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Lou Reed.

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Handwriting is truly original  
and says a little about each one of us.  
I hope we never lose this very personal  
form of expression.  
"Writing on the Wall" p.38



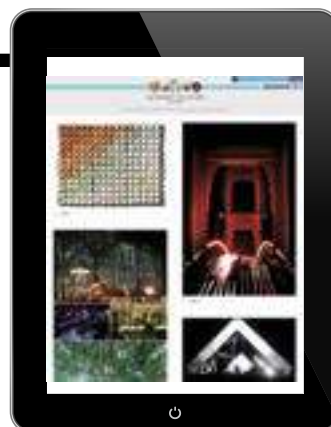
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After learning about urbex,  
I always now wonder what amazing  
abandoned buildings  
I'm driving past.  
"The Unsettled Dust" p.28



I could easily spend an afternoon  
in The Lexington's bar, drinking in  
Paige's kaleidoscope of curated art,  
cocktail in hand.  
"The Curated Journey" p.20

### Follow Us on Tumblr

With exquisite photos, hotel openings, and behind-the-scenes stories, there's no better way to keep up with the Autograph Collection. You'll also find our picks of photography and art that is "Exactly Like Nothing Else," as well as "Interviews with Independents" from our hotels and the creative world at large.

[autographcollectionhotels.tumblr.com](http://autographcollectionhotels.tumblr.com)

(COVER) FRANK OUIDEMAN



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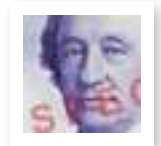
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# THE CANADIAN DOLLAR

In November 2013, the last of Canada's polymer bank notes was released; among them, the \$10 bill. Fully deployed with integrated holograms and invisible-to-

the-eye details, the note is an impregnable safe that fits in your wallet. It also tells of Canada's frontiers, one of which is found at **THE ALGONQUIN RESORT** in

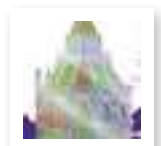
New Brunswick, abutting the placid Passamaquoddy Bay that flows into a rolling and frothy horizon known as the Bay of Fundy. —Roni Reino



**TO BRIBE OR NOT TO BRIBE**  
Accusations that Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald, accepted bribes from potential railroad contractors forced Macdonald to resign in 1873. It's unclear whether voters forgot or forgave, but he returned in 1878 when his party regained power to fix a failing economy and see the railroad installation to its completion.



**SHARED SPACE**  
Sir John A. Macdonald first graced this note in 1969, succeeding Queen Elizabeth II who received the title of "Queen of Canada" in 1953 — a title Macdonald had fought but failed to give Queen Victoria in 1867 during the Confederation of Canada.



**A COLOR CONNECT**  
Tilt the note and see the color images of the Library of Parliament and Sir John A. Macdonald change. The two have a connection: The first Parliamentary librarian, Alpheus Todd, dedicated his volumes on British parliamentary constitutionalism to his friend Macdonald.



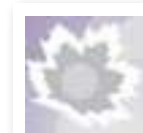
**A GRAND ACCOMPLISHMENT**  
The 1955 flagship locomotive, *The Canadian*, winds its way through the Rockies. The Canadian Pacific Railway was completed during Macdonald's governance in 1885 as the longest line in the world at that time.



**PLASTIC SURGERY**  
Counterfeiting increased in the early 2000s, peaking at 552,691 fake bills in 2004, forcing Canadian officials to reevaluate currency security. To deflect forgery, the 2011 series bills were created, using Australia's groundbreaking technology for polymer bills.



**A BUMPY ROAD MAP**  
Graze the upper corner for 10 raised dots, indicating the value of the bill. Rub John A. Macdonald's shoulders; there's more raised ink — another anti-counterfeiting measure.



**NOT FOR THE NAKED EYE**  
The final authentication test is quite magical. Facing a light source, bring the bill close to your eye, then look through the center circle of the gray maple leaf to see a previously invisible ring of 10s.

**Space Age Money**

Accompanied by a floating microphone, Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield proudly reveals the new \$5 polymer bank note (displaying the country's space milestones) from the International Space Station. [bit.ly/SpaceAge](http://bit.ly/SpaceAge)



# MOD POD

What if building a home was as simple as hanging curtains? With MIMA Lab ([mimahousing.com](http://mimahousing.com)), it is. Inspired by Japanese architecture but born and bred in northern Portugal, the dwelling is a fully customizable system of lightweight panels designed for installation and reconfiguration at any time by just two people. If houseguests are imminent, turn part of an open-kitchen into a spare room in less time than it takes to cook a turkey. It's the perfect solution for an airy – if cozy – abode, and takes only a week to assemble on-site. Measuring nearly 400 square feet, the interior grid – with tracks in the floor and ceiling – allows the walls to be shifted on a whim. The panels, which come in a variety of colors and wood veneers, can also cover windows – good for blocking out not only the sun, but also Peeping Toms green-eyed with envy. –Sarah Tuff



(ALL PHOTOS ON THIS SPREAD) LUKE SHEPARD

## Exactly Autograph Collection

For more of a sampling of the world's most amazing design, art, and ideas that Autograph Collection defines as "Exactly Like Nothing Else," check out posts tagged with the phrase on our Tumblr page ([bit.ly/AutographELNE](http://bit.ly/AutographELNE)) and find the hash tag #ExactlyLikeNothingElse within our Facebook posts ([facebook.com/AutographCollection](https://facebook.com/AutographCollection)) and tweets (@Autograph).

# LEIGH CRAIG'S EDINBURGH

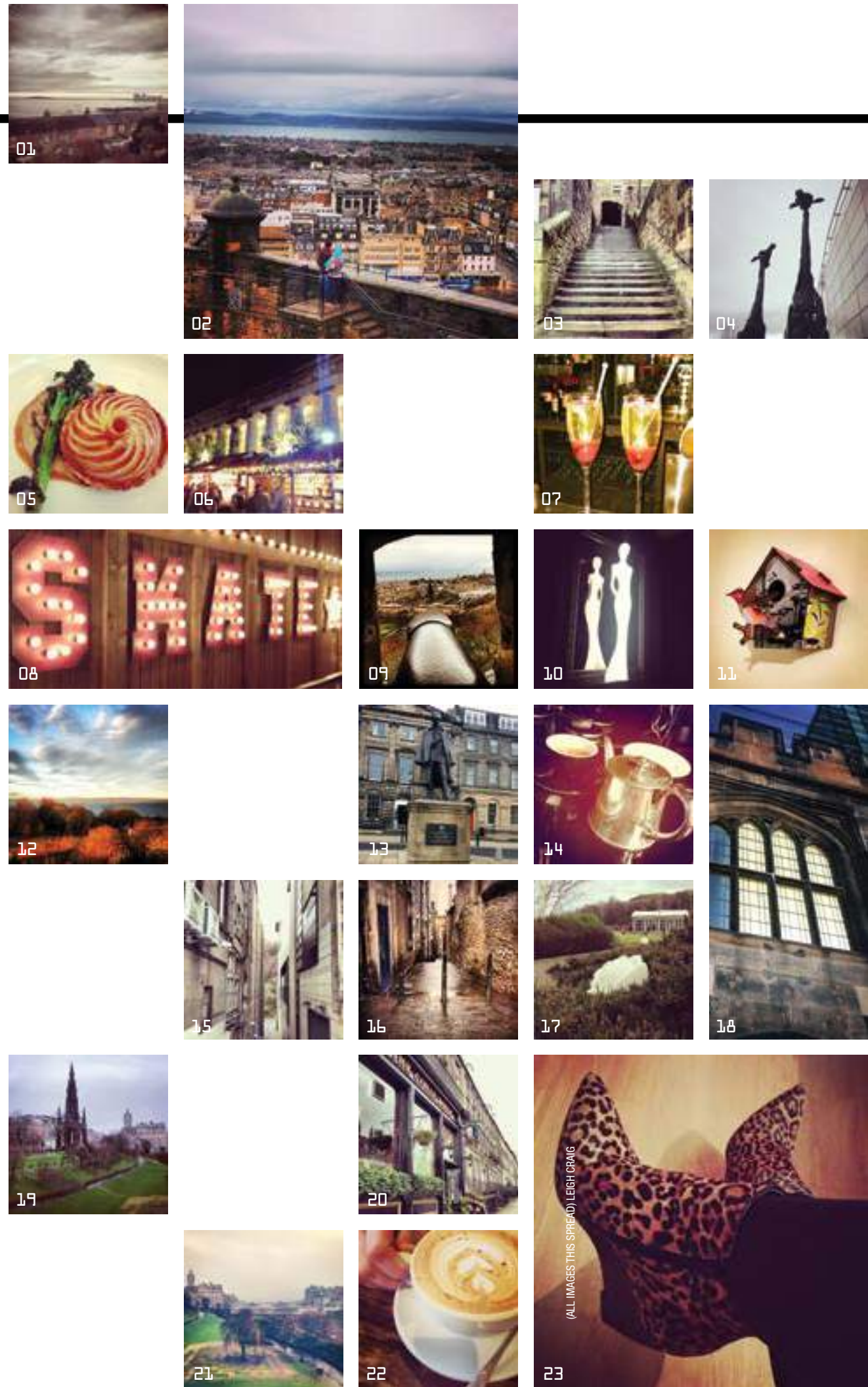
*This native with an eye for aesthetics takes us on a visual tour of her "truly beautiful city" on the banks of the River Forth.*

BY RYAN BRANDT



It takes a discerning eye and a wee bit of vision to transform a hotel's orderly business center into an airy gallery filled with avant-garde art. As a part of its 2013 head-to-toe renovation and entry into the Autograph Collection, that's exactly what happened to **THE GLASSHOUSE** in Edinburgh's city center — thanks to Leigh Craig. The new gallery debuted last summer in the atrium above the reception area, showcasing a rotating exhibit of 30 to 40 canvases, mixed media, and sculptures.

