

THE EPOCH TIMES

LIFE &

TRADITION



BIBA KAYEWICH

How to Encourage Wisdom in Our Children

6 ways to foster discernment

PRESIDENTIAL HOMES

A Retreat and Refuge: Eisenhower's Farm

Gettysburg was the site of more than just a famous battle

By Lynn Topel

Although Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, will always go down in U.S. history as the site of one the bloodiest battlefields during the Civil War and where President Abraham Lincoln delivered his famous address, it's also a place where another U.S. president sought refuge and retreat from the bureaucracy and political climate of the nation's capital.

Ties to Gettysburg

Before President Dwight D. Eisenhower's family moved from Denison, Texas, to Abilene, Kansas, his ancestors were actually Pennsylvania Dutch farmers who lived in the Keystone State for five generations.

Much later, Eisenhower, as a West Point cadet, first set foot on the hallowed grounds of Gettysburg and the land of his ancestors in 1915. As part of his class field trip, the young cadet was to study the various military strategies employed during the fighting in Gettysburg and to analyze what could have been done better. The exercise would plant the seeds for the great military strategist he later became.

Later, in 1918, instead of being called out to France to be on the frontlines for World War I, he got called in to Fort Meade in Maryland, where he met future general George Patton Jr., and they both advocated for the use of tanks in warfare. He was given command of Camp Colt in Gettysburg—on the same fields where Pickett's Charge took place—and was tasked with training soldiers in the use of tanks—a task he accomplished without said machinery. With ingenuity and resourcefulness, he used flatbed trucks and bolted the guns down onto them. The soldiers would also then head up to Big Round Top, the highest topographic point

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LYNN TOPEL

▲ Eisenhower's entry hall greets visitors with this eye-catching specially made wallpaper showcasing state seals, as well as the nation's seal.

By Jeff Minick

Knowledge is knowing that a tomato is a fruit; wisdom is not putting it in a fruit salad."

Attributed to British journalist and humorist Miles Kington (1941–2008), that aphorism nicely sums up the distinction between knowledge and wisdom.

Unlike knowledge, wisdom is one of the four cardinal virtues, which are acquired by practice and habit rather than from the pages of a textbook or the words of a teacher.

Most commentators agree that, unlike calculus or geography, wisdom can't be taught in a classroom. However, it can be encouraged to grow and thrive. Two of history's greatest teachers, for example, Socrates and Jesus, sought to inspire wisdom seekers among their followers—Socrates by his questions and

Jesus by his parables. Closer to our time, 19th-century American writers aimed at this same target by including a heavy dose of traditional moral teachings and stories in their textbooks.

Early training in virtues such as honesty, kindness, persistence, and courage breeds wisdom.

Given the often-reported confusion and mental distress among our children and youth today, we might do well to follow the examples of these ancestors and work to nurture in the young their capacity for discernment and wisdom.

Here are six tools to help them on their way.

Literature and History

Aesop's fables; Lucy Montgomery's "Anne of Green Gables" stories; the age-appropriate biographies of figures such as George Washington, Amelia Earhart, and Theodore Roosevelt; the novels of Jane Austen; and the plays of Shakespeare: These and thousands of other stories offer a wealth of lessons that help sharpen judgment.

Such books constitute a laboratory of human behavior, a place where young people can observe virtue and vice, good and evil, in relative safety. They may not realize it, but by reading these classics, they're absorbing important lessons about life and morality, adding to their store of wisdom.

Words of the Wise

For the past 60 years, our society has seen the breakdown of marriage and family, Continued on Page 2



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▲ In 1950, the Eisenhowers decided to settle in Gettysburg, Pa., a town with a lot of history and where they had fond memories from their early marriage years.

PRESIDENTIAL HOMES

A Retreat and Refuge: Eisenhower's Farm

Continued from Page 1

on the Gettysburg battlefields, to practice shooting machine guns. Before being called in to Fort Meade, Eisenhower had married Mamie Doud in 1916 and spent the early years of their marriage in the Maryland-Pennsylvania area. Mamie Eisenhower lived the life of a military wife, moving more than 30 times during the first 35 years of their marriage. It's said that she hadn't even begun to unpack all the boxes when they had to move again.

Life After the Military

After a hectic military life, the Eisenhowers realized that it was time to put down roots. But where? After much introspection and discussion, they realized that Camp Colt was where their best memories were made. It was a chapter in their life during which they were able to spend time together as a young family, and they still had friends living in the area, creating an instant social circle.

House-Hunting

In 1950, the Eisenhowers started looking in Gettysburg for a place to call their own and

settled on a red-brick farmhouse on 189 acres of land, including a bank barn, a herd of 24 dairy cows, and 500 chickens. They bought it for \$44,000—double the asking price—after the seller realized who he was selling the property to. However, as they started to fix up their home to meet Mrs. Eisenhower's standards, they realized that their red-brick farmhouse was really a log cabin from the early mid-1700s with bricks built up around it. A cabin from this era would have sustained plenty of damage caused by water and termites. Only a few things could be salvaged from these, and the Eisenhowers ended up building a new home, keeping the original bricks and saving what they could from the log cabin.



▲ The porch was the Eisenhower's favorite room as this was where they watched television and hosted friends. Taking advantage of the natural light, Eisenhower pursued his love for oil painting here.



▲ At one end of the living room is a marble fireplace, removed from the White House in 1873 by President Ulysses Grant, and given to the Eisenhowers as an anniversary gift by White House staff.

How to Encourage Wisdom in Our Children

Continued from Page 1

the rise of a youth culture, and rapid technological advances, especially in communication and social media. The consequence? The mentors of our young people are frequently their peers, adolescents, teens, and 20-somethings just like themselves. To counter this disastrous trend, we should encourage the young to partner up more with parents, grandparents, and mentors such as teachers, coaches, and employers. The uncle who has been around the block a few times will likely display much more good sense on how to live than a high school "friend" on social media.

The Art of the Pause
One common sign of wisdom is the ability, when confronted by a problem,

to step back and consider choices and outcomes before acting on a decision. Many adults, from some of our politicians to our next-door neighbors, lack this talent for weighing consequences. They remain stuck in adolescence, mistaking glitter for gold and jumping into situations with little regard for consequences. By example and by word, we can teach the young to take some time and reflect before they act.

Guided Failure
No parent wants to see a child fail. Some parents nag their 10th graders to put away their phones and study for the next day's biology exam. Others reinforce with sympathy a teenager's excuses for quitting a summer job after

only two days. Some even call a college professor to protest a child's grade of C on an exam. When we always try to smooth and gild the paths of our children, we leave them poorly prepared to face the more dire setbacks they'll face as adults. By protecting them from the experience of failure, we diminish their acquisition of wisdom. When our young people fall down, we can pick them up, brush them off, and offer them our sympathy and advice, but we should bear in mind that these small defeats of adolescence will give them the strength, resilience, and sagacity to overcome adult challenges.

