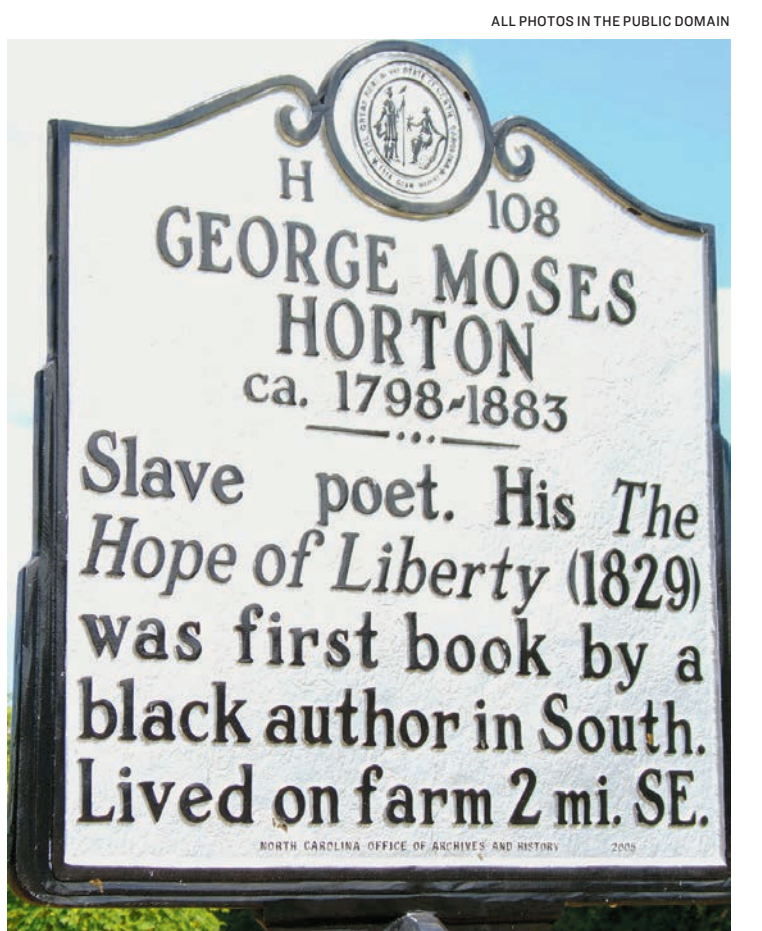
In his 10-stanza poem "On Liberty and Slavery," Horton proclaimed:

"Oh, Liberty! thou golden prize,
So often sought by blood—
We crave thy sacred sun to rise,
The gift of nature's God!"

In a way, his poem was prophetic, as approximately 30 years later, the "golden prize" was "sought"—and won—"by blood" during the Civil War.

Three years after his book was published, Horton learned to write and was earning \$3 a week. He worked out an agreement with his owner to purchase his time so that he could be free to write his poetry. He also became a handyman and worker at the university. In 1845, he published his second collection of poetry, titled "The Poetical Works." As his work progressed, so did his acclaim—so much so that prominent North Carolinians, including Governor John Owen and two of the university's presidents, supported his request for freedom.

His freedom, however, would not come until the Civil War's end. In 1865, he joined the 9th Michigan Cavalry Volunteers, which traveled throughout North Carolina. Based on those travels and experiences, he wrote his third work, "Naked Genius."



ALL PHOTOS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

A North Carolina state historical plaque honoring George Moses Horton.

For the final 17 years of his life, he resided in the city where the greatest American words "that all men are created equal" were written. Though he would die in 1883 in Philadelphia, he would be most remembered and honored in Chatham County. In 1978, June 28 was made "George Moses Horton Day." A local middle school was named after him. In 1996, he was inducted into the North Carolina Literary Hall of Fame. The following year, he was declared the Historic Poet Laureate of Chatham County.

Dustin Bass is the host of EpochTV's "About the Book," a show about new books with the authors who wrote them. He is an author and co-host of "The Sons of History podcast."

REWIND, REVIEW, AND RE-RATE

A Charming 1938 Romantic Comedy

IAN KANE

Director George Cukor's breezy yet insightful romantic comedy titled "Holiday" is about a holiday of the more leisurely kind, rather than of the seasonal variety. And although it has the same co-stars (Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn) as 1938's delightful "Bringing Up Baby" (directed by the great Howard Hawks), this film's humor is much subtler.