Sometimes demure, other times bubbly, the 37-year-old is no curator — she's a sales and marketing director who grew up just across the River Forth from Edinburgh and who insists she just found the right curator partner in the local Creative Arts Gallery because of their focus on Scottish artists and all mediums. There's no denying her eye, though. So we asked Craig to put it to use once more on a photo-inspired tour when her city was decked during last year's Christmas holidays.



## CRAIG'S PHOTOS, EXPLAINED:

- [1] The uniformity and colors of the houses on her way to work is the draw here, along the banks of the River Forth.
- [2] "Oh, it's truly a beautiful city," she brags, here looking east from Edinburgh Castle. "You have such contrast of old and new — there aren't many cities where you can see [sights like] Calton Hill and the castle on your commute."
- [3] Craig suggests walking is the best way to see her city. Granted, with sites like the very steep Royal Mile, you will get a workout in, too.
- [4] Two metal giraffes stand around the corner from the hotel.
- [5] For a special lunch with a girlfriend, she turns to the Michelin Star-studded Castle Terrace restaurant, a mile-and-a-half from The Glasshouse.
- [6] Edinburgh's festive cheer is on display with this pop-up market on the edge of Princess Street Gardens.
- [7] George Street has great cocktail bars; The Grassmarket square is her choice for pubs.
- [8] A retro sign advertises the holiday ice rink in the city center.
- [9] One of the castle's many cannons makes itself known every day (except Sundays) with the "one o'clock gun," startling visitors while letting locals know it's 1 p.m.
- [10] Craig and colleagues found this seven-foot-tall acrylic statuette at a design show when outfitting the hotel renovation. They named her Penelope and sprinkled seven around the hotel.
- [11] A birdhouse that graces her kitchen wall reinforces a sense of style.
- [12] "I can sit and stare out that window for a long time," says Craig of her living-room view across the river to her hometown, Fife.
- [13] Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, one of Edinburgh's most famous natives, was born in Picardy Place just steps from The Glasshouse.
- [14] Afternoon tea is an Edinburgh weekend to-do at the venerable Prestonfield House.
- [15] A sliver of Calton Hill greenery peeps through this narrow alley.
- [16] The Royal Mile up to the castle includes a variety of "closes," a Scottish term for the narrow cobblestone passageways.
- [17] The white rose is actually a light, lining the terrace of the hotel's rooftop garden from which you can take in the city.
- [18] The Glasshouse was once a church. The building's signature feature remains this breathtaking window, which offers the natural light to the gallery on the other side.
- [19] The spires of the Scott Monument on the edge of Princess Street Gardens reinforce two common Edinburgh themes: its famous local authors (the 200-foot-tall Gothic monument is a tribute to Sir Walter Scott) and its appreciation of sculpture (it includes 64 statues of characters from Scott's books).
- [20] Craig describes the Conan Doyle, right across the street from the hotel, as a "proper pub," the kind of place she meets up "for a quiet drink after work."
- [21] Looking from the Scottish National Gallery across the gardens to North Bridge.
- [22] A cuppa' at her favorite Sunday brunch spot, Leo's Beanery.
- [23] "I realized I have quite a bit of leopard print," laughs Craig of her vast shoe collection. She recommends the shops of Princess Street if you're on the hunt.
- [24] Commissioned for the hotel renovation, this striking seven-foot-wide canvas in the reception area from local artist Claire Heminsley often captivates guests, depicting all of the city's most famous sites.

## Interview with Independents

What does Craig have in common with renowned Spanish interior designer Lorenzo Castillo and the trio of Lee brothers mixing local and "new Korean American" flavors in San Francisco? They're all part of Autograph Collection's ongoing "Interview with Independents" series on Tumblr, where we focus on amazing locals doing things differently with an eye on unique craft. [bit.ly/AutographWI](http://bit.ly/AutographWI)

# THE DUOMO OF MILAN

The notion that in Italy life is lived *tranquillo* is best summed up by the Duomo, an almost-six-century undertaking culminating in Italy's largest Gothic cathedral. During this period, some 80 engineers and architects were employed to build the cathedral dedicated to Santa

Maria Nascente. Its history is its construction, growing more magnificent with each turn (40,000 people can fit inside), each new archbishop, or, as in the case of Napoleon, each new conqueror. Because of it, Milan is called Italy's "moral capital," and the idea that "all

things run through" this Gothic structure is both figurative and literal – case in point, the five-minute walk from the **BOSCOLO MILANO** from whose rooftop terrace guests can take in the cathedral from a vantage point few get to experience. —Michael Persson



1392 / 1461 / 1500 / 1562 / 1805 / 1869 / 1877 / 1943 / 2006 / 2009

Merchant Marco Carelli gives more than 35,000 gold ducats to continue construction. He remains the only non-ordained person buried in the Duomo.

A nail from Christ's cross is stored at the Duomo in a vault above the choir. Each year on September 14th, the Archbishop of Milan is raised to the level of the vault on a special lift, in the form of a cloud decorated with painted canvases and drapery, to reveal the prized possession to the public.

Artist Giuseppe Archimbollo, who would go on to be best known for his fruit and vegetable Vertumnus painting of Emperor Rudolf II, begins his career designing the Duomo's stained-glass windows.

The statue of St. Bartholomew by Marco D'Agate is completed. Depicting the saint, who was completely flayed alive, carrying his own skin draped over his shoulder, it remains the most grotesque of the cathedral's 3,159 statues.

Napoleon Bonaparte is crowned King of Italy. Prior to his coronation, the Emperor ordered completion of the cathedral's façade, assuring that all expenses would fall to the French treasurer, which, in the end, was never paid.

"They say that the Cathedral of Milan is second only to St. Peter's at Rome. I cannot understand how it can be second to anything made by human hands." —Mark Twain

The Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II, the famed shopping gallery connecting the Duomo and Teatro alla Scala opera house, opens. Tradition has it that if you rotate your heel on the bull's genitals, which appear on the mosaic on the Turin coat of arms, Lady Luck will smile upon you.

Allied bombing during World War II badly damages the cathedral during Milan's German occupation.

A more-than-life-size ad of pop icon Madonna for clothing chain H&M is hung from the cathedral's wall, raising the ire of Catholic groups. "It's just an ad, certainly not a canonization," responds the Duomo's Monsignor Luigi Manganini.

While signing autographs in Milan, Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi has his nose broken by a miniature Duomo model hurled by a protestor.

**The Duomo: Scope & Sound**  
Grasp the sheer size and scope of this six-century project in this 360-degree narrated tour.  
[bit.ly/DuomoTour](http://bit.ly/DuomoTour)



MOSAIC: EVGENY MURTOVA



# TAKING TIME-LAPSE "VIDEO" AT NIGHT

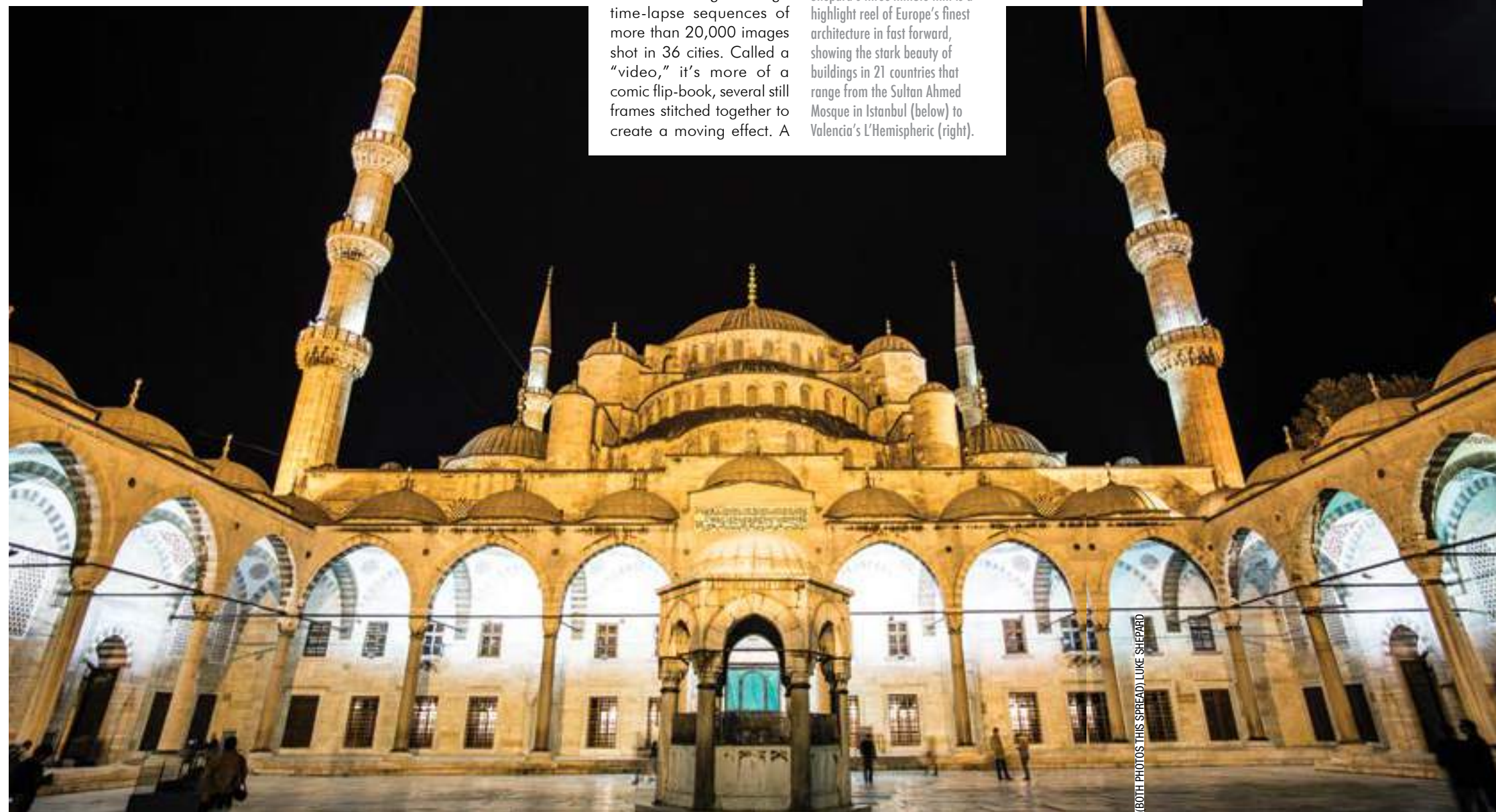
You've never seen Europe like this. The Arc de Triomphe seems to stand stalwart in slow motion, illuminated against the night sky while ant-like people and cars scurry by. Big Ben's hands go 'round and 'round while the Blue Mosque glows golden. Man-made landmarks take on a god-like grandeur beneath a swiftly moving night sky.