Standards for a Good Life
Early training in virtues such as honesty, kindness, persistence, and courage breeds wisdom. By teaching these character strengths to our children and by living them out ourselves, we help on the arduous climb toward wisdom. For instance, kindness teaches an understanding of others. To bravely face up to trouble rather than run away will



▲ The back view of the Eisenhower farmhouse.



▲ Dwight D. Eisenhower and his wife, Mamie, in San Antonio, Texas, circa 1916.

of a farm may not be the optimal place to invite dignitaries and public figures, Eisenhower often saw and brought visitors over to his private residence.

His son John is quoted as saying, "When my father was president, he developed the habit of bringing world visitors to the farm. Such informality, he reasoned, would make them feel at home."

One such visitor was Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev, who visited the United States in 1959. After a frustrating meeting at Camp David, Eisenhower invited Khrushchev to his Gettysburg farm just 18 miles away. As they helicoptered in, he took Khrushchev on a tour of the farm, inspecting the cattle and enjoying the rural setting. He had hoped that the more relaxed atmosphere and the absence of diplomats and bureaucrats would ease tensions between the two countries. Although it didn't result in anything conclusive, Eisenhower did get an invite to do a similar visit in Russia, which never materialized.

In May 1960, the U-2 spy plane incident happened, in which the Soviets took credit for shooting down a reconnaissance plane carrying CIA pilot Francis Gary Powers. He took the call regarding this crisis on a red phone installed in one of the rooms of his farmhouse—probably feeling the frustration of a failed diplomatic mission.

Not all visits ended in a stalemate, however, and Eisenhower did entertain other prominent figures at his "unofficial" presidential retreat. Such luminaries included British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and French President Charles de Gaulle, who were personally taken on a private tour of the grounds by Eisenhower himself on his Crosley runabout.

someday make them wise counselors in a marriage or the workplace.

A Humble Spirit

The serenity prayer encapsulates the humility that accompanies wisdom: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." Recognizing our limitations is a mark of the wise and will allow us to enjoy the serenity mentioned in the prayer, another tool in the practice of good judgment. Tales and even jokes are told of sages living on top of mountains. The mountain represents an arduous and even dangerous climb; the sage is wisdom. When we encourage our young people to become seekers of wisdom from an early age, we're giving them a boost up that mountain.

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschool-

A Peek Inside Their Private Lives

The farm may have been Eisenhower's domain, but Mrs. Eisenhower got the last say over the interiors of the house. A house tour will allow you to step back in time to the '50s and '60s, when the "red-brick" farmhouse saw the glory of the Eisenhower years. Nearly 98 percent of the inside is original to the house; hence, drawn drapes over the windows shield the furnishings from the harsh brightness of the sun, and glassed-off rooms prevent visitors from leaning too far in.

As you enter the main hallway, you're greeted by the original wallpaper specially ordered by Mrs. Eisenhower to show 48 state seals, the seal of the territory of Hawaii, and the U.S. seal.

Moving toward the living room, visitors may see gifts bequeathed to the Eisenhowers, which include a beautiful mother-of-pearl inlaid black lacquer table, a matching room divider from the South Korean first lady to Mrs. Eisenhower, and a silk rug from the shah of Iran.

Four-poster beds, pink bathroom tiles, linoleum kitchen floors, and rotary phones alongside trinkets, fine china, and Eisenhower's own paintings make this cozy farmhouse an ideal retreat for the tight-knit Eisenhower clan.

Visiting Eisenhower's Farm

The only home that the Eisenhowers ever purchased is now under the National Park Service. Visitors can drive directly to its on-site parking, recently completed in April, and take advantage of the hourly house

tours being offered by the park rangers. On the property, you may also visit the Secret Service Office adjacent to the barn, as well as the garage, which houses Eisenhower's presidential limousine, golf carts, and station wagon.

With its close proximity to the battlefields in Gettysburg, the Eisenhower National Historic Site may be easily overshadowed because of the associated history that draws visitors every year. But it's this same battlefield that brought a young Eisenhower to the rolling fields of Pennsylvania; it was where he commanded thousands of men during his stint at Camp Colt; and years later, it's the place that he would call home. For more information, visit the National Park Service website for hours of operation and special events information.

Lynn Topel is a freelance writer and editor based in Maryland. When not busy homeschooling her sons, she enjoys reading, traveling, and trying out new places to eat.

ing students in Asheville, N.C. He's the author of two novels, "Amanda Bell" and "Dust On Their Wings," and two works of nonfiction, "Learning As I Go" and "Movies Make The Man." Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va.



▲ Early training in hard work and persistence will help children acquire strength and resilience.

REFLECTIONS

The Myth of Modern Love

Tackling modern notions of love

By James Sale

Recently, I went to my local health club for a swim and a sauna, both of which I particularly enjoy and regularly do; as a grandfather with four granddaughters, I like to keep active so that I can keep up with them when I meet them. But this visit was slightly unusual.

As I approached the mixed sauna and went through the door, I found one solitary young woman, probably in her mid-20s, inside, wearing a minimalist bikini; she was standing upright and reading a book. This was curious: standing in a sauna? One normally sits or lies down; and then reading a book? In a sauna? Most unusual, in my experience. So I just had to start a conversation. I said, "I'm impressed."

And she replied, without looking up, "By what?" I responded: "At last, we have an intellectual in the sauna. It's usually full of idiots like me who have trouble reading, especially in saunas."

She quietly laughed but didn't look up. I wondered whether she actually was an intellectual and what she was reading.

So I said, "What's so interesting?" She said: "Alain de Botton's 'Essays in Love.' Do you know them?"

I said: "No, but I was obviously right about you: He is a famous philosopher and his articles often crop up in Sunday newspapers in the UK. So you are an intellectual." Again, without looking up, she softly laughed, then said, "They're really interesting."

I responded: "I expect they are. The thing is—there must be at least 100,000 books on the topic of love, which proves at least one thing."

She asked, "What's that?"

I said, "Nobody really knows what it is, for if they did, we'd have one definitive book!" She said: "Well, this one's really good. Really interesting. You know, love's not the sort of romantic stuff that people imagine it is. This book really sets you straight."

Oh, dear, I thought. Another humanist philosopher undermining transcendence: They start denying God, and then, not long after that, they debunk every other great ideal, too: "You thought love was something romantic? Sucker—now I'll tell you what it's really like." For me, this is the equivalent of grown-ups desperately wanting to tell their children that Santa Claus doesn't exist.