Grant stars as Johnny Case, an energetic fellow who has worked many a job since he was 10 years of age. While on a holiday in Lake Placid, a quaint little settlement in northern New York (and the first vacation he's ever taken in his life), he meets pretty young Julia Seton (Doris Nolan) and the two quickly fall in love.

The lovebirds agree to marry as soon as possible. However, Julia must first seek the permission of her hard-edged, overprotective, and very wealthy father, Edward Seton (Henry Kolker).

A little later in New York City, Johnny goes to meet Julia at her lodging, which happens to be the palatial Seton family estate. Since Johnny doesn't know that Julia comes from a wealthy background, he asks his cab driver, "What's this?" and then adds: "I guess she must work here," as he hops out of the car.

Instead of going directly through the front door, Johnny walks around to a side gate and knocks on the kitchen door. There, he is ushered in by one of the servants, who begins to guide him through the mansion to Julia. "Judas!" Johnny loudly exclaims as he enters the sprawling, high-ceilinged main foyer, complete with dual winding stairways, crystal chandelier, and ornate candelabras.

The servant walks Johnny to an elevator that takes him up to the second floor, where he is told that Julia is awaiting his arrival in one of the larger rooms of the estate. As Johnny leaves the elevator and peers at the top of the stairway leading down to the main foyer he was just in, he remarks "I could have walked."

When Julia finally greets Johnny, it is quite evident that the sparks of romance are still very much alive. But it also be-

comes clear that there is somewhat of a class difference between them, when Julia begins to lightly criticize his funky bowtie and haircut.

This class chasm isn't lost on Johnny, who has concerns about marrying into a wealthy family and all of the baggage that often goes along with it. When he finds out that Julia's father is a rather hard-to-please man, who would optimally want to match his daughter with someone from an upper-crust background, he becomes even more intimidated.

Johnny's anxiety is eased somewhat when he meets Linda Seton, Julia's older and wiser sister (Katharine Hepburn). In Johnny, Julia sees someone like herself: a similar free-spirited soul who isn't impressed by wealth or the wealthy. Later, while Johnny and Linda are alone in the cold and dreary mansion's sole bright spot—a cheery, toy-filled room that the Seton siblings used to play in with their now-deceased mother—Johnny reveals his hard-working, lower-middle-class background. He also tells her that he doesn't want any of the family's money and would rather make his own.

Johnny also announces to Linda that he intends to go on another holiday with his savings since he enjoyed the first one so much. Only this time, he intends to make it a lengthier one and adds that, once he finds out more about himself and what he wants out of life (he's only 30 years old) and runs out of money, he intends to return to the working life as an older and wiser man.

This simple, admirable plan thrills Linda, who identifies with his freewheeling yet introspective nature. Soon, it becomes obvious where things are going with Johnny and Linda, and their blooming romance.

I must say that, although I could see a mile away how this romantic comedy was going to play out, because of the performances by its ensemble cast, coupled with the film's peppy pace and fantastic dialogue, most of the fun is simply following along with its interesting characters.

Although comparisons can be drawn between this film and the aforementioned



(L-R) Julia Seton (Doris Nolan), Johnny Case (Cary Grant), and Linda Seton (Katharine Hepburn), in "Holiday."

Most of the fun is simply following along with its interesting characters.

'Holiday'

Director:
George Cukor

Starring:
Katharine Hepburn, Cary Grant, Doris Nolan

Not Rated

Running Time:
1 hour, 35 minutes

Release Date:
June 15, 1938

★★★★★

"Bringing Up Baby" (Hepburn also plays a wealthy woman to Grant's more middle-class man), I must say that I enjoyed this one's subtler humor.

Some standout examples of this humor can be found in Johnny's initial verbal sparring with Julia's father, as well as poking fun at some of the snobbery indicative of the hoity-toity "friends" of the Seton family. These stuffy folks mutter insults about people behind their backs, while later smiling to these same people's faces.

