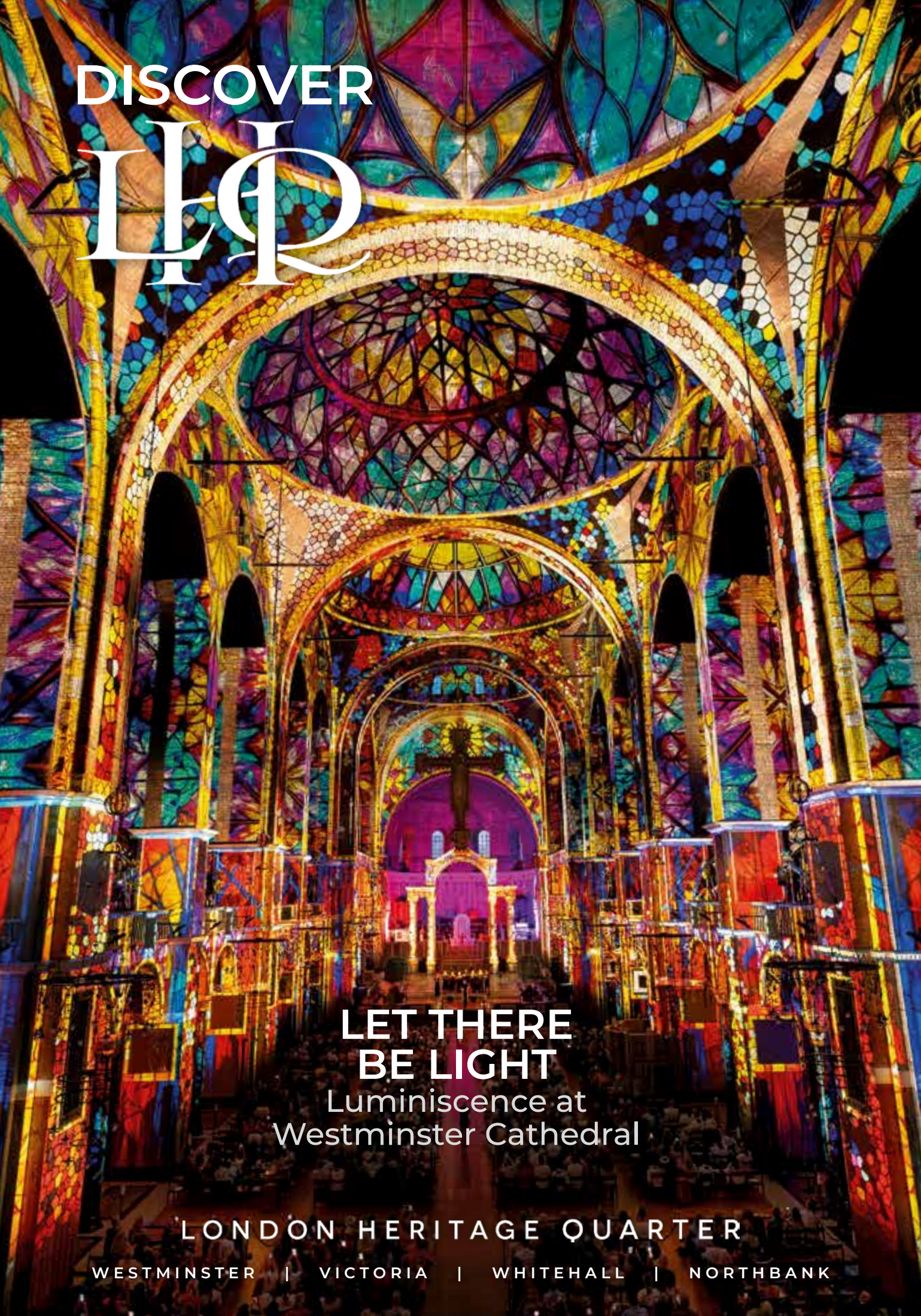


A full-page photograph of the interior of Westminster Cathedral, showing a series of high, vaulted arches covered in intricate, colorful stained glass. The perspective is looking down the central aisle towards the altar. The light filtering through the glass creates a vibrant, multi-colored atmosphere.

DISCOVER

LHQ

LET THERE
BE LIGHT

Luminiscence at
Westminster Cathedral

LONDON HERITAGE QUARTER

WESTMINSTER | VICTORIA | WHITEHALL | NORTHBANK



A FRENCH RIVIERA STATE OF MIND



LE CAFE LPM

AT THE LANESBOROUGH



16

DISCOVER LHQ

AUTUMN

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Luminiscence at
Westminster Cathedral

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What's in a name?

Discerning readers will note that we have a new name. Formerly *Victoria Magazine*, we're now known as *Discover LHQ* to reflect the fact that we also cover Westminster, Whitehall and Northbank. We hope you'll enjoy discovering more about London Heritage Quarter with us!

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IMAGE: KATE MARTIN

Rooms with a view

There's a new hotel to discover at 180 The Thames. St Clement offers 90 rooms, 14 river lofts and one duplex river penthouse with a wraparound terrace, chef's kitchen and library (yours for £15,000 a night). Each room comes with a complimentary mini-bar, a bathroom cabinet stocked with free grooming products, drawers filled with custom board games and a book selection. The on-site restaurant, Lunette, was created by chef Florence Knight, while intimate cocktail bar Bobbi's will be open till 3am. *12 Temple Place*

Artistic statements

The Picture Gallery at Buckingham Palace has undergone a once-in-a-generation transformation. The number of paintings on display has nearly doubled, allowing guests to enjoy works by the likes of Rubens, Rembrandt, Caravaggio and Zoffany. The space has been redesigned with new emerald silk wall hangings and an updated lighting scheme to improve the visibility of the art.

Buckingham Palace



IMAGE: BEN FITZPATRICK



Al fresco evenings
You have until September 24 to enjoy Sundowner Sessions at Nova Place. Every Thursday from 5pm to 8pm, these free live music events feature performances by DJs, singers, electric violinists and saxophonists. Settle in and soak up the last of the summer. *Cardinal Place, Victoria Street*

From an exciting archaeological find to a theatrical blue plaque, here's the latest local news

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Busby's boys

Westminster School has acquired a gold ring that belonged to Dr Richard Busby, headmaster of the school from 1638 to 1695. Known as the most celebrated headmaster of his time, Busby's illustrious pupils included

John Locke, Christopher Wren, Robert Dryden, Henry Purcell and Robert Hooke. The ring bears a memento mori design of a skull and was discovered by metal detectorist Amanda Parker in Lancashire. After buying the ring at auction for £3,200, school archivist Dr Elizabeth Wells said: "The ring is an important addition to our collections and will be

used for teaching at the school and made available to academic researchers."