I realized immediately that this young woman was going to have her ideals destroyed by reading this pernicious, secular book. (And no, I haven't read it, but she had said enough). So I had to do something about it; this was an emergency. She had everything, or was about to get everything, completely wrong.

So, I said, "I totally agree with you," and as I said it, I could see her body language relax, relieved that there was a kindred spirit, although still, she hadn't taken her eyes off the page.

"Yes," I said, "romantic love, that Hollywood kind, that sort you see on films, really is the pits. That's not like life at all."

"No," she said and continued reading and continued standing. Surreal. I waited a few moments; I was getting comfortable now, and the sauna was baking.

Then I said, "But, of course, there is a point from which you can go from false love and all the Hollywood images to the other side."

"The other side?" she queried, seeming to hesitate, and I thought for a moment that she might look up and see me.

I said: "Yes. The other side, where you persevere, you dedicate yourself to another, you focus, and you get creative, flexible, and open; and forgiveness becomes an automatic state of mind; and you're on a journey, a big journey—together. That side. That's when it gets romantically all over again."

At last, she stopped. Suddenly, she turned and looked at me.

"That's deep," she said. I said: "I know. Love's deep."

James Sale has had more than 50 books published, most recently, "Mapping Motivation for Top Performing Teams" (Routledge, 2021). He has been nominated for the 2022 poetry Pushcart Prize, won first prize in The Society of Classical Poets 2017 annual competition, performing in New York in 2019. His most recent poetry collection is "StairWell." For more information about the author and about his Dante project, visit EnglishCantos.home.blog



▲ “A Wild Scene,” between 1831 and 1832, by Thomas Cole. Oil on canvas; 51 inches by 76.5 inches. Baltimore Museum of Art.

FINE ART

Thomas Cole Unbound

America’s revered landscape painter

By Bob Kirchman

Born in England’s industrial northeast in 1801, artist Thomas Cole immigrated to America as a young man. Here, he found a country brimming with uncharted and untamed wilderness. His masterful handling of light, composition, and aerial perspective captured the sublime character of the American wilderness. Cole found his unique place as one of the first artists to apply the style of European Romanticism to American landscapes and gave birth to what we know today as the Hudson River School.

His Early Years

Cole had a keen eye and taught himself to paint by observing the works of other artists. In 1822, he began to work as a portraitist. One of his patrons, George Bruen, financed a summer trip for him to visit New York’s Hudson Valley in 1825. There, he painted five landscapes from scenes of the Catskill Mountains, Kaaterskill Falls, and Cold Spring (New York’s Hudson Highlands). The landscapes “Lake With Dead Trees (Catskill),” “Kaaterskill Upper Fall, Catskill Mountains,” and “View of Fort Putnam” were displayed in the window of William Coleman’s bookstore in New

York. This exhibition became a turning point in the young artist’s career. The paintings caught the attention of Col. John Trumbull, an artist and president of the American Academy of Fine Arts, who purchased the painting of Kaaterskill Falls. Artists William Dunlap and Asher B. Durand were also impressed with Cole’s artistry and purchased the other two artworks on display. This acknowledgment earned Cole a fellowship in the American Academy when he was still in his 20s.

Fathers of Conservation

While traveling abroad from 1829 to 1831, Cole met a number of wealthy Americans in Europe who later became his valued patrons. His famous series “The Course of Empire,” chronicling the rise and fall of the ancient world, was commissioned by patron and art connoisseur Luman Reed. While painting this series (1834–36), Cole wrestled with a great dilemma: The industrial development that was advancing civilization also had the power to destroy the very wilderness that he loved. This drove Cole to become an outspoken conservationist.

Author James Fenimore Cooper, poet William Cullen Bryant, and Cole are sometimes considered the fathers of the conservation movement. With the wilderness being a “fitting place to speak to God,” as Bryant wrote, they believed that nature was the manifestation of sublime providence. In their work, they described the American wilderness, once seen as limitless but now in need of conservation.

Influenced by the essays from American transcendentalist philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson, the Hudson River School became the initial catalyst for the creation of the national park systems. Their paintings of American canonical landscapes showcased the unique relationship between the country’s people and their land, encouraging the quest for a national identity.

‘The Voyage of Life’

The year 1836 was a momentous time in Cole’s life. His father, as well as his beloved patron Reed, passed away. Later that year, Cole married Maria Bartow, and the newly wedded cou-

ple made their home in the Catskills, where they entertained a number of prominent artists and literary figures. Their first child, Theodore Alexander Cole, was born on New Year’s Day in 1838. Cole’s recent experiences with the death of his father and the birth of his first son informed his next allegorical series, “The Voyage of Life.” The series represented the four stages of human life (childhood, youth, manhood, and old age) and was commissioned by Samuel Ward, a wealthy philanthropist, who passed away before the paintings were completed.

While traveling in Europe again in

1841, Cole painted a second series of “The Voyage of Life” and shipped the canvasses to New York. He returned to America in the summer of 1842 on Isambard Kingdom Brunel’s first ocean-going steamship: SS Great Western. The world was changing and new modes of transportation were

shortening distances while urbanizing land. Cole was all too aware of the fragility of the natural wonders of American landscapes. His work and the work of his pupils, Frederic Church and Benjamin McConkey, brought renewed awareness of American wilderness—becoming part of the call for its conservation.

Bob Kirchman is an architectural illustrator who lives in Augusta County, Va., with his wife Pam. He teaches studio art to students in the Augusta Christian Educators Home-school Co-op.



▲ “The Voyage of Life: Youth,” 1842, by Thomas Cole. Oil on canvas; 52.8 inches by 76.8 inches. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.

BOOK REVIEW

‘Lady Tan’s Circle of Women’ by Lisa See

An engrossing tale of a female doctor during the Ming dynasty

By Anita L. Sherman

Author Lisa See has a list of published titles to her credit, most recently “The Island of Sea Women” and “The Tea Girl of Hummingbird Lane.” Her historical novels are rich in poignant plots and captivating characters brought to life with a narrative style that often reads like poetry.

Whether already a fan or discovering this writer for the first time, “Lady Tan’s Circle of Women” delivers in a myriad of ways.

This enthralling story begins in 1469, the fifth year of the Chenghua emperor’s reign. The protagonist is inspired by the real-life Tan Yunxian, who was a physician in the Ming dynasty. A woman doctor practicing in 15th-century China was a rarity.

‘Lady Tan’s Circle of Women’

In 1511, the historical Tan Yunxian published a book of her medical cases, “Miscellaneous Records of a Female Doctor.” It was this source and many more which the author relied on to craft her story in a very authentic fashion: how the gardens were landscaped, the type of food they ate, the behavior in court, foot-binding, and so on. A central theme throughout is how physicians treated their patients. While male doctors dominated, there were a few women doctors but many midwives who were better suited to handle the challenges of childbirth.