Welcome to the world of photographer and videographer Luke Shepard, whose three-and-a-half-minute *Nightvision* film captures the continent's iconic buildings through time-lapse sequences of more than 20,000 images shot in 36 cities. Called a "video," it's more of a comic flip-book, several still frames stitched together to create a moving effect. A

Vimeo "Staff Pick," the stunning *Nightvision* raised more than \$20,000 on Kickstarter and has gone viral, generating hundreds of admirers worldwide.

"I believed I could inspire appreciation for the incredible architecture throughout Europe in a way single pictures cannot," says Shepard, who was drawn to the surreal and unfamiliar perspective that long exposures at night can bring. Here, he shares the essential tricks and must-dos to making your own still shots come alive. —Sarah Tuff

Shepard's three-minute film is a highlight reel of Europe's finest architecture in fast forward, showing the stark beauty of buildings in 21 countries that range from the Sultan Ahmed Mosque in Istanbul (below) to Valencia's L'Hemispheric (right).



## THE TOOLS

- Use a tripod if shooting manually to keep the image from blurring and to help move the camera between frames.
- Get a camera with a full-frame sensor to get more of the image in each frame — important when capturing buildings. Shepard uses the Canon 5D Mark III.
- Use the camera's internal "intervalometer" to trip the shutter; otherwise, a remote is required.
- Splurge for prime lenses, which are fixed at one focal length and thus have larger max apertures (f2.0 or f2.8), letting more light into the camera — great for night photography.
- Stitch together photos in postproduction using After Effects and Premiere Pro: After Effects to create smaller sequences; Premiere Pro to edit those sequences and add music.

## CAMERA WORK

- Always shoot in manual mode to prevent the camera from overriding your necessary settings, like exposure length.
- Consider what your subject is to determine the right exposure length: Stars move slower than clouds, so they require longer exposures (30 to 60 seconds) to make their movement noticeable; to prevent clouds from blurring, shoot at 1 to 2 seconds; for architecture, expose at 1 to 3 seconds.
- Shoot in RAW format, which will give you the most control in postproduction — this also means memory cards of at least 32 gigabytes each are a must.
- Adjust the white balance on the camera to handle warmer (more yellow, tungsten) or colder (more blue, daylight or halogen) lighting conditions. In order to balance the white in an image, you'll need to add yellow or blue to counteract the opposing tint.

## YOUR ENVIRONMENT

- Know where all light sources are to avoid having your and your camera's shadows creep into the frame.
- Have a friend assist as a second set of eyes. Interruptions are inevitable in long-sequence time-lapse images — from police, to carousing tourists, to the wandering dog.
- Steel yourself for starting all over, even if you're well into the shoot.

## Nightvision

Shepard transforms Europe's landmarks when his 20,000 still images come together in fluid effect.  
[lshep.com](http://lshep.com)



# SPANISH STEPS

Everything you imagine southern Spain to be comes to life in Seville: flamenco dancing, sherry drinking, and yes, even bull fighting. History runs as deep as its traditions, with distinctly different quarters dividing this city split by the Canal de Alfonso XIII, from the historic Triana district on the western bank to the city's former working naval port on the river's eastern bank. With year-round festivals that don't start until after the scorching sun sets and a rainbow of color appears, no matter where you turn, we narrow down your choices to within a 10-minute walk from the **FONTECRUZ SEVILLA**.  
—Joni Lacroix

## PLAZA DEL SALVADOR

Spend your evening like Sevillanos do: dining at an alfresco tapas bar — like traditional plates of jamón, aceitunas, and queso (ham, olives, and cheese) at Bodeguita del Salvador. Or hang out on the steps of Parroquia del Divino Salvador, a circa-1674 baroque church built on the site of Muslim Ishbiliya's main mosque, where you can watch the crowds go by.

## CATEDRAL DE SEVILLA

As the largest church in the world by volume, this 12th-century Gothic masterpiece has arguably the best 360-degree view of the city from the 322-foot Giralda Tower, as well as glimpses of buttresses and gargoyles while climbing to the stunning lookout.  
+34 902 09 96 92, [catedraldesevilla.es](http://catedraldesevilla.es)

## REAL ALCÁZAR DE SEVILLA

The majesty of Europe's oldest working royal palace is the draw, but the Moorish architecture dating back to the 10th century is most impressive: elaborate Mujédar tiled rooms, grand archways and corridors, and evergreen inner courtyards that allow for the division of public and private life when the royal family is in residence.  
+34 954 50 23 24, [alcazarsevilla.org](http://alcazarsevilla.org)

## BARRIO SANTA CRUZ

This former Jewish quarter was intentionally designed to be a labyrinth of narrow cobbled streets and fragrant orange trees to shade the sun's rays. Whitewashed houses with jasmine gardens share curb space with landmark palaces and churches, as well as artisan shops, like Coco Seville with its mosaic-tiled mugs and hand-painted silk scarves.

## LOS GALLOS TABLAO FLAMENCO

Twelve dancers and musicians pack the stage of this renovated historic home for two hours at Seville's oldest flamenco show. And while the sangria and the living-room-style seating are mainstays, the show is never the same.  
+34 954 21 69 81, [tablaolosgallos.com](http://tablaolosgallos.com)

## AIRE DE SEVILLA

Ancient tradition gets a modern-day face-lift in this 16th-century Moorish mansion-turned-spa, adorned with midnight blue Arab tiles, candlelit chambers, and carved dark-wood ceilings. Massages and facials aside, dip your toe in a series of thermal bath and hammam rooms arranged in order of descending temperature.  
+34 955 01 00 25, [airedesevilla.com](http://airedesevilla.com)

## METROPOL PARASOL

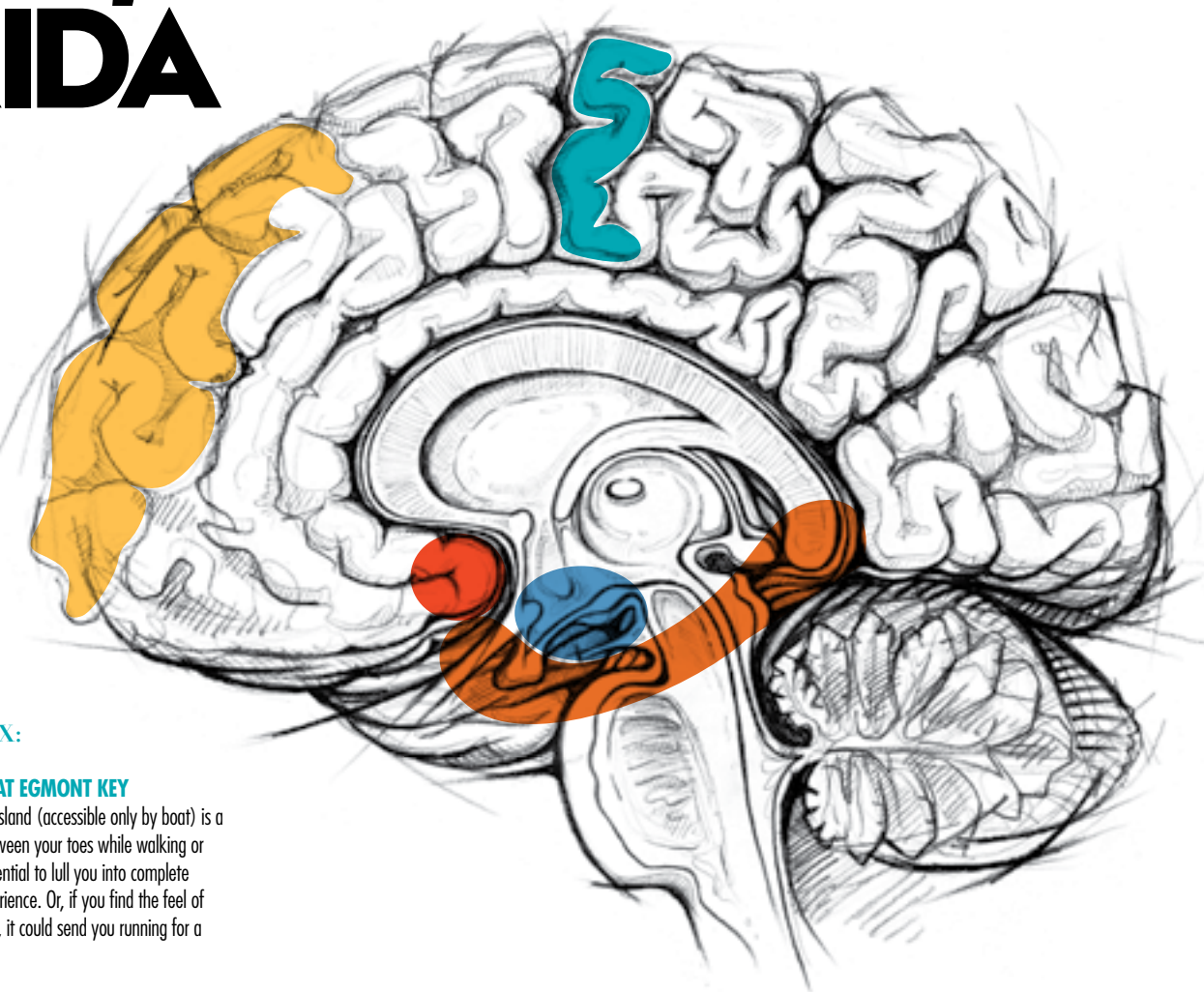
Aptly nicknamed the "Mushrooms of the Incarnation" by Sevillanos, the layout of this largest wooden structure in the world was dictated by the Roman ruins that lie beneath. Under the waffle-like canopy are a farmers' market, an elevated plaza, and archeological museum; above, a winding walkway makes you feel suspended in midair when taking in views of the city.  
+34 606 63 52 14