Westminster School, 17a Dean's Yard



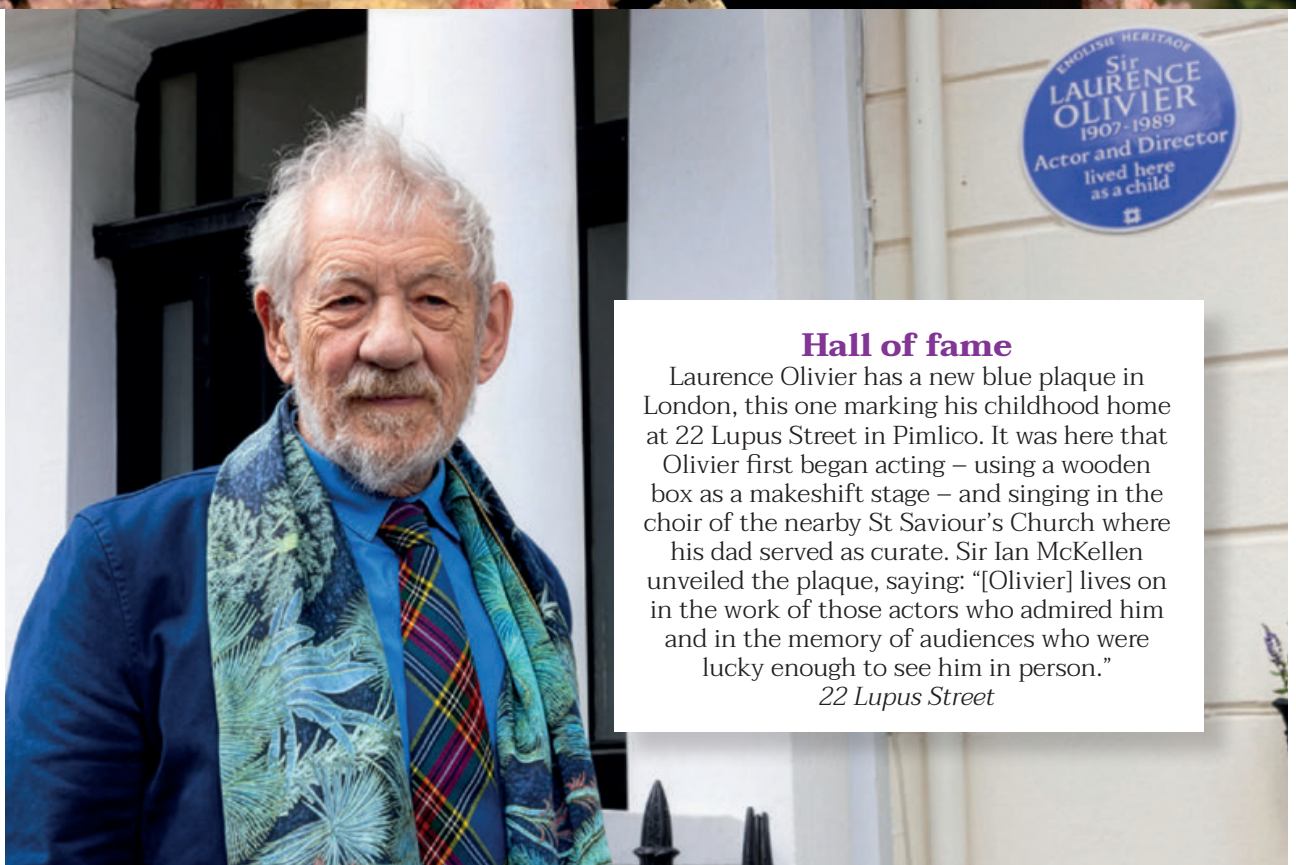
IMAGE: NOONVANS



Flower power

Fifteen of Princess Diana's most iconic outfits have been reimagined by Fleurs de Villes florists at Somerset House using thousands of fresh flowers. Each of the floral creations commemorates a key moment in Diana's life, from her HIV/Aids advocacy to her walk through an Angolan minefield. All money raised will go to support The Diana Award, a charity which helps young people to make positive change.

Until October 6, Somerset House, Strand



Hall of fame

Laurence Olivier has a new blue plaque in London, this one marking his childhood home at 22 Lupus Street in Pimlico. It was here that

Olivier first began acting – using a wooden box as a makeshift stage – and singing in the choir of the nearby St Saviour's Church where his dad served as curate. Sir Ian McKellen unveiled the plaque, saying: "[Olivier] lives on in the work of those actors who admired him and in the memory of audiences who were lucky enough to see him in person."

22 Lupus Street



Bright lights

Luminescence has arrived at Westminster Cathedral. It's an immersive light and storytelling experience, voiced by Hugh Bonneville, with live music provided by the Lux Aeterna choir and a 14-piece orchestra. The specially commissioned script by Bafta and Olivier award winner Tim Whitnall tells the story of the cathedral, using 24 lasers to transform the interior with colour and imagery. At the end of the experience, you'll be able to see what Westminster Cathedral could look like with its domes covered in colourful mosaics, in accordance with the original plans of architect John Francis Bentley.

Until September 26



Hockey heartthrobs

Heated Rivalry was an unexpected phenomenon – so much so that it has inspired no fewer than four parody musicals in the year since its release. This one – *Deep-Heat Rivalry*, created by Olivier award-nominated artist Trevor Ashley – retells everyone's favourite steamy hockey romance through jokes, power ballads and cabaret.

Until October 11,

The Other Palace, 12 Palace Street

Royal send-off

Visit a special exhibition dedicated to Queen Elizabeth II's lying-in-state, held in Westminster Hall where the ceremony took place in 2022. You'll discover works by six British artists, drawing inspiration from the historic vigil and its lengthy queue of wellwishers. The exhibition is a free addition to a tour of the Palace of Westminster.

Until October 2



WHAT'S ON

Night fever

Want to channel your inner disco vampire? You can now try a silent disco in the crypt of St Martin-in-the-Fields, with a retro soundtrack inspired by the 1970s. You'll receive a set of headphones with three DJs competing over separate feeds – pick your favourite and enjoy your subterranean boogie from 7.30-11pm. *October 2 and November 27, Trafalgar Square*

From silent discos to parody musicals, fill up your diary with fun autumn events

BY ALICE CAIRNS

The winner takes it all

In a development that will either have you warming up your vocal chords or running for the hills, Bam Karaoke Box is now offering competitive karaoke. You can choose to compete either one-on-one or group-versus-group, and your performance will be scored in real time based on accuracy, timing and intensity. Pre-book to receive a free drink on arrival.

Every Tuesday

Back to the 90s

Time flies, which means it's time for a retrospective exhibition surveying the fashion, art and photography of... the 90s. As a decade, it was characterised by its optimism and possibility, with new voices and visionaries emerging in Britain to reshape our cultural identity. From Alexander McQueen to Tracey Emin, from queer club nights to "Cool Britannia", the impending millennium brought out an anarchic and experimental spirit. Relive it with this autumn exhibition. *October 8 to February 14, Tate Britain, Millbank*

WHAT'S ON

New perspectives

This exhibition of modern painting from the Courtauld and Reuben collections includes works by 20th-century greats such as Picasso, Magritte and Modigliani. Explore how these groundbreaking artists changed the landscape of modern art for ever.

*Ongoing, Courtauld
Institute of Art,
Somerset House,
Strand*



Underground heroes

Did you know that there's a London Underground football league? Every player is a TfL employee, with teams representing different underground lines (including recent Division One champions, Northern Line FC) as well as buses, the overground and British Transport Police. As the league celebrates its 30th anniversary, this exhibition tracks its growth from grassroots beginnings to its current status as an official competition with FA officials, as well as the pride, camaraderie and connection it brings to participants and fans.