The story begins with a young Tan Yunxian, who grows up in an elite household. She is not allowed to leave the confines of the family compound. Daily visits with her mother, who instructs her on the rules of being an attractive and alluring wife, knowing her place, and following established decorum are soaked in eagerly by the daughter. Then, at the age of 28, her mother dies leaving her to cope with

The narrative is lush in language, insight, and renewal.

an absent father and his concubine Miss Zhao, who is the biological mother of her young brother Yifeng.

What saves the three is that they are sent to be under the care of her father’s parents, her grandparents. They will reside in the Mansion of Golden Light. Yunxian will not leave this compound until her wedding day.

Suffering from the loss of her mother and separation of her father (who is away studying for exams to raise his administrative and scholarly stature in society), Yunxian feels abandoned and alone. But she quickly comes under the wings of her Grandmother Ru, who is one of a handful of female doctors in China. Soon, she is learning about medicinal herbs and the pillars of Chinese medicine. She absorbs this knowledge quickly.

Another gift Grandmother Ru gives to Yunxian is introducing her to Meiling, the daughter of a prominent midwife. They form a fast friendship that will last well into their adult years.

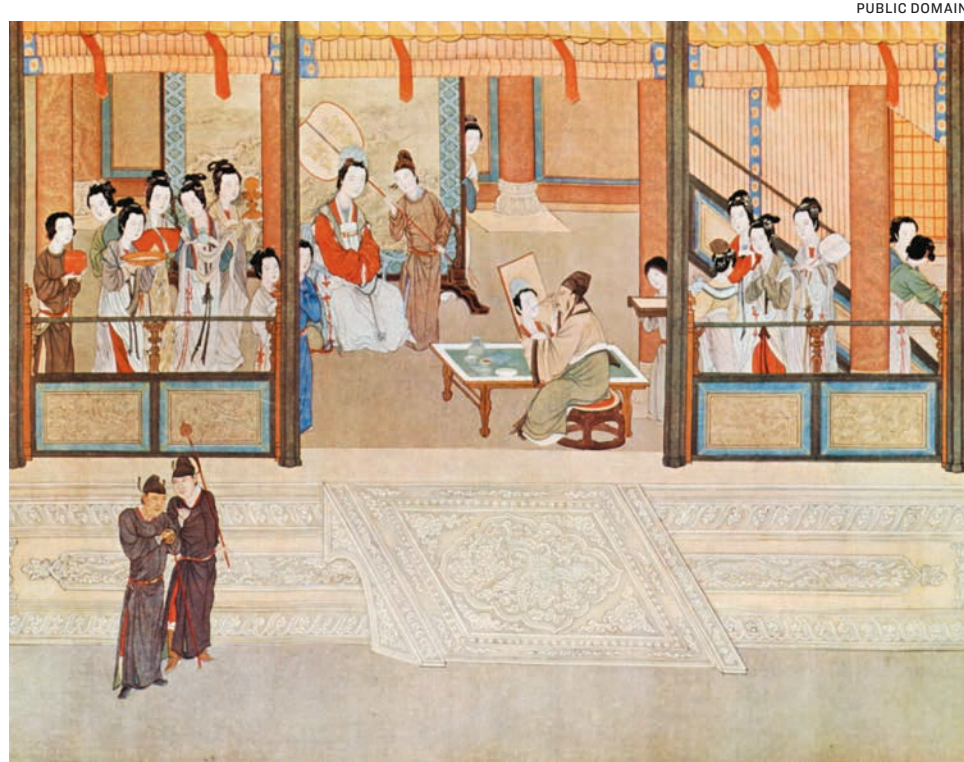
This friendship does not come without its challenges. The two girls are from different worlds—one born into a higher class than the other. Yunxian bears the privilege and burden of bound feet; she is well educated. When they first meet, Meiling is not able to read or write, but binding her feet was not something she would do.

Differences aside, their friendship and devotion to one another spans decades and takes readers along sharing in their joys and sorrows. “No mud, no lotus” is a theme that runs throughout their relationship: Without suffering through the mud of adversity you can’t have the beauty and happiness of the lotus.

The Road to Wellness

Yunxian is set to become a doctor. She wants to help people, particularly focusing on women’s illnesses. Likewise, Meiling wants to follow in her mother’s footsteps, being on hand to help and welcome new life.

For Yunxian, the road to nurturing a career is cut short when she is sent to spend her days as a new wife in another



▲ Upper class women of the Ming dynasty were expected to learn all the arts of a good wife. “Spring Morning in a Han Palace” by Qiu Ying.

family compound, the Garden of Fragrant Delights. Now her duties are reciting poetry, embroidering bound-foot slippers, playing a stringed instrument, and above all, giving birth to sons.

She has a meddling mother-in-law who does not approve of her treating any girls or women in the household, forbidding her to practice medicine; seeing Meiling is not an option, either. But the story certainly doesn’t end there for either of these young and enterprising women. Their paths intersect as they move forward, sometimes painfully and sometimes joyfully, but always with each other in purpose and heart.

The chapters move swiftly. The narrative is lush in language, insight, and renewal. Historical details add dimension and color to each scene. Readers will find themselves immersed in a time and place in history brought to life in a mesmerizing way.

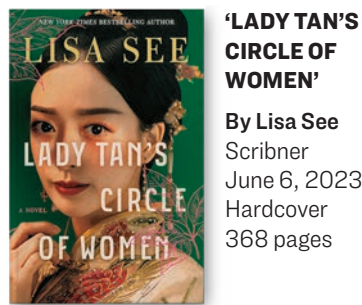
This is a powerful story of friendship: of women helping other women succeed. It’s written in dramatic fashion.

While the women are the dominant figures in this read, the males play pivotal and supporting roles. They are their own force and energy.

It’s the interplay between all that creates this triumphal and remarkable tale made even more compelling as it is based on an actual figure who lived centuries ago in the Ming dynasty.

Prepare to be enlightened, entertained, and engrossed in this thoughtful and poignant narrative.

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



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FILM REVIEW

An American in Soviet Armenia

The naïve suffer the full force of communism

By Joe Bendel

Armenia was the first nation to adopt Christianity as the official state religion, but the 20th century wasn’t kind to Armenian Christians. They endured genocidal horrors at the hands of the Islamic Ottoman Empire during World War I and couldn’t freely worship while their country was subjugated by the USSR.

Thanks to his mother’s efforts, young Charlie Bakhchinyan (Michael A. Goorjian) survived the Armenian genocide, but as a naïve adult, he willingly returns to Armenia, believing the propaganda of Stalin’s repatriation campaign (in real life, 313 Armenian Americans like him were lured back to their homeland). Instead of building a new Armenia, Bakhchinyan will spend years behind prison bars in director-screenwriter-lead actor Michael A. Goorjian’s “Amerikatsi.”