# TAMPA, FLORIDA

When bombarded by an array of stimuli in Florida's city by the bay, which parts of your brain really start singing and zinging?

BY CATHERINE SHANNON



## [SOMATOSENSORY CORTEX: TACTILE SENSATION]

### LAYING OUT ON THE SECLUDED BEACH AT EGMONT KEY

The southwestern strip of beach on this 400-acre island (accessible only by boat) is a touchy-feely paradise with super soft sand felt between your toes while walking or laying out. This fine-grained sensation has the potential to lull you into complete relaxation, supplying an almost massage-like experience. Or, if you find the feel of sand to be the equivalent of nails on a chalkboard, it could send you running for a towel and some sandals.

## [PREFRONTAL CORTEX: SUSTAINED ATTENTION] BIKING TO BAYSHORE BOULEVARD

The eastern stretch of this four-and-a-half-mile-long continuously running sidewalk overlooks stunning views of Tampa Bay, eliciting a prolonged staring session for miles. But it is Florida's most opulent mansions that really causes cyclists to stop, drop their wheels (and their jaws), and be drawn in. The most gawk-worthy stands at 1801 Bayshore — a 13,712-square-foot Mediterranean revival said to be one of Tampa's most expensive properties and one that you'll fixate on and wonder what lies beyond those doors.

## [PREFRONTAL CORTEX: ANTICIPATION] SIPPING A VAUNTED VINTAGE

Great expectations are bound to bubble up when you learn that Epicurean Hotel's lobby-based Bern's Fine Wines & Spirits is home to one of the world's hardest-to-find vintages: 1996's Domaine de la Romanée-Conti La Tâche from Burgundy. Of which less than 2,000 cases were made, this coveted pinot noir's rarity, coupled with its 96-point Wine Spectator score, has the power to summon maximum levels of suspense, excitement, even stirring long-hibernating butterflies.

## [AMYGDALA: NOSTALGIA] TASTING EXECUTIVE CHEF CHAD JOHNSON'S "MY SUNDAY SUPPER"

The hotel's restaurant, Élevage, has a signature entrée of vinegar-glazed country pork ribs, white beans, and corn bread madeleines inspired by a beloved dinner Johnson's own grandmother made for him Sunday evenings growing up. Knowing this has the power to prompt your own memories of home cooking and the satisfying flavors associated with comfort food, beware! Happy sentimentality, coupled with deliciousness, could trigger a whopping appetite.

## [NUCLEUS ACCUMBENS: PLEASURE THROUGH SOUND] LISTENING TO THE MIGHTY WURLITZER THEATER ORGAN

The Tampa Theatre is still home to its original 1926 now-1,400-pipe "Mighty Wurlitzer" organ, providing the music that accompanied silent films of the day. However, the most fascinating part of this organ — which you can still hear in action during silent film showings today — isn't a church-like melody it emits, but sounds of the era's special effects, like train whistles, car horns, and doors being knocked on. Close your eyes and cast your memory to those classic silent flicks of Charlie Chaplin and enjoy a chuckle.

## [PERIRHINAL CORTEX: VISUAL OBJECT RECOGNITION] LOOKING AT AN ORIGINAL ROY LICHTENSTEIN

The most famous Lichtenstein piece housed in the permanent collection of the University of Southern Florida's (USF) Contemporary Art Museum is his *Brushstroke Chair and Ottoman*. Not just because the artist worked on it here in the late '80s, but because, for pop art enthusiasts, the iconic brushstroke symbol is instantly attributable to Lichtenstein and may cause a reminiscence of when and where you first saw it.

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## THE CURATED

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THE DOORS OF NEW YORK'S ART WORLD SWUNG WIDE OPEN FOR **PAIGE POWELL** AS ONE OF ANDY WARHOL'S CLOSEST CONFIDANTES IN THE 1980S. THE ONLY QUESTION DURING HER RECENT TWO-YEAR CURATION PROJECT FOR THE RE-DEBUT OF THE LEXINGTON HOTEL WAS WHICH DOORS – NEW AND OLD – WOULD SHE TRY?

**BY RACHEL WOLFF**

BILLY FARRELL/BFANVC.COM

POWELL **STARTED DATING BASQUIAT** IN 1983 AND,  
 AS HE WAS LACKING NEW YORK GALLERY  
 REPRESENTATION AT THE TIME, **MOUNTED AN EXHIBITION**  
 OF HIS WORK IN HER UPPER WEST SIDE APARTMENT.

In January, the New York art world fêted one of its own, Paige Powell. The occasion: her solo photography show at The Suzanne Geiss Company in Soho. The subject: "Reclining Nude: Jean-Michel Basquiat," a selection of intimate portraits of her onetime paramour and the celebrated late-'70s street artist. The crowd: divine. Gallerist Jeffrey Deitch presided, it seemed, in his signature spectacles and suit, and Powell was flanked at various points throughout the evening by other household names: photographer David

LaChapelle, artist-designers Isabel and Ruben Toledo, artist-architect Maya Lin, nouveau-cabaret star Justin Vivian Bond, chanteur Rufus Wainwright, and auteur Gus Van Sant.

It left little doubt that Powell, some three decades removed from her "it girl" status as one of Andy Warhol's closest confidantes, remains deeply involved in what makes the contemporary art scene in this city hum. Yet, what the sparkly soiree and strappy heels blur is that Powell thinks nothing of getting her hands dirty. Especially when it comes to digging deep in the name of art.

So it was for her curatorial project for the debut of Midtown's The Lexington hotel last year, a two-year project from start to finish. Imagine her traveling the streets of Harlem to find undiscovered greats. Or perusing the densely packed booths at the Brooklyn Flea for inspiration. And then enlisting some of her illustrious artist-friends to contribute.

The final product is a kaleidoscope of art that reflects the eclectic new interior: Bespoke comic strips, jazzy grand dames, and abstracted visions hang salon-style over the bar's banquettes; elegant laser-cut monoliths demure in the lobby; and languid ingénues wrap around elevator cabins and across walls in a series of new murals by the renowned Mr. Toledo – bold, bright vignettes of would-be guests at a *Gatsby*-esque party thrown on the set of *Metropolis*.

"This area was a hotbed of activity," says Powell of the hotel built in 1929 by architectural firm Schultze and Weaver. "The elegance, the energy, the glamour, the music, the etiquette..." all factored in to her conceit.

"The platform is basically a Jazz Age icon reimaged," says David Ashen, whose Long Island City-based firm, Dash Design, spearheaded the hotel's recent \$46-million overhaul. "That sort of became the foundation for how we wanted to think about the art."

But Powell wasn't drawing from the Jazz Age alone. Her approach also owes something to her unique perspective on New York's cultural DNA, having long been entwined in it herself.