*Ongoing, London Transport Museum,
Covent Garden Piazza*



RENÉ MAGRITTE (1898-1967), L'AMI INTIME (THE INTIMATE FRIEND), 1958
IMAGE: © ALL RIGHTS RESERVED, DACS © REUBEN COLLECTION

Powerful women

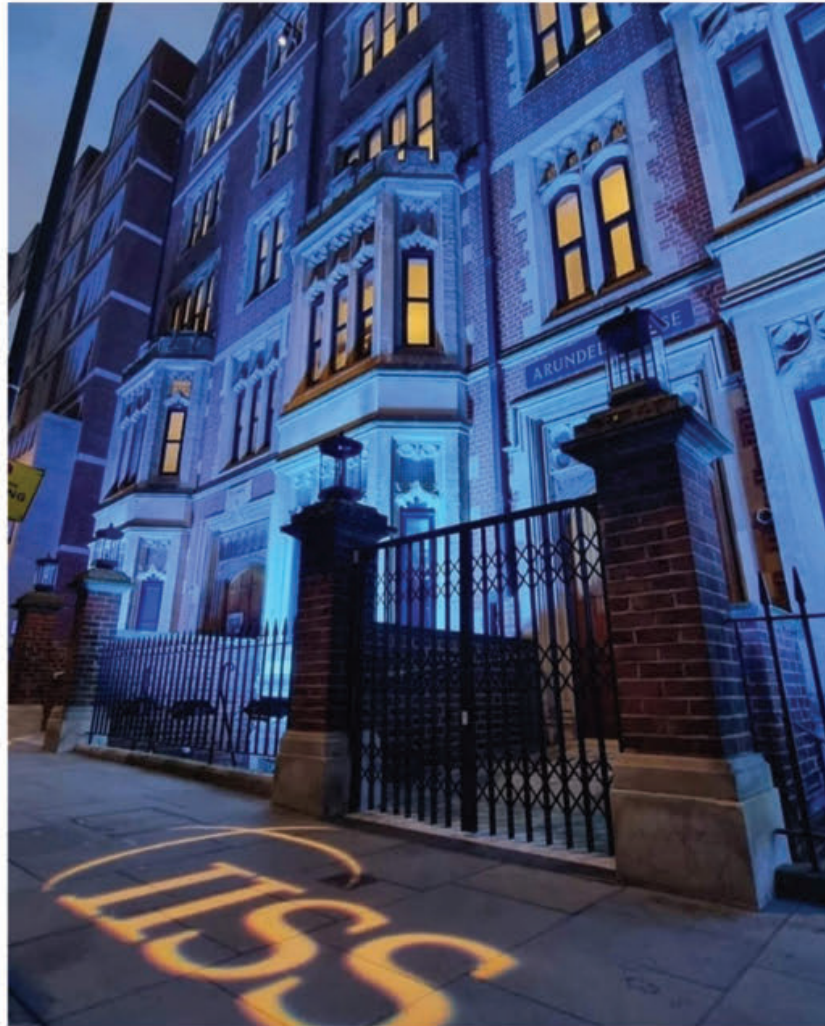
Visit the Lady's Chapel at Westminster Abbey for a talk by historian Kate Williams about women and power. Kate will take you on a whirlwind journey through the lives of some of the world's most inspirational female leaders – including Elizabeth I, who is buried in the chapel. You'll also be able to buy a copy of Kate's latest book, *Regina: A New History of Women and Power*.

October 14



Arundel House

Conference, Meeting and Event Space



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w: www.sixtempleplace.com

CUTTING EDGE

Paul Taylor-Mills is artistic director of The Other Palace. He talks experimentation, education and the beauty of camp

BY ALICE CAIRNS

"I grew up in Kidderminster, a proud single-parent child," says Paul Taylor-Mills.

"We didn't have the money for me to attend stage school or to travel to big theatres. The only contact with 'art' I had came through the school curriculum and amateur dramatics. I never dreamed I would be an artistic director anywhere, let alone at a venue like this one."

Paul is artistic director of The Other Palace, a unique and experimental theatre sandwiched between two West End powerhouses – Apollo Victoria (the home of *Wicked*) and Victoria Palace Theatre (the venue for *Hamilton*).

"We're part of the same grand theatrical ecology as *Wicked* and *Hamilton*," Paul says. "But we are our own little island in many ways. We only have 300 seats in our main house, but we offer something

unique and we punch above and beyond our weight."

Rather than staging established productions, The Other Palace is a home for exciting, emerging musical theatre – a kind of testing ground for new work, where lucky audiences might stumble upon the next big thing. It was here that the revamped production of *Heathers* began its life, blossoming into a cult phenomenon with three record-breaking UK tours. *Kenrex*, the true crime Western thriller mash-up, recently won two Olivier Awards for its winter run at The Other Palace.

"We started out as a venue that housed brand new musicals," Paul explains. "We've now moved to

not only work with new musicals, but also with revivals done in a new and exciting way. We do something every year called MTFest, which is a celebration of new work and new musicals that are presented for the first time in front of an audience to get some sense of whether they work.

"Over the last few years we've

also developed a really strong reputation for our seasonal offerings – like *Homo Alone* and *Lovers Actually* – which are adult parody comedies that sell out even before they open."

Rather than banking on tried and tested productions, The Other Palace is built on an ethos of experimentation and risk-taking – after all, wouldn't it be sad if only the safest theatre got made? In spite of his years of experience, even Paul can't predict with certainty whether a show will become a hit.

"There have been moments when I've been in the studio of The Other Palace, when I've felt the shared experience and the complicity between the audience and the performers, and I've gone: 'Wow, this is a moment. It's happening – it's going to be a hit.' Something like *Heathers*, we knew from the studio



IMAGE: PAMELA RAITH PHOTOGRAPHY





readings, when people just had the scripts in their hands, that there was a spark there.

“The thing is, you absolutely cannot predict when it’s going to happen. There are a lot of ideas that look brilliant on paper, but in the transition from page to stage they don’t work. That’s why places like The Other Palace, where audiences have the opportunity to see things in their infancy, are so precious and should be protected at all costs.”

Remembering his childhood in Kidderminster, Paul is passionate about ensuring that young people from all backgrounds can experience theatre.

“Amateur and school theatre were all I had access to, but they were powerful enough to change my life,” Paul says.

“That’s why I think it’s so important to continue to prioritise theatre and the arts in schools. Not

everyone has the money or support to access the arts in other ways. I would say that the lack of regard given to art in education scares me. That’s why at The Other Palace, we’re always trying new things to reach young audiences.

“We just hosted the National Youth Music Theatre’s 50th anniversary, which the king and Idris Elba attended at our theatre. In general, it’s become more and more

crucial that we learn how to reach young people, because – as cliché as it sounds – they really are the future of theatre.”

The musical – that much-loved, much-maligned form – remains at the heart of The Other Palace’s offering. Why are they so important?

“People often ask me what I love so much about musicals,” Paul says. “In a word, ‘camp’! They say when you can’t say it, sing it – and when you can’t sing it, dance it.

“From a young age I’ve been fascinated by the form and how it works. I think it’s one of the hardest art forms in the world to get right – and when you get a really, really excellent musical, that’s on the zeitgeist, that hits the right spot, there is nothing more magical in the world for me.”



IMAGE:
PAMELA RAITH
PHOTOGRAPHY

12 Palace Street

MAN WITH A PLAN

Elected as the new head of Westminster City Council, Paul Swaddle has promised to make the area safer and cleaner. In an exclusive interview, he reveals his blueprint for the borough

BY WILL MOFFITT

Meet Paul Swaddle, the new leader of Westminster City Council.

Having represented the St John's Wood and Marylebone area as a councillor since 2018, Swaddle became leader of Westminster City Council in May after the Conservatives regained control of the borough from Labour.

He comes from a business and technology background. According to the council, he is the chief executive of a central London software company, who can bring "real-world experience" to local government.

He seems less concerned about ideological flag-waving and more interested in problem solving. His leadership campaign promised safe streets, a clean city and "real action".

Upon taking office he has made stamping out crime and emboldening the Metropolitan Police to take swifter action against it a priority. His immediate appointment of Caroline Sargent as a cabinet member for enforcement should help to prioritise Westminster's safety and security concerns.

Swaddle will not

be drawn on the Palantir debate – Scotland Yard's proposed £50 million, two-year contract with the US company to deploy its AI technology has been vetoed by the mayor's office.

"What I want is good policing on our streets and the political football they're turning that into is not something Westminster can directly influence," he says. "So, I'll stick out of it."

Despite swerving that knotty issue, Swaddle is enthusiastic about embracing cutting-edge technologies. He also wants to better utilise existing surveillance systems to proactively respond to

crime and antisocial behaviour. The day before we spoke he was in conversation with the Met. "Several London leaders were there bemoaning and questioning facial recognition systems," he says. "I put my hand up and said: 'Please come to Westminster.'"