Bakhchinyan hopes for a fresh start in post-war Armenia, but he’s ill-equipped

to navigate Soviet politics. He also has an unfortunate habit of genuflecting when his emotions are heightened. It’s an involuntary response that will get him into a whole lot of trouble, when he ill-fatedly attracts the attention of a senior Soviet official.

Bakhchinyan saves Dmitry Petrov’s (Mikhail Trukhin) young son from getting trampled during a bread riot, but in the USSR, no good deed goes unpunished. In this case, the Russian officer is clearly annoyed by the interest that his Armenian wife Sona (Nelli Uvarova) takes in Bakhchinyan. Instead of pulling a few strings to secure him a good job, Petrov has him arrested for the crimes of “cosmopolitanism” (wearing a necktie) and physical displays of religious faith. Petrov only intended to scare Bakhchinyan, but due to some typically Soviet bureaucratic communication breakdowns, they keep him imprisoned for years.

‘I’m an American’

Bakhchinyan quickly realizes that “you can’t do this to me; I’m an American” is not

the best thing to say during his initial interrogation. Eventually, the interviews stop, but the brutal beatings remain a weekly tradition, week after week, year after year. Since his American values could also contaminate the rest of the Armenian prisoners, Bakhchinyan is held in solitary confinement the entire time. The only signs of life he can see from his makeshift cell are those he spies in Tigran’s apartment, just beyond the prison wall.

Tigran (Hovik Keuchkerian) is a former dissident artist, who now works as a prison guard, thanks to the intervention of his sister, Sona Petrov. He’s also probably too sensitive for the Soviet prison system. Watching Tigran’s celebrations with his wife, Ruzan (Narine Grigoryan), and their families provides the imaginative Bakhchinyan brief escapes from the boredom and torture of his imprisonment. However, he can see that sacrificing his art has left Tigran depressed and irritable, to the point that it might jeopardize his marriage.

There are times when “Amerikatsi” flirts with the sentimentalism of “Life Is Beautiful.” The idea that the mind can make a heaven out of prison and vice versa definitely constitutes Mr. Goorjian’s primary theme. However, “Amerikatsi” is a bit tougher than the divisive Roberto Benigni film. Although Bakhchinyan’s beatings mostly (but not always) take place behind closed doors, the brutal aftermath is often plain to see.

Wordless Friendship

The way the wordless friendship develops between Bakhchinyan and Tigran, despite the physical distance between them and the risks it entails, is also quite deftly handled. Frankly, both Mr. Keuchkerian and Mr. Goorjian give tremendous performances, especially considering they each have hardly any audible dialogue.

Due to his slapstick-ish clumsiness and his awkward guilelessness, the guards nickname Bakhchinyan “Charlie Chaplin,” rather ironically, given that the silent

film star was often praised by Stalin and the USSR throughout the 1930s and 1940s. Regrettably, Mr. Goorjian (who might be familiar to many viewers but hard for them to place from his many TV guest appearances, including shows such as “The Lincoln Lawyer,” “House,” “Monk,” and “Alias”) sometimes plays up those “sad clown” Chaplinesque affectations a little too much.

It’s important to note that “Amerikatsi” was produced in Armenia with an almost entirely Armenian cast and crew. Throughout the film, Bakhchinyan maintains his respect for his fellow Armenians. It’s the Soviet outsider, Dmitry Petrov, who’s openly contemptuous of the Armenian national culture and customs. It’s clear that Armenia would be a healthy place for Bakhchinyan if it weren’t for the communists.

Mr. Goorjian works overtime trying to find ways to make his tragic tale feel uplifting. That he succeeds to the extent that he does is an achievement, almost like an Armenian “Shawshank Redemption,” but not quite. Despite some occasional tonal issues, there’s a lot of merit and a good deal of honesty to “Amerikatsi.”

Joe Bendel writes about independent film and lives in New York. To read his most recent articles, visit JBSpins.blogspot.com

‘Amerikatsi’

Director
Michael A. Goorjian

Starring
Michael A. Goorjian,
Mikhail Trukhin, Nelli Uvarova,
Hovik Keuchkerian

Running Time
1 hour, 55 minutes

MPAA Rating
Not Rated

Release Date
Sept. 8, 2023

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

▲ Friends Thomas Cole and William Cullen Bryant reminisce in the sweeping landscape of the Hudson River Valley. “Kindred Spirits,” 1849, by Asher Brown Durand. Oil on canvas; 46 inches by 36.2 inches. Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Arkansas.

EDUCATION

Resources for Studying the Classics

Courses and conversations about the Great Books of Western civilization

By Walker Larson

“Until lately the West has regarded it as self-evident that the road to education lay through great books. No man was educated unless he was acquainted with the masterpieces of his tradition. There never was much doubt in anybody’s mind about which the masterpieces were. They were the books that had endured and that the common voice of mankind called the finest creations, in writing, of the Western mind ... these books shed a light on all our basic problems, and ... it is folly to do without any light we can get.”—Robert M. Hutchins

Studying the classics, if done properly, helps us flourish as human beings—it makes us, in a sense, more human as we encounter “the best that has been thought and said,” in Mathew Arnold’s phrase, about the things that matter most: life, death, love, war, justice, beauty, sin, and the like. We learn about the heights to which humanity can rise and the depths to which it can fall. And we enter into the “Great Conversation” about these most fundamental and vital realities, which has been going on for centuries—until just the last few generations, arguably, when we stopped reading the great minds of history, stopped listening to that conversation, and stopped contributing to it.

How can we recover something of this traditional mode of education?

Ideally, one should always study under a wise and knowledgeable teacher. The trouble is, such teachers are scarce in our day—a problem I frequently wrestle with myself. Most of the universities (including the one that I attended) are infected with postmodernism and neo-Marxism and disdain the classics, which means that they’re useless for, or even detrimental to, the studying of great books. They may instill a deep misunderstanding, skepticism, downright hatred, or a toxic combination of all three with regard to the classics. To be sure, there are still good universities out there, but they require a good deal of digging to find—and usually come with a substantial price tag.

The suggestions below, then, offer some alternative ways to study the great books of our civilization besides attending one of the few sane universities remaining in our country. For many people (including myself), going to such a college isn’t feasible. But that doesn’t mean that your education must end. I hope the ideas below will offer you new avenues of learning to explore. I outline these opportunities not as an expert—I’m not one—but as a fellow traveler in the pursuit of a true classical liberal arts education. I should be clear that I haven’t completed all of these programs myself, but they’re some of the most compelling among all those that I’ve researched.

Memoria College

Memoria Press has established itself as a significant name in the classical education world. The press offers curriculum and training in the classical model for schools and homeschools, along with online courses at Memoria Press Online Academy.