A fifth-generation Oregonian, Powell

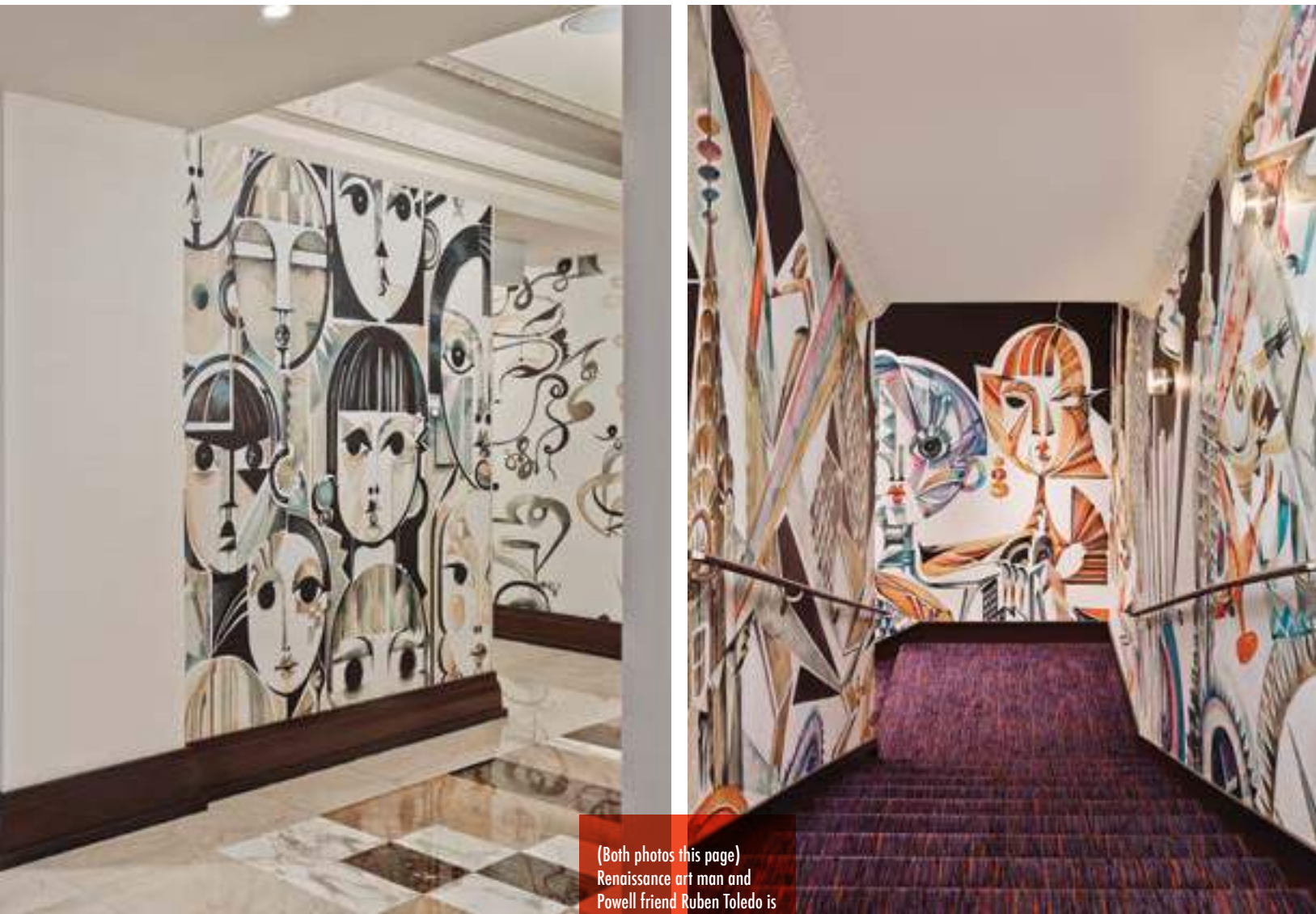


(BOTH PHOTOS THIS SPREAD) FRANK OUDENAN



The Lexington's common areas offer plenty of opportunities to take in Powell's selections and the Jazz Age vibe of the newly renovated hotel, including the library (above) and lobby bar (left); (previous spread) Powell's Tinker Bell stature belies a woman who knows good art when she sees it and isn't afraid to get some dirt under her nails to find it.

LANGUID INGÉNUES WRAP AROUND ELEVATOR CABINS  
 AND ACROSS WALLS IN **A SERIES OF MURALS** BY RENOWNED  
 FASHION ILLUSTRATOR **RUBEN TOLEDO** – **BOLD, BRIGHT**  
**VIGNETTES** OF WOULD-BE GUESTS AT A *GATSBY*-ESQUE PARTY  
 THROWN ON THE SET OF *METROPOLIS*.



(Both photos this page) Renaissance art man and Powell friend Ruben Toledo is best known for his fashion designs but has spread his creativity across all mediums, as well as the hotel with this dream-like mural; (opposite) another notable friend, Alba Clemente, delivered these laser-cut panel screens bookending the lobby.

(BOTH PHOTOS THIS SPREAD) FRANK OUDEMANN

left her native Portland for New York in 1980, intent on working for either Andy Warhol or Woody Allen. In Portland, she had watched Allen's films repeatedly and discovered Warhol's *Interview* magazine through a friend. "It was just magnetic," she says of the iconic publication. "I had never seen anything that resonated so much with me and my interests. It had the faces of people that I'd never seen before – young musicians, designers, artists, architects, impresarios."

No other magazines, no other filmmakers would have sufficed, she insists: "I had this razor blade focus. If I was going to move to New York and leave my friends and family, it had to be exactly what I wanted." She boldly knocked on their doors and, as fate (and persistence, it seems) would have it, she received entry-level offers from both *Interview* and Allen's producer and manager, Jack Rollins. The *Interview* offer started sooner so she took the gig. She worked her way up the ladder at the publication over the subsequent 14 years, striking up a close friendship with Warhol himself in the process – the two often made the rounds to parties and clubs together, arm in arm.

Powell started dating street artist Jean-Michel Basquiat in 1983 and, as he was lacking New York gallery representation at the time, mounted an exhibition of his work in her Upper West Side apartment. The artist moved in shortly thereafter. Living uptown installed Powell in close proximity to Harlem, which had a remarkable impact on her – and on this project.

"It was sort of like a sanctuary for me," she says, speaking by phone from Portland, Oregon, where she returned in 1994 to focus on animal rights work and independent curatorial projects. "The people were neighborly; it wasn't gentrified. The restaurants, the after-hours clubs, the bakeries, the music...I just had this incredible connection with it."

Indeed, the famed urban hub is where Powell and The Lexington's histories meet as the Jazz Age-era supper clubs that once populated the hotel's milieu were themselves populated with staggeringly talented musicians hailing from Harlem, from the very streets where, decades later, Powell would frequent after-hours clubs and Baptist churches. Powell took it as something of a sign.

She scoured the neighborhood for undiscovered talent and even took Ashen on a field trip of sorts to The Harlem School of the Arts, where they came upon the illustrative work of painting instructors Susan Kricorian and Ghislaine Sabiti, both of whom contributed jazz-infused paintings

(Sabiti's inspired by jazz great Dee Dee Bridgewater) reminiscent of retro nights out on the town. Others evoke New York's singular glitz and glamour, like Rose Hartman's photographs of Lenny Kravitz, Betsy Johnson, and Liza Minnelli and Gus Storms's four-part comic strip in which a couple is sucked in to an eerie art-deco vortex.

"It was a learning experience for me," Ashen says. "New York is kind of Paige's adopted hometown. I knew there'd be layers of the story that would come out of this."

Powell's primary tactic, it seems, is to keep her eyes and ears open at all times, as she never quite knows when a synergistic



(Both photos) Powell didn't miss an opportunity to remind guests staying in the Centerfield Suite of its DiMaggio-Monroe connection.



THE HOTEL'S CENTERFIELD SUITE  
(SO TITLED FOR ITS **MOST FAMOUS RESIDENT,**  
**JOE DIMAGGIO**, AND HIS THEN-WIFE, **MARILYN**  
**MONROE**) CONTAINS A NOSTALGIC,  
LARGE-SCALE TAKE ON YANKEE STADIUM  
AND TWO ACID-HUED PORTRAITS OF DIMAGGIO  
AND MONROE MADE WITH MELTED CRAYONS.

(BOTH PHOTOS THIS SPREAD) FRANK OUDEMANN

relationship might blossom.

She sourced lobby bar paintings from the Brooklyn Flea, mined art school connections and artists' assistants' networks for fresh talent, and reached out to past acquaintances she thought might be a good fit. A friend from Los Angeles, for instance, introduced her to an acquaintance a few years before named Alex Asher Daniel, a talented portraitist who seeks to capture his subjects' very essence by prying stories out of them as he paints from life. Powell commissioned him to paint four jazz musicians for a display near The Lexington's lobby elevators. The freewheeling musical genre itself has long influenced Daniel's work, and the paintings have a controlled wildness to them, with bursts of color breaking free from the constraints of delicate outlines, as if they themselves were visual embodiments of Coltrane's runs.

The prevalence and significance of music during the hotel's genesis in the 1920s also inspired Powell to tap in to a favorite resource of hers, the Creative Growth Art Center in Oakland, California, a facility that serves physically, mentally, and developmentally disabled artists. She

learned about the organization in 1998 through her fellow downtown publishing magnate, Kim Hastreiter (who founded *Paper* in 1984).

Its roster of artists has a strong following among New York's culturati – David Byrne is a collector, notes Powell, and Creative Growth artists have exhibited at buzzy New York galleries like White Columns and Gavin Brown. Powell visits often and continues to support. "The place itself is really a miracle," she says. "And music is really important to so many artists there." That musicality comes through in the rhythms of the work – much of which hangs in the salon-style lobby bar display – however figurative or abstract it may be.

The hotel's Centerfield Suite (so titled for its most famous resident, Joe DiMaggio, and his then-wife, Marilyn Monroe) contains commissioned works by Pacific Northwest painter Jessica Bonin, whose nostalgic, large-scale take on Yankee Stadium fills its entryway, and New York artist Alex Morel, who contributed acid-hued portraits of DiMaggio and Monroe made with melted crayons.

Last but not least, Powell commissioned two dear friends to create striking signature works. Alba Clemente (wife of renowned painter Francesco Clemente who, like Powell, came of age in the 1980s New York art scene) has a background in theater and design that informed her contributions, which include a series of stage-wing-like screens that flank the hotel lobby. The laser-cut white resin panels have an Indian feel to them, with their clean lines and crescent-shaped cutouts. They gently enclose the space while giving passersby a glimpse at what might lie beyond.