Using AI to improve surveillance monitoring is something Sargent and her team are working on. "At the moment there's only two people watching around 100 CCTV cameras. They're not going to see very much," Swaddle says. "We need to use AI to start pulling out the right data. At the moment it's an

overly reactive service. We need to make it a proactive service."

Luxury watch, jewellery and phone thefts by criminals on bikes and scooters is a London-wide

issue, particularly in affluent areas. Better profiling enabled by AI monitoring could help the police to catch them faster.

"Take phone thefts," Swaddle says. "The criminal is normally given a swag bag, they're wearing a balaclava, they're on a very specific type of ebike, which can do 50 miles an hour. An

Continued on page 14

"I want to work with people to get the best outcome... working against them doesn't deliver that"



UNDER THE HIGH PATRONAGE OF HIS SERENE HIGHNESS PRINCE ALBERT II OF MONACO

mys

MONACO YACHT SHOW

23 - 26 SEPTEMBER 2026



AI detection model might say: 'I've just seen [that type of bike] on the Bayswater Road, heading towards Marble Arch.'

We move on to the cycling habits of everyday Londoners. I mention the sea of Lime and Forest bikes encircling Hanover and Berkeley squares. How can companies making hundreds of millions let their bikes clog the streets? "We've just announced a live data-sharing agreement with Lime, which is them stepping up and doing what's right... we will know



much more quickly where there is overloading of bikes," Swaddle says. "We will very shortly take bikes off the street that are parked in the wrong place."

At the end of May he confronted Airbnb and Booking.com to end the "unlawful" and "out of control" letting of properties across the West End. He says while London homeowners are legally permitted to let their homes for up to 90 days a year, he estimates that 2,700 properties are probably exceeding that limit.

He met Lisa Marçais, Airbnb's UK and northern European

general manager, and Carlo Olejniczak, vice-president and European manager of Booking.com, to discuss the issue. "We sat down. I laid out the way that I'd like to work. I want them to be a responsible operator," Swaddle says. "I've particularly called for action on social housing. While it's 90 days in other forms of housing it's zero if you're a social tenant. I want action and swift action on that."

Swaddle seems like someone who wants to talk things through and find solutions rather than push through a preconceived agenda. "It's grownups in the room. I thanked them for coming," he says. "I want to work with people to get the best outcome, because working against them doesn't generally deliver that."

Eat & drink Directory out & in



CHURCH HOUSE CAFÉ

Westminster's New Favourite Meeting Place

From expertly crafted barista coffee and freshly baked pastries to seasonal breakfasts, vibrant salads, sandwiches, including signature toasties, and delicious home bakes, Church House Café is the perfect place to pause in Westminster.

New: now available for exclusive evening private hire, the café offers a light, stylish setting for networking events, team celebrations and informal drinks for up to 50 guests, with curated food, wines and exceptional service.

Download the LHQ Hub app and receive 10% off your café bill.

Open Monday to Friday from 8am.

Enquire about private hire online churchhouseconf.co.uk.

KENDAL'S CAFÉ BAR

Discover Kendal's Café Bar at One Great George Street for great coffee, snacks and dishes. Perfect if you're out and about in Westminster with a friend or colleague, or need a pick-me up after taking in the sights of its neighbouring Big Ben and St James's Park. Traditional British daily menus are designed to suit every palate.

**Kendal's Café Bar, One Great George Street,
The Institution of Civil Engineers,
Westminster, London, SW1P 3AA**



SHAN SHUI SOCIAL

Step into the glamorous 1920s Shanghai at Shan Shui Social, a captivating gem just moments from bustling Victoria station. This playful haven transports you with its neon-lit, retro-chic vibe and authentic regional Chinese cuisine.

Savour exquisite dim sum, succulent Cantonese roast duck, fiery Sichuan specialties and wok-tossed delicacies - all crafted with premium, locally-sourced ingredients and timeless techniques.

Then, unwind with innovative Asian-inspired cocktails featuring baijiu, lychee, calamansi and chillies from our Art Deco-themed bar. Perfect for lunch, dinner or happy-hour cocktails.

Discover a sophisticated yet fun escape - book now and journey through China's flavours!

14 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0QP

020 4617 8888

hello.victoria@shanshuisocial.co.uk

www.shanshuisocial.co.uk

ROMY GILL AT THE PEM

Discover a new chapter at The Pem, where acclaimed chef Romy Gill MBE brings her vibrant, deeply personal take on Indian cuisine to Westminster. Celebrating the richness and diversity of India through a British lens, Romy's menu is rooted in seasonal ingredients, bold spices and recipes inspired by her life and travels. From carefully blended spice mixes to beautifully presented sharing dishes, every plate tells a story. Set within the elegant surroundings of Conrad London St. James, The Pem offers a warm, contemporary dining experience that invites you to linger, share and discover something new.

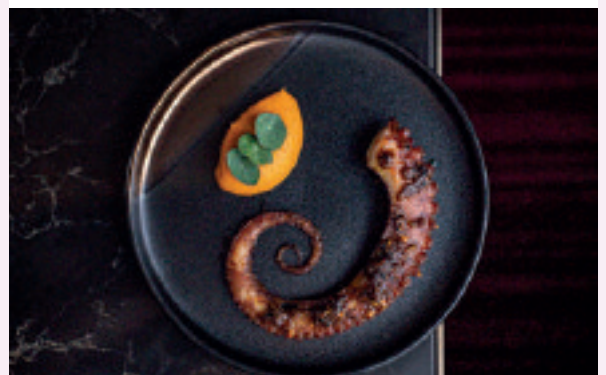
Romy Gill at The Pem at Conrad London St. James.

22-28 Broadway

London SW1H 0BH

020 3301 8080

romygillatthepem.com





Sweet treat

Looking for a great spot for a morning coffee or an afternoon treat? Don't miss Donutelier's flagship on the Strand. It's a bakery specialising in elevated doughnuts like the strawberry matcha (fresh strawberries paired with matcha chantilly cream) or the lemon meringue (topped with vanilla sugar and toasted meringue).

442 Strand

WORD OF MOUTH

Trendy tacos and cool new cocktail bars – here's the foodie news you need to know

BY ALICE CAIRNS

Spoilt for choice

Arcade is an exciting new food hall in Covent Garden. Inside you'll find your choice of cuisines, from smash burgers and fries to north Indian street food or Greek Cypriot sharing plates cooked over a charcoal grill. You can also grab a cocktail at the central bar – try the Coconut Swizzle, made with lychee, coconut cream and strawberry gin churned through crushed ice.

6 Bedford Street



Heavenly hummus

Super-cool vegetarian restaurant Bubala is opening its new site in Covent Garden. Opt for the "Bubala knows best" menu (£39pp) and have course after course of Middle Eastern-inspired cuisine brought to your table, including brown butter hummus, charred flatbreads, halloumi coated in honey and crispy confit potato latkes.

14 Garrick Street

Eat & drink Directory out & in



THE IDLER

Set in the heart of vibrant London Victoria, The Idler is a relaxed escape from the city's fast pace. Bringing together seasonal British ingredients with a Mediterranean twist, the menu is made for sharing, grazing or simply enjoying at your own pace, paired with a great cocktail or a glass of wine.

From easy-going breakfasts and weekend brunches to all-day dining and pre-theatre bites, The Idler is a place to settle in, switch off and stay a little longer. Whether you're popping in for a quick lunch or making an evening of it, good food and good times come naturally here.