Memoria College is a sister institution of Memoria Press. It offers a great books education but is geared toward adult learners. Both a Master of Arts (30 credits) and a certificate (9 credits) in “The Great Books,” at relatively affordable prices, at least compared to most graduate degrees, are offered through the college. The degrees are available 100 percent online. Courses include offerings such as The Education of a Free Man: Introduction to the Liberal Arts, The Plays of Shakespeare, and The Development of Political Theory. According to the college’s Master of Arts degree description, “Graduates of the Master of Arts program will be able to think, discuss, speak, and write on the ideas and texts found in the Western cultural tradition of great books in a meaningful way that prepares them for whatever walk of life they choose.”

Per the Memoria College FAQ page, the college isn’t accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. Some people might see that as a mark in the college’s favor, not against it.

The college faculty includes some well-known figures in the classical liberal arts

education movement, including Martin Cothran, Joseph Pearce, and Jay Wile. Incidentally, Pearce also edits a series of critical editions of great literature. This is very valuable because it’s difficult to find literary criticism that isn’t highly politicized and progressive, whereas these editions focus on traditional readings of the great texts.

Albertus Magnus Institute

The Albertus Magnus Institute offers a full-scale online school grounded in the great books. It appears to model itself after traditional academies such as Plato’s in which students are united in a friendship as “Fellows,” under the direction of great teachers, “Senior Fellows.” The Magnus Fellowship page proclaims the fellowship as “the college to end colleges.” It criticizes mainstream universities for their expense and their focus on the goals of money or power rather than education, which, if truly humanizing, is an invaluable good in itself. The fellowship, by contrast, is unaccredited, free, and an end in itself. Once admitted, you become a fellow (with a certificate and all). Then, once you complete the impressive and rigorous three-year curriculum, “rivaling or surpassing the rigor and merit of a typical four-year undergraduate degree,” you become a “Lifetime Fellow.”

Here’s a sampling of the courses in the core curriculum and list of electives: Literary Tradition I: Homer & Virgil, Geometry & Astronomy I, Rhetoric Tutorial, Music Tutorial, Philosophy of Man, Metaphysics I & II, Plato’s “Republic,” and

Newman’s Idea of a University. (The latter two courses ran this past summer, and I was able to observe a few snippets. They didn’t disappoint.)

Among the faculty (“Senior Fellows”) of the fellowship, you’ll find such noteworthy figures as Anthony Esolen, Jared Staudt, and, once again, Joseph Pearce. The institute also publishes books and produces a podcast, the latter of which I have found to be of high quality.

The Great Courses

While not a school, and certainly not specifically a great books program, The Teaching Company produces hundreds of stand-alone classes, called The Great Courses, on a wide range of topics, from cellphone photography to experiencing Shakespeare. I have been impressed by the sampling of lectures on literature and history from their catalog, but of course, they have a vast array of teachers and topics from many different philosophical and religious perspectives, many of which I would disagree with. Still, by choosing courses carefully, one could learn much through this avenue.

The company recruits experts to teach its courses, often top-rated college professors. Thus, the quality of the material is probably comparable to many college-level courses.

Addendum: The Texts

The quotation at the beginning of this article was drawn from the introductory volume to the “Great Books of the Western World.” I own this book set, published by Encyclopedia Britannica in the United

States in 1952. If you choose to buy a set of the most important works of the West, this would be the one to buy—both because of the volumes selected and the beauty and quality of the editions. The project was headed up by Mortimer Adler, one of the original advocates of the study of the “Great Books,” who developed one of the first of such courses at the University of Chicago. That might, in part, explain the high quality of this set.

One of its most valuable features is a two-volume index of topics to the entire set that will help you identify the exact volume and page number where any author touches on a given subject (say, “angels” or “war” or “rationality”). It’s a sort of old-fashioned Google search function for the set that allows you to trace the threads of discussion between great minds throughout the centuries in the “Great Conversation.”

As hinted at earlier, self-study is always a dangerous prospect. Some of the volumes contained in the “Great Books of the Western World” contain serious errors (Marx, for example), which Adler was, of course, aware of, but included nonetheless because of the impact of these works and so that people could study the errors and avoid them. But we should tread very carefully. Again, I believe it’s critical to find a trustworthy teacher if possible.

Walker Larson teaches literature at a private academy in Wisconsin, where he resides with his wife and daughter. He holds a Master’s in English literature and language, and his writing has appeared in The Hemingway Review, Intellectual Takeout, and his Substack, “TheHazelnut.”

When studying the classics, finding a good teacher is ideal. ▼



Week 37, 2023

FOR KIDS ONLY

THE EPOCH TIMES

The Hayloft

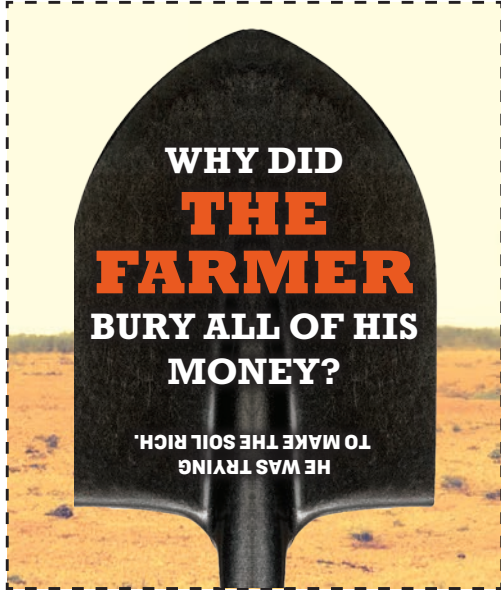
By Robert Louis Stevenson

Through all the pleasant meadow-side
The grass grew shoulder-high,
Till the shining scythes went far and wide
And cut it down to dry.