The other large-scale contribution comes from Toledo, whose whimsical gamines fill a wild mural that wraps around the main elevator bay, seep in to the elevators themselves, and travel up the staircase into the hotel's mezzanine. The idea, says Toledo (who recently, in collaboration with his wife, fashion designer Isabel Toledo, crafted costumes for the Broadway hit *After Midnight*), was "to create a sense of traveling through a dreamscape" – one populated by bobbed bombshells pursing their lips and stretching their limbs as they're surrounded by abstract fragments that recall music notations and art-deco design.

Toledo also aimed to instill "a sense of surprise, along with a sense of familiar memories – an emotional déjà vu, a feeling of complete rapture that you can't easily dispense with," he adds. "Art can produce this sense of gentle obsession." Just ask Powell. She's living proof. #

#### # Rethinking The Lex

In this quick video, David Ashen, the interior designer behind the \$46-million renovation of **THE LEXINGTON**, discusses the creative process behind the redesign.

[bit.ly/AshenLex](http://bit.ly/AshenLex)



# THE/ UNSETTLED/ DUST/

BRITISH PHOTOGRAPHER **DAVE BAKER** TAKES US OVER THE CONCERTINA WIRE AND BEHIND LOCKED DOORS INTO THE GUERRILLA WORLD OF URBAN EXPLORATION, WHERE ABANDONED HOSPITALS, FACTORIES, AND HOMES ARE TRANSFORMED INTO ACCIDENTAL MUSEUMS IN OUR MIDST.

BY **JEFF HARDER**



## PRIPYAT HOSPITAL UKRAINE

Once a bustling city near the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, Pripyat has been abandoned since the 1986 nuclear catastrophe. Inside this operating theater, firefighters who responded to the disaster were attended to before succumbing to radiation poisoning. Even today, the firefighters' uniforms stored in the basement remain too dangerous to approach.



#### POWER PLANT BELGIUM

Baker climbed some 50 feet to get this shot of a fossil fuel power plant's cooling tower in Charleroi, Belgium. The distorted vantage point doesn't capture its true immensity. By Baker's estimate, the rim is somewhere between 400 and 500 feet up.



#### UNIVERSITÉ DU VAL BENOÎT BELGIUM

Inside dilapidated buildings, it's not uncommon for urbexers to run across other tribes on the fringe: squatters, drug addicts, and metal thieves. During a shoot at this abandoned university in Liege, Belgium, where Baker photographed this antiquated typewriter, a man wandered toward Baker and asked for the time. It was six o'clock. The man began stuffing his jacket with all the copper he could grab before making his exit to cash it in. "Gotta' go," was all he said.

**D**eep beneath the streets of Antwerp, Belgium, a pair of headlights pierced the darkness, announcing the behemoth charging on the subway tracks behind them. And there was Dave Baker, out in front, with nothing left to do but run as fast as he could.

It was May 2011. The plan was simple: When the time was right, Baker and a few friends would blitz from a live subway platform to a concealed doorway. They measured the intermission between trains

that passed through the station at about 45 seconds. But sometimes, without warning, a train would arrive more quickly. Down on the tracks, they realized they picked the wrong train.

Baker and company dove out of the way, dusted themselves off, and found the grail of their transgression: the tunnel of a half-built metro system, situated beneath its active counterpart, abandoned back in the early 2000s after its developers ran out of funds. One of his friends flipped a switch. Lights raced along the right side of the

tunnel, one at a time, like some antiquated vision of a space-age future, and Baker began pressing his camera's shutter release.

In virtually every city in the world, from Detroit to London to Melbourne, there are others like Baker. They call themselves urban explorers, a loose affiliation of daredevils and preservationists who finds pleasure in shimmying through size-too-small windows, traipsing across rotten support beams, and lugging costly camera equipment into worthless places: shuttered hospitals, factories, homes, schools, and other man-made

structures left to perish. Sometimes they're looking for a way out as soon as they get in, just in case men with badges show up. But when the light hits just right, it obscures the risks and illuminates the rewards, the unheralded histories and unlikely beauty outside the margins.

Five years ago, 35-year-old Baker, a resident of Norwich, England, and the proprietor of forum site TalkUrbex.com, dove headlong in to photography. Wandering in to off-limits places, he says, was an impulse since childhood: Soon, he was slithering



through broken windows, catching cuts and scrapes to find out what was inside a decrepit building. (In an erstwhile mental hospital, he touched the walls of a padded cell to discover that they aren't actually soft at all.) He only learned that urban exploration — "urbex," for short — had a name after clicking through other explorers' Flickr pages.

Urban exploration has apocryphal origins: It could have started a few decades ago, with the coining of the phrase in a 1996 urbex fanzine, or in the 18th century,

with Philibert Aspaïr's wanderings in the Catacombs of Paris. That lack of official history reflects urban explorers as true individuals, unbound by a club charter or rules of conduct. "Once you're actually off the beaten path of the law, you kind of make your own code," says Bryan Papciak, a filmmaker and urban explorer from the Boston area. For example, a few urbexers see no problem with taking artifacts despite the hobby's unofficial mantra: "Take nothing but photographs, leave nothing but footprints." Most urban explorers are, in fact,

involved in photography, and trends that focus on the so-called "aesthetics of decay" are among the catalysts for the modern incarnation of urban exploration, says Alastair Bonnett, a professor of social geography at England's Newcastle University. Another is that derelict buildings are some of the last blank spots on the map. "The really unknown and interesting places are under our feet, around the corner, in the old house up on the hill that no one goes to," Bonnett says.

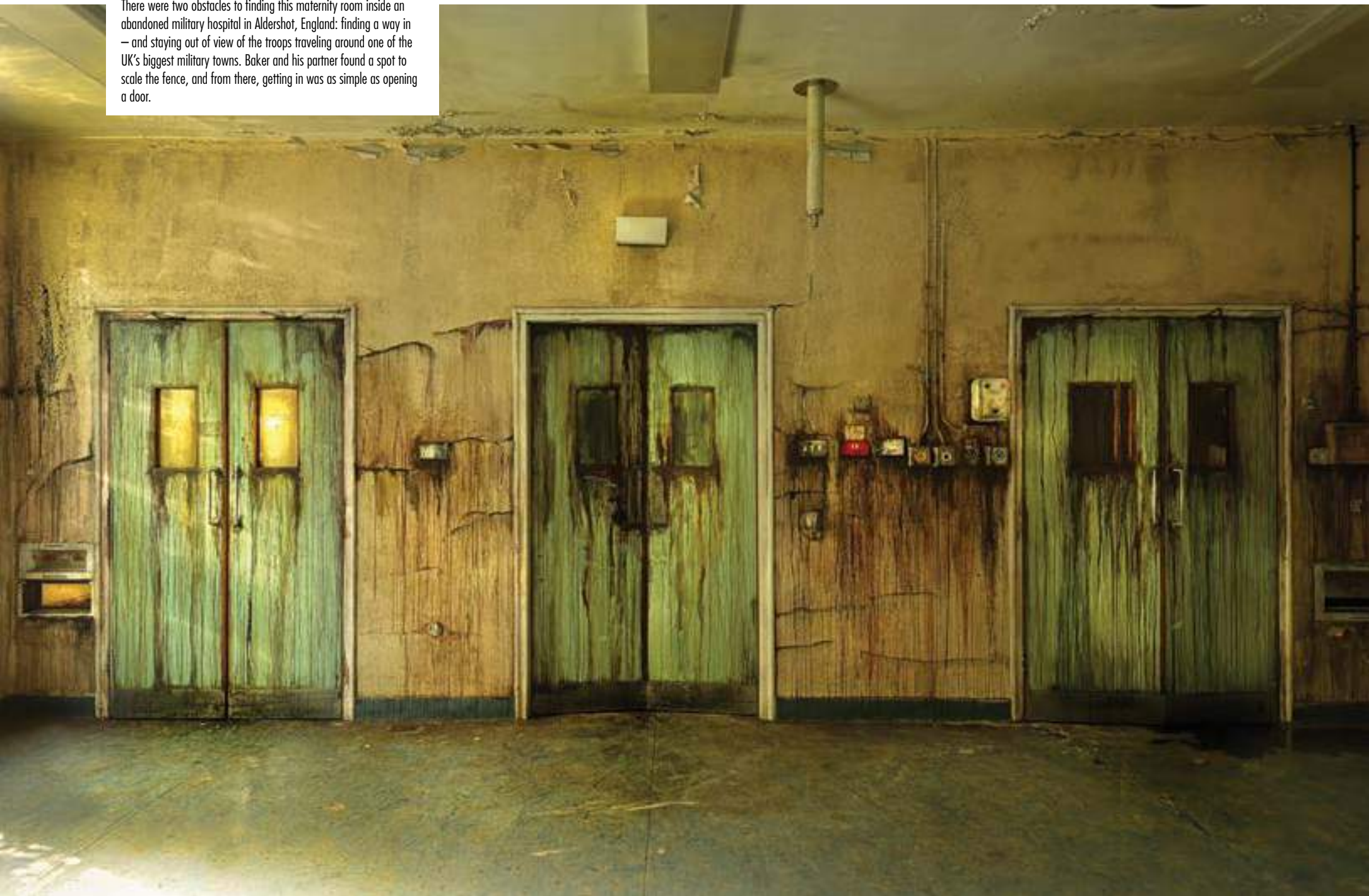
Urban exploration draws more than

adrenaline junkies: Baker says he knows urban explorers who are commercial airline pilots, lawyers, and medical professionals. Baker is a father; his main exploration partner, Lucy Shires, is also a parent — and his fiancée. "We've been certain places six, seven, eight times to make sure we've got everything, from a photographic point of view. That's not about thrill seeking," says Shires, who opted out of the Antwerp subway escapade.