282 Vauxhall Bridge Road

London

SW1V 1EJ

Tel: 020 4618 8200

<https://www.thejuly.com/restaurants/the-idler>

MR FOGG'S SOCIETY OF EXPLORATION

Mr Fogg's Society of Exploration is the atmospheric immersive cocktail bar in Covent Garden home to the world's first Mechanical Mixologist. The spirit of adventure remains within these very walls with a lifesize train carriage, timeless antiques, weather-beaten maps and old mounted portraits of past explorers. Open seven days a week, Mr Fogg's Society of Exploration offers showstopper cocktails and light bites as well as playing host to the Murder On The Fogg's Express, a two hour tabletop murder mystery breakout experience, including a welcome cocktail and selection of nibbles, the perfect way to spend an afternoon or evening on Bedford Street.

1A Bedford Street

London

WC2E 9HH

Tel: 020 7590 5255

<https://www.mr-foggs.com/society-of-exploration/>



IMAGE: JOHNNY STEPHENS PHOTOGRAPHY



IRIS & JUNE

Long standing neighbourhood favourite, Iris & June is known for its awesome coffee, deliciously wholesome and filling salads, sandwiches, frittatas and tarts. With the cabinet always stocked full of homemade cakes, slices, freshly baked muffins, scones and pastries there's always something to tempt your taste buds.

Open 7.30am - 4.30pm weekdays.

1 Howick Place, SW1P 1WG

www.irisandjune.com

@irisandjune

THE VINCENT ROOMS

Come join us at The Vincent Rooms, a trio of restaurants nestled away in the heart of Victoria.

Step inside and relax as you are served dishes prepared by students training to become the next star chefs in London, following in the footsteps of Jamie Oliver, Ainsley Harriott and multiple MasterChef winners.

Start your day in the Café with tea, coffee and pastries made fresh that morning, share classical British fare in the Brasserie, or treat yourself to fine dining at the Escoffier. From exciting events and themed foodie weeks, this is one culinary hotspot you don't want to miss.

The Vincent Rooms

76 Vincent Square

London, SW1P 2PD

0207 8028 391

<https://www.thevincentrooms.co.uk/>



Rise and shine

The Soak has launched a new breakfast club, available Monday to Friday from 7am to 11am. Choose from freshly baked pastries, stacked American pancakes, avocado toast, customised omelettes and much more.

When it comes to drinks, we're intrigued by the pistachio cappuccino.

Terminus Place



On fire

Before National Curry Week from October 5 to 11, The Curry Room at The Rubens at the Palace is offering a special celebratory menu. All guests booking the restaurant during National Curry Week will receive a free aloo papri chaat – a spicy yoghurt and chickpea street food. Samundar ka raja – lobster simmered in aromatic coconut milk sauce – will also be introduced specially for that week.

39 Buckingham Palace Road

Healthy heroes

Healthy dining spot Atis has opened its doors at St James's Park. It's your go-to for a fresh and balanced lunch, with plenty of colourful salads, power plates, smoothies and shakes. The new location has bespoke circadian rhythm lights that change colour throughout the day to match your energy, as well as a new breakfast offering including a build-your-own yoghurt bar.

Unit 1, The Broadway



Eat & drink Directory out & in



MAISON GIGI - PÂTISSERIE, DELI & CATERING

As Autumn settles over London, mornings call for something warm: a coffee, hot chocolate, or matcha to ease into the day. Every morning, our pastry team bakes classic French pastries, served warm and flaky. For lunch, our kitchen prepares daily seasonal specials, hearty quiches, and fresh sandwiches. And because a sweet treat brightens any day, our cake counter is always waiting for you. After all, good things are made to be shared, at our table, or catered for yours.

Monday to Friday 7am-5pm

143 Victoria Street, London SW1E 5NH

bonjour@maisongigi.co.uk

COMMON BREADS

Our neighbourhood Lebanese bakery Common Breads on Buckingham Palace Road has a new addition to the menu: the Za'atar & Goat Labneh Manouche, freshly baked with za'atar and olive oil, then topped with fresh za'atar sprouts, mint, goat labneh and a final drizzle of olive oil. For something sweet, try the Walnut Maamoul Muffin, with comforting notes of walnut and cinnamon.

Discover their signature ka'ak, manouche, pastries and more, or order ahead with Click & Collect. Common Breads also offers catering for meetings, gatherings and events.

110 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SA

www.commonbreads.com

020 8017 3773



BROWNS BRASSERIE & BAR

Browns Brasserie & Bar offers the best of seasonal British brasserie classics with menus celebrating fresh, quality ingredients, from comforting favourites to lighter dishes. Fresh fish is delivered daily, ensuring our seafood dishes are always exceptional.

Start your day with a leisurely brunch, choosing from a selection of delicious dishes alongside fresh juices and coffees, or for pre-show dining, our specially crafted theatre menu provides perfect two or three course options, served with efficiency so you won't miss a curtain call. Whether you're meeting friends, enjoying a family gathering, or celebrating a special occasion, Browns Victoria is the ideal setting.

2 Cardinal Walk, Greater, London SW1E 5JE

020 7821 1450

<https://www.browns-restaurants.co.uk>

WESLEY'S CAFÉ

Wesley's Café offers a welcoming space in the heart of Westminster, open Monday to Sunday serving breakfast and lunch alongside seasonal drinks. Enjoy our bright, relaxed setting and warm up with expertly crafted Old Spike coffee, including autumn and winter favourites such as pumpkin spice lattes and salted caramel hot chocolates. Our hyper-seasonal menu features fresh sandwiches and hot food, made with ingredients from London-based suppliers for a constantly evolving offering. Pair your drink with freshly baked cakes from our in-house baker, perfect for a cosy treats.

Monday-Friday 8am-4pm, Saturday-Sunday

10am-4pm

Follow us @wesleyscafeln

Central Hall Westminster, Storey's Gate, London

SW1H 9NH

www.c-h-w.com/wesleys-cafe/





IMAGE: THE FOOD FILL PHOTOGRAPHY

Mediterranean menu

Honest Greens has arrived in Victoria. Founded in Spain, it serves up healthy, Mediterranean-inspired dishes: think loaded toasts, garden bowls, charcoal-grilled meats and homemade falafel. It's the perfect place to grab a quick lunch or a breakfast on the go. The speciality coffee is also excellent.

123 Buckingham Palace Road

Taco time

A taco restaurant loved by David Beckham and Barack Obama is opening its first UK branch in Victoria. Coyo Taco makes fresh tacos and burritos served with sides such as homemade salsa, charred corn and guacamole smashed to order. Attached is a speakeasy style bar, Bar Coyo, with DJ decks, spicy margs in four heats, agave cocktails and tequila flights. You can even put your name on the waiting list for a "tequila locker", where a favourite bottle can be stored ready for your visit.

2 Orchard Place



Let's go outside

Until mid-September you can enjoy al fresco dining on the Bam Karaoke Box summer terrace. In collaboration with 818 Tequila (Kendall Jenner's award-winning spirit brand), the terrace will offer tequila cocktails, DJ sets and exclusive bottomless brunches. Don't miss the margarita, which also comes frozen.

74 Victoria Street

Eat & drink Directory out & in



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THE IVY VICTORIA

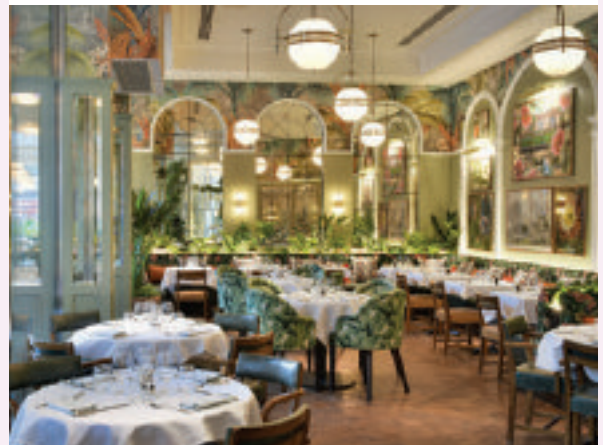
The Ivy Victoria is a favourite among regulars and visitors alike, pairing timeless British classics with warm, attentive service. Choose from The Ivy Edition Menu - two courses for £34.95 - or explore the seasonal à la carte, crafted to make the most of what's in season.