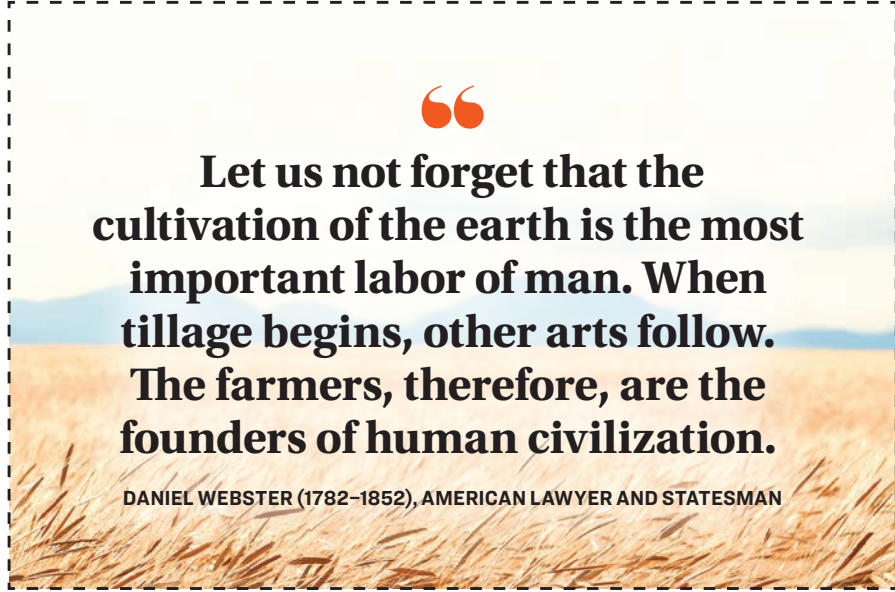
Those green and sweetly smelling crops
They led in waggons home;
And they piled them here in mountain tops
For mountaineers to roam.

Here is Mount Clear, Mount Rusty-Nail,
Mount Eagle and Mount High;—
The mice that in these mountains dwell,
No happier are than I!

Oh, what a joy to clamber there,
Oh, what a place for play,
With the sweet, the dim, the dusty air,
The happy hills of hay!



PRIMASTOCKPHOTO/SHUTTERSTOCK



DANIEL WEBSTER (1782–1852), AMERICAN LAWYER AND STATESMAN

OLGA GAVRILOVA/SHUTTERSTOCK

By Aidan Danza

THE ROTTWEILER



The Rottweiler is commonly regarded as a dangerous, frightening dog.

It’s muscular, it’s got big teeth, and it means business. But why has this connotation been developed over the past hundreds of years? More importantly, are these perceptions true?

The Rottweiler’s origins, first of all, is obscured by history. There is a notion that they descended from the mastiffs of Roman legionaries, though it isn’t known whether this is true. Some say they are descended from the Romans’ cattle-driving dogs. Whatever the case, they are certainly a very old breed.

During the Middle Ages, they were used in Rottweil, Germany, (hence the name) to carry money for butchers and cattlemen during a cattle auction. Because livestock is very expensive, the men needed to guard their

money in case someone tried to steal it, and the large, muscular Rottweiler was intimidating and protective.

They were also used for pulling carts, as guards for houses, and for herding cattle. If the job required muscle or protection,

the Rottweiler was the dog to do it. It was first recognized as a standard breed by the American Kennel Club in 1931.

Rottweilers are designed for protection. Something inside the Rottweiler is driven to protect. This can be a double-edged sword. A neglected Rottweiler can be aggressive toward other dogs and people and destructive of property, and they can actually be quite dangerous, given their size and muscle. On the other hand, if the Rottweiler is properly trained, it can have a very calm, loyal, and

intelligent temperament.

A trained Rottweiler is protective during a crisis, but not aggressive at any other time. Generally, Rottweilers are quite confident and calm, and a little aloof with strangers. They are rightly considered to be one of the best guard dog breeds that exist, but a trained Rottweiler isn’t dangerous.



ALL PHOTOS BY SHUTTERSTOCK



BIBIA KAYEWICH

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



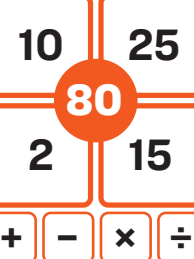
Solution For Easy 1
 $2 \times (8 - 7 \times 2)$
 $2 \times (9 \times 8 \div 2)$

Medium puzzle 1

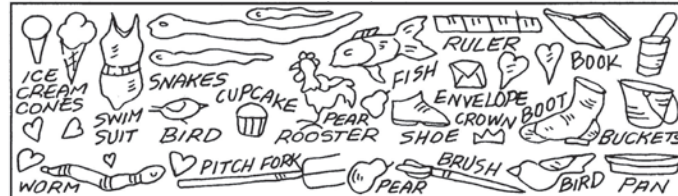
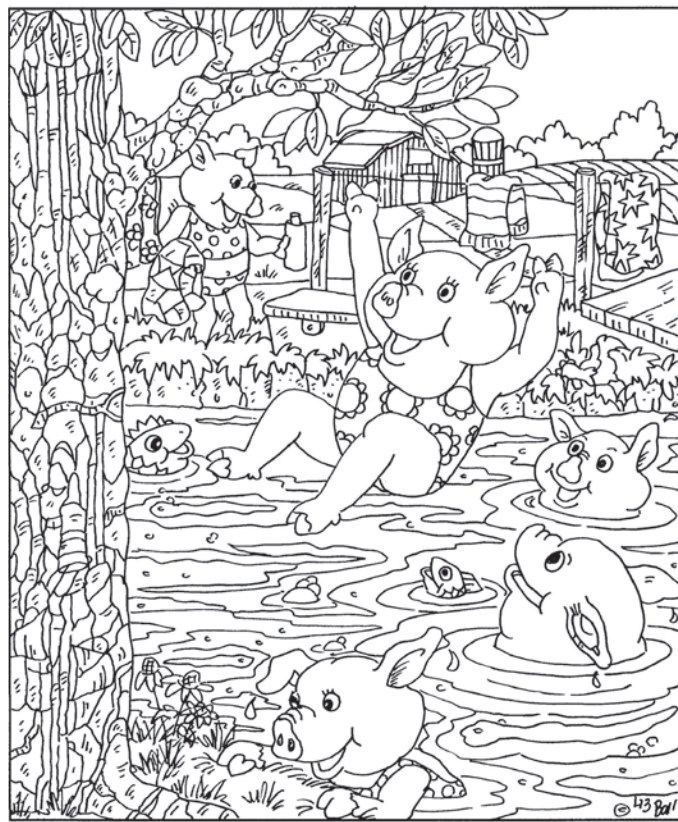


Solution for Medium 1
 $81 \div 01 \times (2 - 91)$

Hard puzzle 1



Solution for Hard 1
 $01 \times (2 - 91 - 92)$
 $(2 - 01) \times (91 - 92)$



HIDDEN TREASURES by Liz Ball
www.HiddenPicturePuzzles.com

WORD SEARCH: What Kind of Animals Live on a Farm?



Bee
Bulls
Calf
Camels
Cat
Chicken
Cows
Dog
Dove
Duck
Ewe
Fish
Geese
Goat

Rabbit
Reindeer
Sheep
Shrimp
Turkey



▲ The Royal Palace of Oslo stands tall at the head of the palace’s square. The neoclassical three-story building presents a simple U shape, with two wings, a flat roof, and a façade with stuccoed bricks. A row of six pillars decorates the temple front in a clear reference to classical revival.