Still, there are ingrained risks to urban exploration, from asbestos to the inevitable

**CAMBRIDGE MILITARY HOSPITAL UNITED KINGDOM**

There were two obstacles to finding this maternity room inside an abandoned military hospital in Aldershot, England: finding a way in — and staying out of view of the troops traveling around one of the UK's biggest military towns. Baker and his partner found a spot to scale the fence, and from there, getting in was as simple as opening a door.



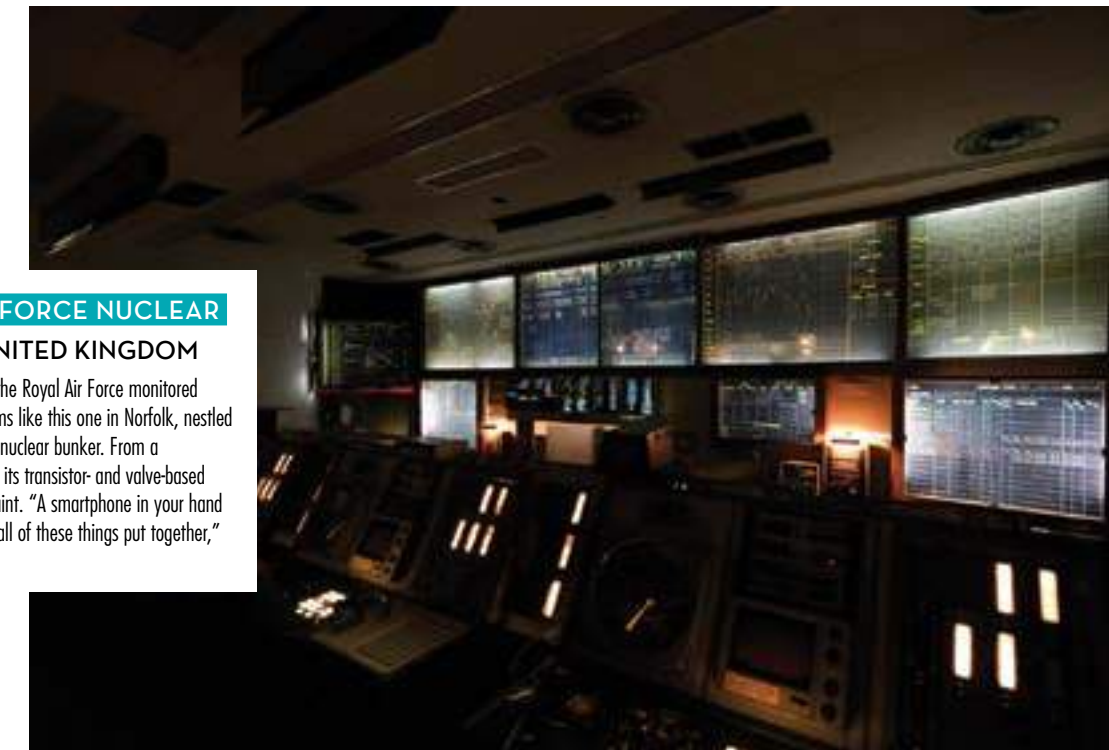
**PREMETRO BELGIUM**

To prevent outsiders from pillaging a cherished spot — like this half-built train station in Antwerp — Baker says that his inner circle might pass GPS coordinates and other information privately via phone or private online forums. Months later, those outside the circle are finally made aware of these finds. "[The locations] only go mainstream when everyone in the smaller group has had their shoot in there," Baker says.



**ROYAL AIR FORCE NUCLEAR BUNKER UNITED KINGDOM**

During the Cold War, the Royal Air Force monitored British skies from rooms like this one in Norfolk, nestled inside a subterranean nuclear bunker. From a 21st-century vantage, its transistor- and valve-based technology seems quaint. "A smartphone in your hand is more capable than all of these things put together," Baker says.



## ECVB POWER PLANT BELGIUM

Baker visited this power plant outside of Ghent four times. There was some urgency in his visits — it was demolished just months after his last visit in April 2013.



crumble of time. “I’ve put my foot through floors so many times I can’t count,” says Brad Pitcher, a “retired” urban explorer who lives in Texas; the worst involved plunging through to his hip, some three stories above the ground floor of a New York mental hospital. Urbexers have died in storm drains and industrial buildings.

Then there’s the matter of trespassing. It’s a benign civil offense in the UK, but Belgian and French police can issue fines on the spot. Baker says he has heard “horror stories” about corrupt Ukrainian police snatching passports. And while climbing

fences and turning doorknobs is harmless, forcing entry can provoke criminal consequences. This pall of impropriety leads some explorers to stick to aliases.

Others have no compunctions about using their real names. To Baker and Shires, it’s a matter of their legitimacy as professional photographers, who don’t do violence to the places they portray — aliases signal that there’s something to hide. Subway war stories aside, Baker and Shires often ask property owners for permission first — and usually, they say yes. With sanctioning, they’ve visited forgotten places like



## BERELLE BREWERY GERMANY

Patience is a prerequisite for urbex — beneath the dust, there’s as much trash as treasure. After finding little more than darkness and debris in this abandoned brewery near Berlin, Baker walked up into an attic: “It was full of really cool stuff: sample bottles of beer, records on how they tested and adjusted recipes, and the light in there was amazing.”

Pripyat City in the shadow of Chernobyl’s reactors and empty Cold War-era nuclear bunkers in the UK. “Sometimes we make money at the end of it,” says Baker, who works as an architectural and concept art photographer by day, “but that’s not the driver; it’s about going out and experiencing amazing places that a lot of people never get to see.”

Today, rifts are emerging among explorers, between daredevils looking for dangerous spots and aesthetes looking for evocative subjects. Purists fear that attention will draw vandals looking for abandoned

buildings only to smash them to pieces. But in urban exploration, the allure isn’t in asserting yourself upon a place; it’s the place itself. “The outcome is you get some photos and you take them away, but the real key thing is the experience, what you’re feeling when you’re there,” Baker says. Every noise echoes. What’s around the corner is a mystery. The places can often feel wrong, he says, like “a movie set full of bad things.”

“You think, I could be at home, doing normal stuff,” Baker says. “But then you think, I’d actually rather be here.”

### The Lost Portfolio

Click through Dave Baker’s complete collection of his urban explorations at your peril — fascinating and haunting image after image may cause you to wonder what happened to your afternoon.

[davidbakerphotography.com](http://davidbakerphotography.com)





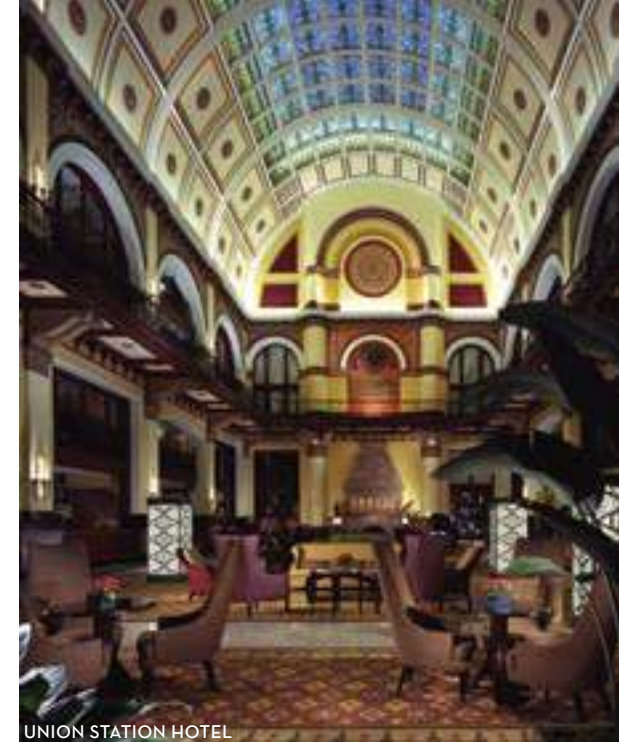
ST. ERMIN'S HOTEL



HOTEL ICON



MANSION ON FORSYTH PARK



UNION STATION HOTEL

# URBEXING/ THE/ AUTOGRAPH

DISCOVERING A BUILDING'S PAST LIFE NEED NOT REQUIRE TIPTOEING THROUGH THE DARKNESS. AT THESE AUTOGRAPH COLLECTION DESTINATIONS, CLUES TO THEIR COLORFUL HISTORIES ARE PLEASANTLY PRESERVED — AND IN PLAIN VIEW.

## ST. ERMIN'S HOTEL LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

Once a 15th-century chapel, this central London hotel is renowned for its role in 20th-century British espionage. During World War II, Britain's secret intelligence service (more commonly known as MI6) directed reconnaissance and sabotage activities from its headquarters on the top floors of St. Ermin's Hotel. Halfway up the lobby staircase, there's an entrance to a now-inaccessible tunnel running from the hotel to the Houses of Parliament.

## UNION STATION HOTEL NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

First opened in 1900, the lobby of this former railroad station is replete with original installations: a pair of bas-relief panels that depicts a train and a horse-drawn chariot, marble floors, limestone fireplaces, and 100-year-old stained glass at the top of a vaulted ceiling. In 1977, the station was designated a National Historic Landmark.

## HOTEL ICON HOUSTON, TEXAS

First built in 1911 at 12 stories high, this building was among the first concrete-and-steel skyscrapers in the United States, housing the Union National Bank and a host of other occupants over the years. The 30-foot Doric columns in the lobby are vestiges of the original Greek-inspired design, as are the keystone renderings of Hermes, the god of trade. When you check in, there's no way to miss the giant vault door behind the front desk.