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02039712404

The Ivy Victoria, 66 Victoria Street,
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ivycollection.com/restaurants/the-ivy-victoria/



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THE JONES FAMILY KITCHEN

The award-winning Jones Family Kitchen is one of London's leading steakhouses, serving grass fed dry-aged steak from Yorkshire alongside that from its own farm in Devon. The large menu doesn't just cater to the steak lover however, with fish arriving daily from Cornwall and the South Coast from small day boats. Situated in lovely Eccleston Yards, with a large and peaceful outdoor terrace. Jones Family Kitchen also offers a pre-theatre set menu till 6pm.

The Jones Family Kitchen

Restaurant & Bar

7-8 Eccleston Yards

London

SW1W 9AZ

020 3929 6000

www.jonesfamilykitchen.co.uk

"In Damascus I had three restaurants, juice bars and coffee shops. I had my empire," says Imad Alarnab, whose buzzy restaurant Aram opened last year at Somerset House.

"Then in 2013 [during the Syrian civil war] I lost it all in just six days of bombings. With my businesses gone, I fled Syria."

Imad had to cross 10 different countries to reach England – sometimes smuggled across borders in lorries or car boots, sometimes travelling by bicycle. In Calais, he cooked food for other refugees by day and slept on church steps every night. By the time he arrived in London he had just £12 in his pocket, which he used to buy a bus ticket to Doncaster to visit his sister.

"I had no money left after that for food or a place to stay, so I had to walk around central London all night," he says. "In those hours, I fell in love with every bit of the city."



Chef Imad Alarnab fled wartorn Syria to start a new life in London, where he opened Aram by Imad, a Syrian cafe, deli and restaurant, in Somerset House.

He shares his story

BY ALICE CAIRNS

SYRIAN SUCCESS

"It was an instant love. While travelling through nearly 25 cities, I'd always felt judged by people. Perhaps that was in my head, but I felt people were staring at me and thinking: 'God, look at him, turning up here with his backpack.' When I arrived in London, I felt like I was invisible. Here, you can walk naked and no one cares. Everyone is so different that in a way, everyone is the same.

"I say London is my sweetheart. Damascus is like a mother to me – I will always love her, whether I am with her or not. But London is the love I chose."

After staying for a short time with his sister, Imad came back to London. "I started as a car washer, then worked in a scrap yard, then as a car salesman. I hate cars. But I wanted to do



something to support my family back in Syria and to feel alive, you know? It was so difficult to stay away from the kitchen.

"Then when my family were able to join me in 2016, I began inviting people over to our house to try our Syrian food and to see what they thought of it. Everyone loved it, and that gave me the idea to open my first pop-up restaurant on Columbia Road."

Right from the start Imad was determined to give back to the refugee community, hosting supper clubs and raising funds for charities like Choose Love and Cook for Syria. Still, any hopes of restoring his restaurant empire seemed like a distant dream.

"Then the pandemic came. At that point I thought: 'It's now or never', because honestly, in normal times, there was no way I could have afforded a restaurant in central London. When Covid happened, everyone gave up on London, but because London is my sweetheart, I was sure she would come back even stronger. I invested all my savings into my own restaurant in Carnaby Street."

Imad's first restaurant, Imad's Syrian Kitchen, soon became celebrated as one of the best Middle Eastern restaurants in London. He was invited to meet King Charles at Buckingham Palace to celebrate his humanitarian work, and later the king visited his restaurant to sample Imad's work for himself. "I was so nervous before," Imad confesses, "but he was so generous, and he still follows up with me to ask how things are in Syria. That touches me really deeply."

Last year he opened Aram by Imad in Somerset House – a restaurant, cafe and deli serving everything from za'atar croissants and stuffed aubergine to cardamom coffee and pistachio baklava. "I love having a restaurant in Somerset House," he says. "It reminds me of being in Damascus, which is the oldest city in the world – I love being surrounded by history."



The food Imad cooks is drawn from both of the cultures that have shaped him.

"My cooking has adapted to be Damascene but also very London," he explains. "It's a sort of fusion – just like me."

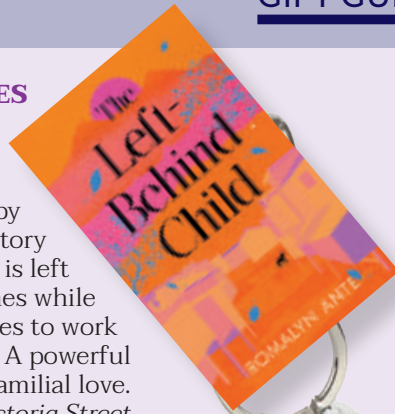
"To be honest, I love British cuisine – it's way more than fish and chips. It's Syrian and Indian and Chinese, and so many other things. Only London can do that, because London is the capital of the whole world, not just of England."

Aram by Imad, Somerset House

GIFT GUIDE

WATERSTONES

A book to get you back into a reading phase, *The Left-Behind Child*, £16.99, by Romalyn Ante is the story of Neneng, 11, who is left behind in the Philippines while her mother, Rose, leaves to work as a nurse overseas. A powerful tale of survival and familial love.
Cardinal Place, Victoria Street



SCRIBBLER

To bring in luck for the new season, stick Jellycat's Amuseables Siofra shamrock bag charm, £28, on your bag and add some positivity into your life.
125 Victoria Street



MOUNTAIN WAREHOUSE

With a folding handle that makes it easy to transport anywhere, Stanley's IceFlow Flip Straw 2.0 tumbler, £40, is exactly the kind of stainless steel cup you want for yourself and your kids, with its functional built-in flip straw for no spillage. It will also keep drinks cold for 48 hours.

*Victoria Place Shopping Centre,
115 Buckingham Palace Road*

PRESENT AND CORRECT

From children to adults, we all know that back to school feeling. Here are some of the things to get you ready for the new term

BY SOPHIA CHARALAMBOUS

OLIVER BONAS

For those who used to wear a pinafore to school, this one's for you. This autumn/winter season, Oliver Bonas has come out with the forest green corduroy button-up mini pinafore dress, £72, to be worn with your best crisp white shirt, white socks and brogues.

Unit 48-49, Victoria station





PEPA LONDON

Responsibly made in Spain, it will be hard to find a more appropriate school shoe than the patent leather Mary Jane shoes in navy, £95. The cushioned instep and strap are comfy and secure and the snap button fastening is easier for smaller children.

40 Elizabeth Street



JONES BOOTMAKER

Celebrating 50 years, the Boston clog, £140, from Birkenstock is an iconic shoe design that's been replicated many times. This leather pair is suitable for all-day wear, with an ergonomic, orthopedic footbed and an extra foam layer.

Cardinal Place,
Victoria Street

HERMANOS

Coffee is a staple of most people's day, and the new launch from Hermanos, Nubia, £24, comes from fourth-generation coffee producers, the Vergara family in Colombia. It has notes of strawberry jam and dark chocolate

– just that comforting cup you need through autumn.
21 Terminus Place



NEAL'S YARD REMEDIES

Sweat, body odour and general stickiness can all be solved with a bottle of Lavender & Tea Tree Body Powder, £15. It's great for kids going back to school or the commute. Talc-free, just apply after sports or a sweaty day.

Unit 47, Victoria station



M&S

An ideal outfit for the start of term is the M&S vest, £30, shirt, £30, jean, £35 and loafer, £65. A great ensemble for work and out-of-work wear to take you all through winter.