LARGER THAN LIFE: Architecture Through the Ages

The Neoclassical Beauty of Norway’s Royal Palace

By Ariane Triebswetter

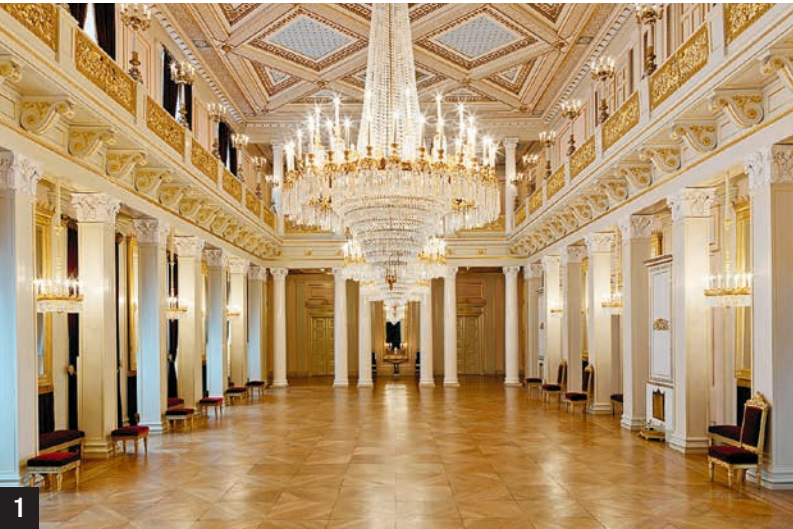
Located in the center of Norway’s capital, the Royal Palace of Oslo is a symbol of Norwegian history that embodies neoclassical architectural beauty. In 1824, King Carl III Johan of Norway commissioned architect Hans Linstow to build a palace in the neo-classical style. Originally, the Danish architect designed a two-story building with projecting wings on both sides

of the main façade. This design was too expensive, and Linstow removed the projecting wings and added a third story instead. The palace was completed in 1849. Carl Johan never lived there. His son, King Oscar I, was the palace’s first resident and made several modifications, including extending the wings facing the front garden and replacing the original steep roof with an elegant flat roof. The palace’s interior reflects the suc-

cessive styles that were fashionable during this 25-year construction period. The most prominent style is neoclassicism, a revival of classical architecture characterized by simple geometric forms, Greek or Roman details, blank walls, prominent use of columns, and a majestic scale. This style is reflected in the Pompeian frescoes in the banqueting hall, the pastel walls in the majestic great hall, and the vestibule, which is a prime example of Norwegian classicist

architecture. The Royal Palace Park is filled with greenery, small ponds, and sculptures. The Queen’s Park features a beautiful Rococo garden. The Royal Palace of Oslo remains the main residence of the Norwegian Royal family. Ariane Triebswetter is an international freelance journalist, with a background in modern literature and classical music.

JAN HAUG/THE ROYAL COURT

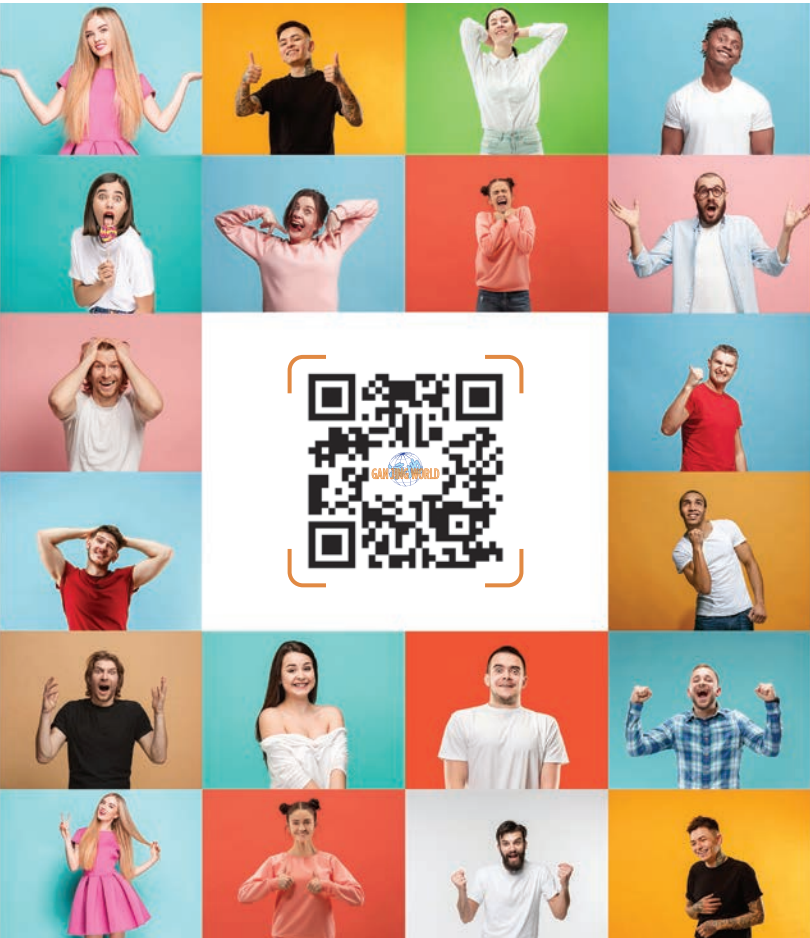


THE ROYAL COURT

SIMEN SUND/THE ROYAL COURT



1. The great hall, also known as the ballroom, is the palace’s most beautiful room. Architect Hans Linstow spared no expense designing this large room, inspired by the concert hall in Berlin. The two-story ballroom, with a ceiling height of about 35 feet, features a roughly 3,875-square-foot parquet floor. The coffered diamond-patterned, sky-blue ceiling, made of wood and gilded papier-mâché, is supported by 12 white stucco marble columns and 24 wooden pillars.
2. Less grand than the banqueting hall, the family dining room is used for informal lunches and dinners. Architect Hans Linstow wanted the family dining room to be simple yet vibrant, and artist Peder Wergmann painted the walls and ceilings of this room in the Pompeian style. Another painter, August Thomsen, added blue wall panels depicting images of classically clad people. The chandeliers, designed by Jonas Hidle, reflect the ornamentation of the walls, and their crystals follow the lines of the painted garlands.
3. The banqueting hall measures more than 3,229 square feet. Artist Peder Wergmann decorated the walls and the ceiling in the Pompeian style, using light colors and painting rosettes, vines, and palmettes. At the time, Pompeian decorations, inspired by the finds at Pompeii and Herculaneum in Italy, were very fashionable in Europe. The walls also feature images of Greek gods and goddesses, representing the 19th-century fascination with antiquity. As part of the 2009–2010 restoration of the palace, new tables and chairs designed in the classical style were added.



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