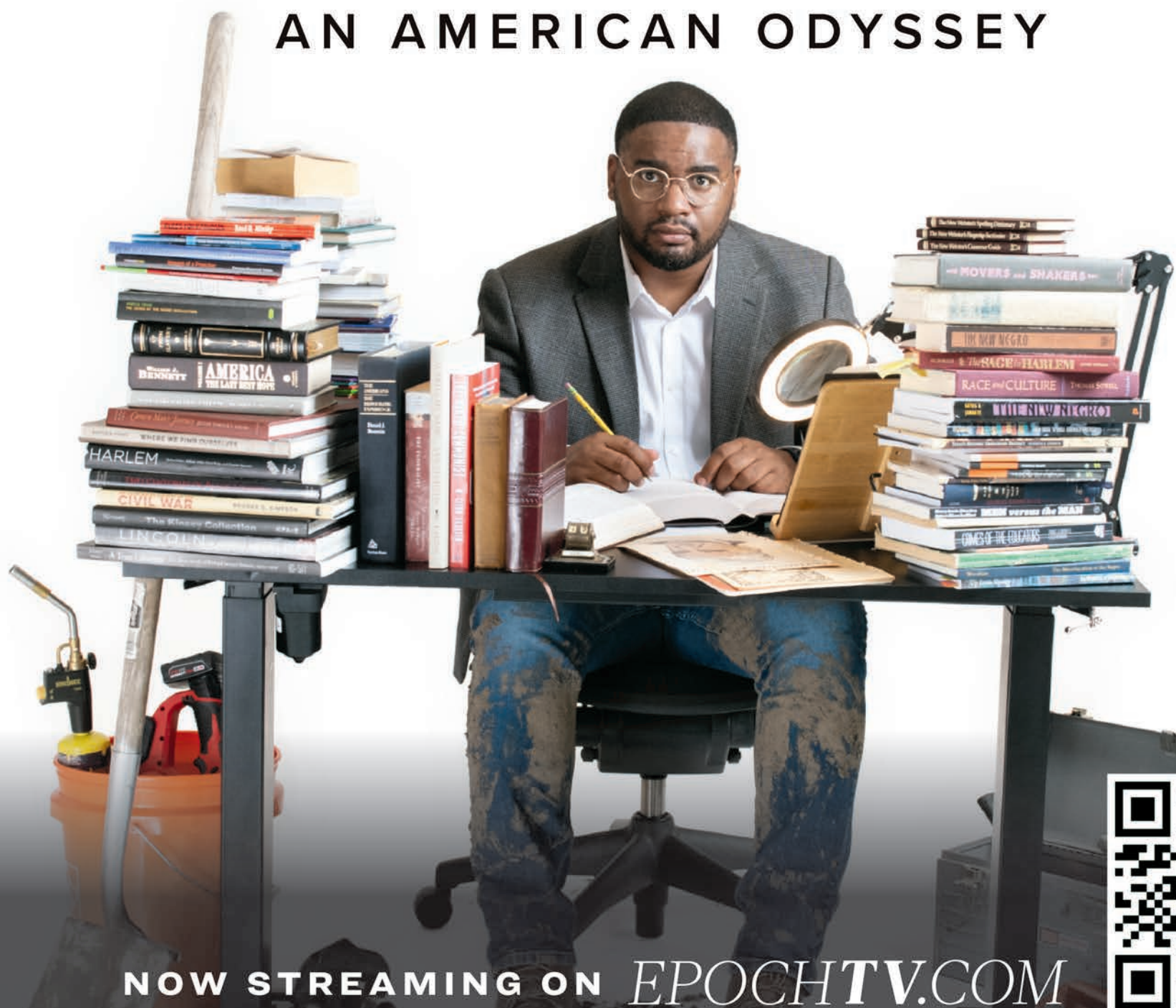
Lew Ayres is also excellent as Edward's only son, an alcoholic whose optimism has been stifled by his overbearing father.

Although the film is predictable, the masterful performances by Hepburn and Grant showcased here, coupled with the positive message about keeping one's integrity intact despite being lured by the twin temptations of money and power, make this a highly enjoyable movie that is sure to charm.

Ian Kane is an U.S. Army veteran, author, filmmaker, and actor. He is dedicated to the development and production of innovative, thought-provoking, character-driven films and books of the highest quality. You can check out his health blog at IanKaneHealthNut.com

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