Cardinal Place,
Victoria Street



BOOTS

The Mood & Zen bundle, £52.18 from Chirpy, is for the young mind that needs natural support with emotional regulation or lack of focus. Ingredients include saffron, zinc, acerola cherry, lavender and chamomile, as well as vitamins D, B6 and B12.

107 Victoria Street

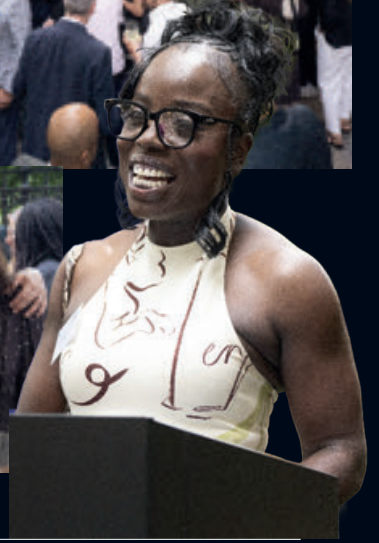




Lion kings

Launch of Pride in the Quarter

Residents and business owners celebrated the launch of Pride in the Quarter, a public art trail that raised money in support of local homelessness charity The Passage. A pride of 17 colourful lions and lionesses, each designed by artists, was stationed across Trafalgar Square, St James's Park, Victoria Tower Gardens and their surrounding landmarks.



Green days

Improvements at Upper Grosvenor Gardens

Local young people aged 16 to 25 took part in a consultation to shape the future of Upper Grosvenor Gardens. Their brief was to improve the design of the garden, boost the community's wellbeing and offer opportunities for local people to connect with nature. The young participants had the chance to work with environmental design experts and were paid the London living wage for their input.



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Left to right: Pauls Putnins, Rozanna Madylus, Sir John Tomlinson

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TRACKING THE PAST



THE EVENT SENT SHOCKWAVES around the world. As the riders thundered round Tattenham Corner during the 1913 Epsom Derby, a lone woman ducked under the white railings and made straight for the king's horse, Anmer.

Her name was Emily Davison, a committed suffragette. Whether she meant to make the ultimate sacrifice or simply make a statement by pinning a banner to the horse's bridle is still debated. The result was the same. Davison was sent sprawling as she collided with horse and rider. She lingered for four days before dying of her injuries on June 4, 1913, a martyr to the cause of votes for women.

Davison's death galvanised the movement. Her coffin, inscribed with "Fight on, God will give the victory", travelled by train from Epsom to Victoria station. There, in death, she was met by more than 6,000 suffragettes, dressed mainly in white, who accompanied her coffin as it made its way to King's Cross station and onward to her hometown in Northumberland. The event generated global press coverage and polarised public opinion: it elicited sympathy and heightened awareness from many, while others decried her reckless radicalism. In 1918 women finally won the right to vote.

Victoria has always been a place for poignancy. Six years after Davison's funeral, the station witnessed the arrival of another coffin, this one containing the remains of Edith Cavell, the nurse executed by the Germans for helping allied servicemen in Belgium to escape. Then on November 10, 1920 the Unknown Warrior, an unidentified First World War soldier, arrived at



Discover the hidden history of Victoria station

BY ANDY WILLIAMSON

platform eight – a plaque marks this spot. The casket remained overnight, guarded by the Grenadier Guards, before being laid to rest in Westminster Abbey.

Victoria station was built on the basin of the Grosvenor canal, which had opened on March 10, 1825. The owner, the 2nd Earl Grosvenor, was rowed by 12 Thames watermen up the waterway to the basin. Along the way an orchestra serenaded the earl, the national anthem was played and cannons gave a royal salute.

The canal provided an efficient means to deliver the materials needed for the earl's new district of Belgravia and to dispose of the waste it created.

In 1860 the canal basin gave way to the new age of the railway. Originally referred to as the Grosvenor terminus, it was renamed Victoria after

the recently built road that ran from its forecourt to Westminster Abbey. But the station long harboured a split identity. It was actually two buildings known by one name – the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway (LBSCR) opened in 1860, followed two years later by the London, Chatham & Dover Railway (LCDR). The result was two sets of tracks, two booking offices, two waiting rooms and two very different station facades – just look up as you enter. It remained this way until the companies unified with the creation of Southern Railway in 1923.

Victoria's dual personality explains a key plot twist in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*. While the LCDR served Kent and the Channel ports, the LBSCR linked to the wealthy seaside resorts on the south coast. Jack Worthing confesses to Lady Bracknell he was found in a handbag in the cloakroom at Victoria station. To try to make the best of this misfortune, he reassures her that it was the one on the Brighton line. "The line is immaterial," comes her withering reply.

Victoria served as the main gateway for millions of soldiers departing for the frontlines during the two world wars, the LCDR taking them to Dover and Folkestone and an uncertain future. The station therefore became synonymous with emotional farewells – and equally, jubilant returns.

Amid all the ordinary, unremarked journeys, Victoria has also seen more royals and heads of state pass along its platforms than any other London terminus and even had a special royal entrance, now abandoned, off Hudson's Place. It was used in 1927 for the state visit of King Fuad of Egypt. King George V, wearing his field marshal's uniform, met him on the red-carpeted platform before escorting him outside to inspect the guard of honour, receive the royal salute and hear the Egyptian national anthem played. Earl Grosvenor would have been proud.





JOIN THE CLUB

Karve specialises in Transformer pilates, an evolution of reformer pilates incorporating strength training, breathwork and meditation. Founder Yulia Pashevkina created her first studio in an old betting shop in Kensington and has opened another in Victoria

BY SOPHIA CHARALAMBOUS

What inspired you to create Karve?

I had spent years going to gyms, doing PT sessions and trying different boutique fitness concepts. I liked elements of all of them, but I was always looking for the most rounded workout – something that gave me the strength and intensity of a gym session, the low-impact benefits and control of pilates and also that mental reset. Time was a big part of it too. I didn't want to spend an hour and a half in the gym moving between different machines. I wanted to dedicate 50 minutes, know I'd had a really thorough full-body workout and then get on with my life.

How did you design the Transformer machine?

We custom-made the Transformer around the Karve method because we wanted more versatility and the ability to create a really thorough full-body workout based around

slow, controlled movements and time under tension. On top, it's much more available for a unisex workout. But the machine is only one part of Karve. What makes the workout is the combination of the Transformer, the Karve method, the programming and our trainers.

How do you decide where to open your next location and what drew you to Victoria?

We look for neighbourhoods where Karve can naturally become part of people's routines and lifestyle, rather than looking purely at footfall. Victoria felt very natural because you have residents, professionals, great connectivity, green spaces and a genuine neighbourhood feel. People are busy and ambitious, but they also value wellbeing and convenience. That fits perfectly with the moving like a New Yorker, living like a Londoner profile.

You also live in Victoria – what do you love about the area?

I love how central it is. It takes me pretty much the same time to walk to Soho or Mayfair or to Chelsea, so I can have the best of both worlds. Plus I have enjoyed many strolls in St James's Park, especially when my kid was little – most of his lunch naps were spent there. So it feels very special. There's a lot of vibrant energy in Victoria and you're incredibly connected. It's also great to see it developing fast in the last few years – the food scene has grown so much and there's a genuine sense of community.

Where do you think boutique fitness is headed over the next five years?

I think the next five years will be much more about brand building. People aren't just choosing a workout any more – they're choosing brands they connect with,



“I was always looking for the most rounded workout – something that gave me the strength and intensity of a gym session, the low-impact benefits and control of pilates and also that mental reset”

MIND, BODY & SOUL

MIND



A stay at The Guardsman Hotel is enhanced with the Indulge and Unwind package, which includes a session at nearby Aire Ancient Baths – 90 minutes of thermal baths and a DIY body scrub with a glass of cava in hand. The 18th-century building is candlelit and the epitome of relaxation. This goes alongside a stay in the boutique hotel's individually designed rooms, with marble bathrooms and a meal in the dining room for some fine British cuisine.

1 Vandon Street

BODY



Pilates & Network at Sentiré Pilates has launched as a monthly event to meet new people and make lasting friendships. The evening will begin with a welcome drink before the boutique pilates class and time to connect. It ends with a goodie bag featuring some coveted brands. It's the perfect opportunity to bring a friend or colleague and create community after a 45-minute class.

23 Eccleston Place, next event is September 11 at 6pm

SOUL



The September workshop at Re:Mind is Rooted – an evening of restorative yoga and sound healing, designed for grounding and reconnection with yourself through the transition into autumn. The guided yoga is designed to release tension and will close with a crystal bowl sound bath.

25a Eccleston Place, September 29, 7-9pm



communities they want to be part of and experiences that fit naturally into their lifestyle. But for me, it can't be about chasing whatever trend is popular that year. Trends come and go. The foundation still has to be a genuinely effective and efficient workout that people enjoy doing and want to keep coming back to.

How do you maintain your own physical and mental wellbeing while growing a company?

I've learned that recovery has to be intentional, especially when work gets very busy. I can't say I'm good at it yet but I've really been trying! Karve itself is one of my resets. When you're moving slowly under tension and completely focused on what your body is doing, your mind doesn't have much space to think about emails or meetings. It becomes almost meditative. I'm also interested in holistic health, so I incorporate things like bioresonance, acupuncture and sound baths depending on what I feel I need. But I really value simple things too – sitting barefoot on the grass, getting outside, turning on the red light before bed and making sure there are moments when I properly disconnect. Taking holidays and spending quality time with friends and family are equally important.

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INSIDERS' GUIDE



BROTHER MARCUS



EMMA AS ELPHABA IN WICKED
IMAGE: MARK SENIOR

What's it like to lead *Wicked* into its 20th year?

It feels completely mind-blowing. I'm a *Wicked* fangirl first and foremost, so when I get to go in and be painted green and become Elphaba, I still sometimes think: 'Is this really my job?!' Sometimes on the tube I realise someone's staring at me because I've got a bit of green paint still on me, but I don't mind – I just think: 'I'm green because I'm in *Wicked*!' What a flex.

Are you excited for the 20th anniversary performances?

I'm buzzing. I can't wait to feel the buzz and the energy of those shows. I also can't wait to see what



Wicked is marking 20 years at the Apollo Victoria Theatre on September 26 and 27. Emma Kingston, who plays Elphaba, shares her local insights

BY ALICE CAIRNS

everyone is going to wear! I think it's possible some people will come painted green...

What do you love about the local area?

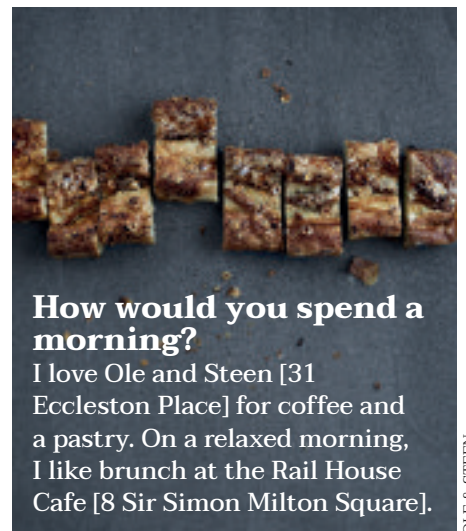
I spend a lot of time in Victoria, and I love how developed it's become. Even in the last 10 years, it's changed so much. There's always something new to discover.

Where do you go when you're relaxing between shows?

I love walking around Cardinal Place and up towards Eccleston Yards, just looking in the shops and sometimes stopping for a coffee. If I want green space, I love how close we are to Green Park and St James's Park.

Where do you and the *Wicked* company go to socialise?

We've had some really fun company nights out at Flight Club [6 Sir Simon Milton Square]. It can get quite competitive, though!



How would you spend a morning?

I love Ole and Steen [31 Eccleston Place] for coffee and a pastry. On a relaxed morning, I like brunch at the Rail House Cafe [8 Sir Simon Milton Square].

OLE & STEEN

And for dinner?

You can't beat Brother Marcus [81 Buckingham Palace Road]. The food there is delicious.

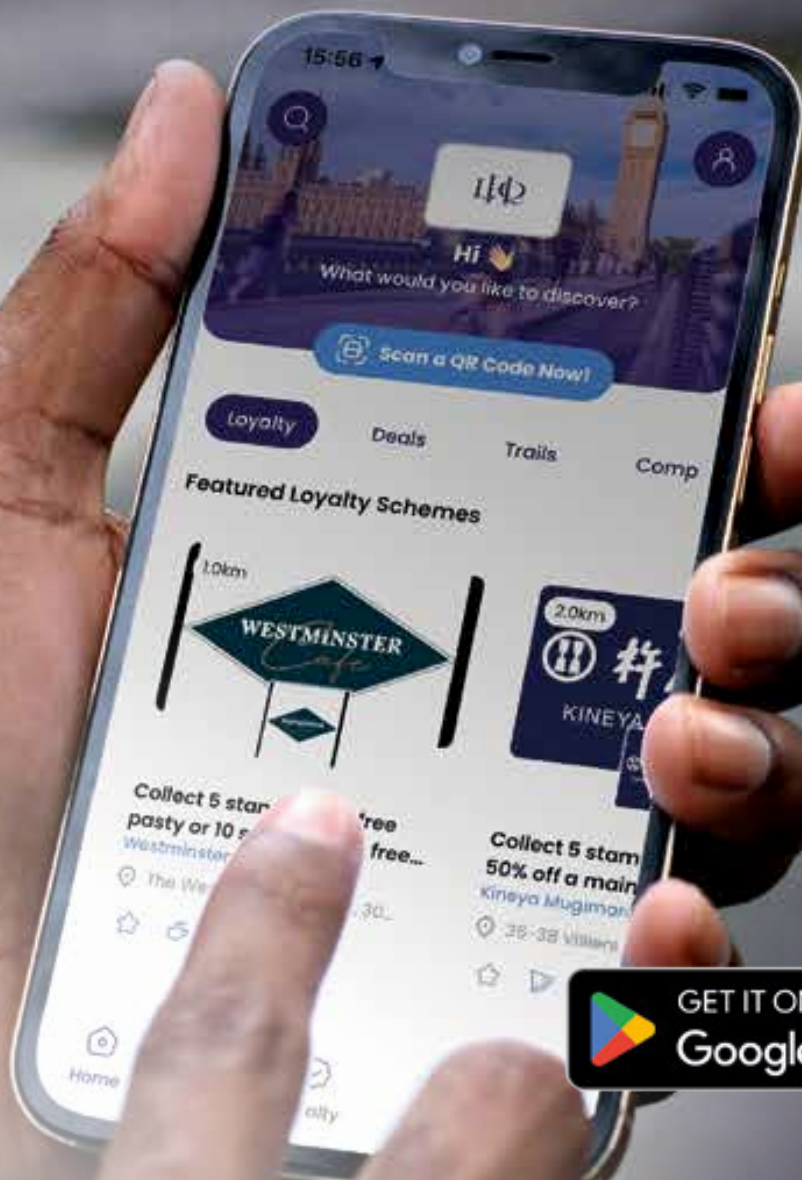
To celebrate the 20-year milestone, *Wicked* will stage three special anniversary performances with commemorative programmes and complimentary gift bags for all who attend. Apollo Victoria Theatre, 17 Wilton Road





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