## BOSCOLO PRAGUE PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC

An inscription on the entryway to this hotel reads "Hypotecni Banca Ceska" — or *Czech Mortgage Bank*, the building's original role at the end of the 19th century. Traces of this past identity remain, most notably on the restored neoclassical façade, and in the cigar bar, located underground in what was once the bank's vault.

## AC PALACIO DE SANTA PAULA GRANADA, SPAIN

This hotel derives much of its architectural identity from a past life as a 12th-century convent. The restaurant, El Claustro, is located in the former dining hall, and the hotel terrace looks down into the convent's courtyard-esque cloister.

## L'HERMITAGE GANTOIS LILLE, FRANCE

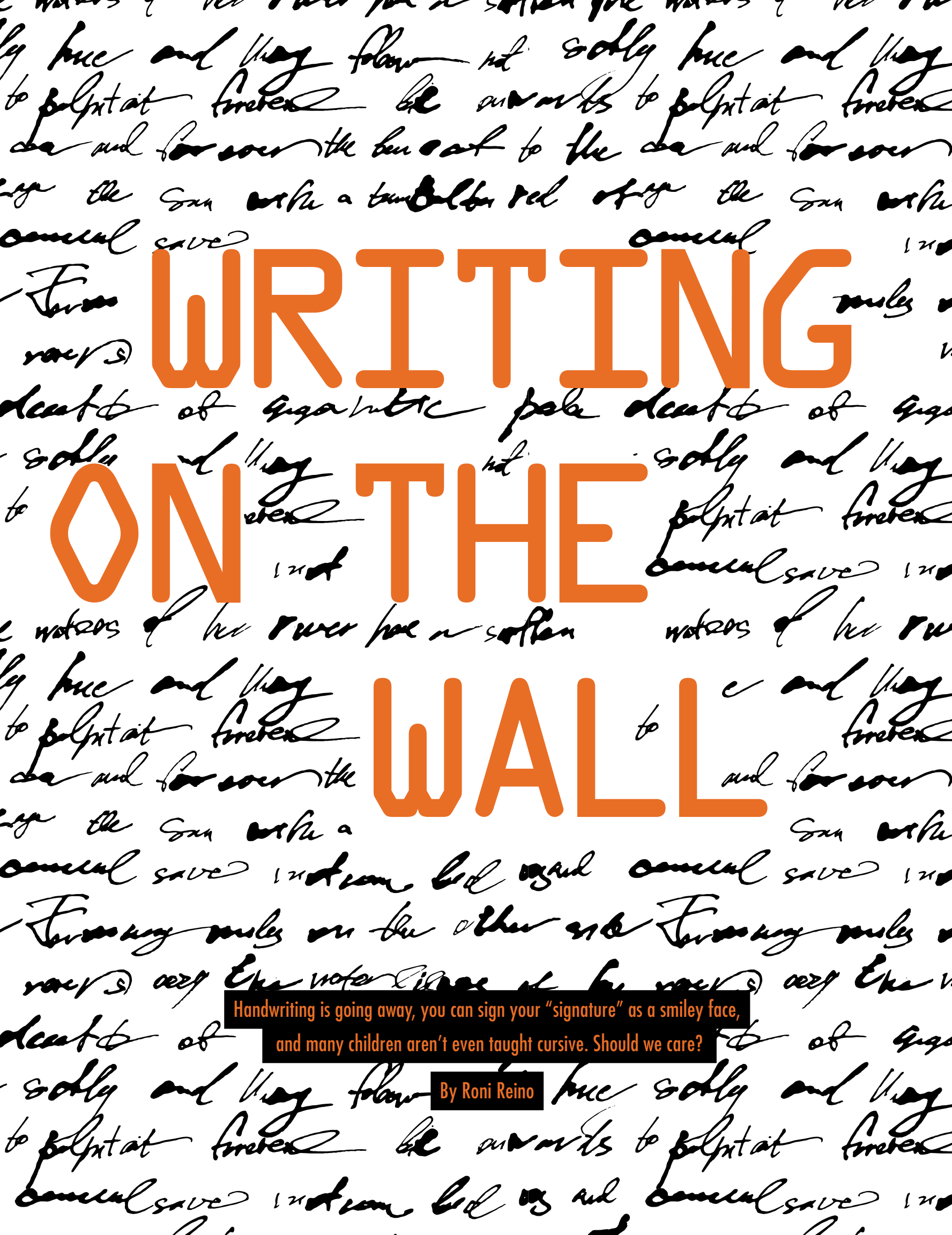
Founded as a hospice in 1462, L'Hermitage Gantois remained true to its original purpose until 1995. Post-renovation, the former wards and dormitories have become guest rooms, and the restaurant is now located in the hospice's former chapel. The hotel also offers guided tours of a small museum outfitted with the hospice's old medical equipment.

## MANSION ON FORSYTH PARK SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

Originally built by A.S. Eichberg as a residence for the Lewis Kayton family in 1888, this Victorian Romanesque mansion has by turns functioned as a funeral home, synagogue, and, finally, a hotel. During its renovation, the owners trucked in bricks from St. Louis to match the exterior of the four-story addition with the terra-cotta of the two-story original.

## THREADNEEDLES LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

Once a Victorian banking hall and former headquarters for Midland Bank, Threadneedles echoes its fiscal past in the original marble floors and spiral staircase of the lobby. But you'll have to tilt your head to see the most impressive relic: a hand-painted, stained-glass dome dating back to 1856, the year the building was created.



# WRITING

# ON THE

# WALL

Handwriting is going away, you can sign your "signature" as a smiley face, and many children aren't even taught cursive. Should we care?

By Roni Reino

Imagine Mark Twain writing by the dim glow of his Dell or Shakespeare toiling over a few lines of *Othello* on his iPad. The luster and romance of writing loses a little something, doesn't it? Today's writers are stuck to keyboards or jotting notes down on their iPhones. Children no longer trace curvy Ys on school chalkboards, and assignments are typed. In 2010, 45 U.S. states adopted the Common Core Standards – Virginia, Texas, Nebraska, Minnesota, and Alaska refusing – which bumped cursive off the mandatory curriculum in place of keyboarding and other tech-based learning. Neither cursive nor print will disappear tomorrow, but your children's children's children, well, they might not know the labor of love that goes into scrawling a capital Q. Even a handwritten love letter is so uncommon people will pay for its novelty. Kyle Eertmoed, founder of Handiemail, writes other people's love notes, thank-you letters, and updates to grandma from a white-walled creative studio in downtown Chicago. His email-to-letter service thrives on digital natives who can't pry themselves from their keyboards to put pen to paper. Certainly just a side business (he also runs a branding and graphic design studio) but one that has him scrawling away all the same, the idea was spurred one day when among all the emailing, texting, and social media, Eertmoed realized he hadn't seen a handwritten letter in years. "I still remember the thrill of receiving letters in the mail when I was younger, especially from girls," he recalls. Though 99 percent of his communications – like most people's today – is typed, Eertmoed says he will never lose his love for handwritten

gems. His business model: For youngsters raised on keyboards, handwriting will become a lost or unused skill, making it a novelty, and something they'd gladly pay someone else to do for them. Virginia Berninger, professor of educational psychology at the University of Washington, thinks that's a bad thing. An advocate for students to be "multilingual by hand," she believes typing and writing can live harmoniously. During early childhood, writing letters improves letter recognition, but when it comes to speed composition, nothing can beat typing. So teach both, she suggests. Some studies indicate extra time linking letters – instead of clacking at keyboards – encourages creativity, thus activating the large portion of the brain fixated on thinking, language, and working memory. But the technology trend has been trading handwriting time for iPads and computers for kids as young as preschool. "I would much rather students be able to type than to know how to properly write cursive," says Liz Riggs, a former teacher who now works for Teach for America. "Without the tools [to type, surf the web, and research], it puts them at an insane disadvantage," insists Riggs, referencing the four grades in her public school district of Nashville, Tennessee, that had only 80 computers for more than 400 students – a stark ratio these days. "My students might have been behind in their reading levels, but it didn't matter if they couldn't even pull up the passage they needed for their next class." "People are only looking at technology – what's going to be the future – and saying

this is how we will be doing business now. Emailing, texting – that’s the language of business and daily life for most people,” says Michael Sull, “Master Penman” and presidential calligrapher for Ronald Reagan. He has spent his career teaching the art of penmanship, now seeing that those interested in this dying art are almost exclusively homeschooling parents. Everyone else, he says, believes if you don’t push typing over writing, the children will fail. If it’s one over the other, computers win.

“But handwriting is a lot more than just a skill to create language on paper or to transmit communication,” argues Sull. “Handwriting allows people a sense of individuality and helps young people with cognitive skills and development.”

In 2012, an Indiana University study pitted preschoolers against each other: one set learning letters by typing; the other, by handwriting. MRI scans showed those who typed couldn’t distinguish between letters and shapes, while those who handwrote could. The verdict: The handwriting group learned to read quicker.

The irony about all this talk about the “death” of handwriting is that it has really only been around for 200 or so years for the masses. More than a thousand years ago, a select few knew how to write, like monks holed up in their abbeys in Ireland, working feverishly as human copy machines rewriting texts of the Bible. But even in the late 18th century, the majority of those living on American soil could not write, often signing legal documents with a single X within the presence of a witness. It wasn’t until the following century that businessmen and the wealthy conveyed a sense of status with a pen – the status being the ability to write their own names.

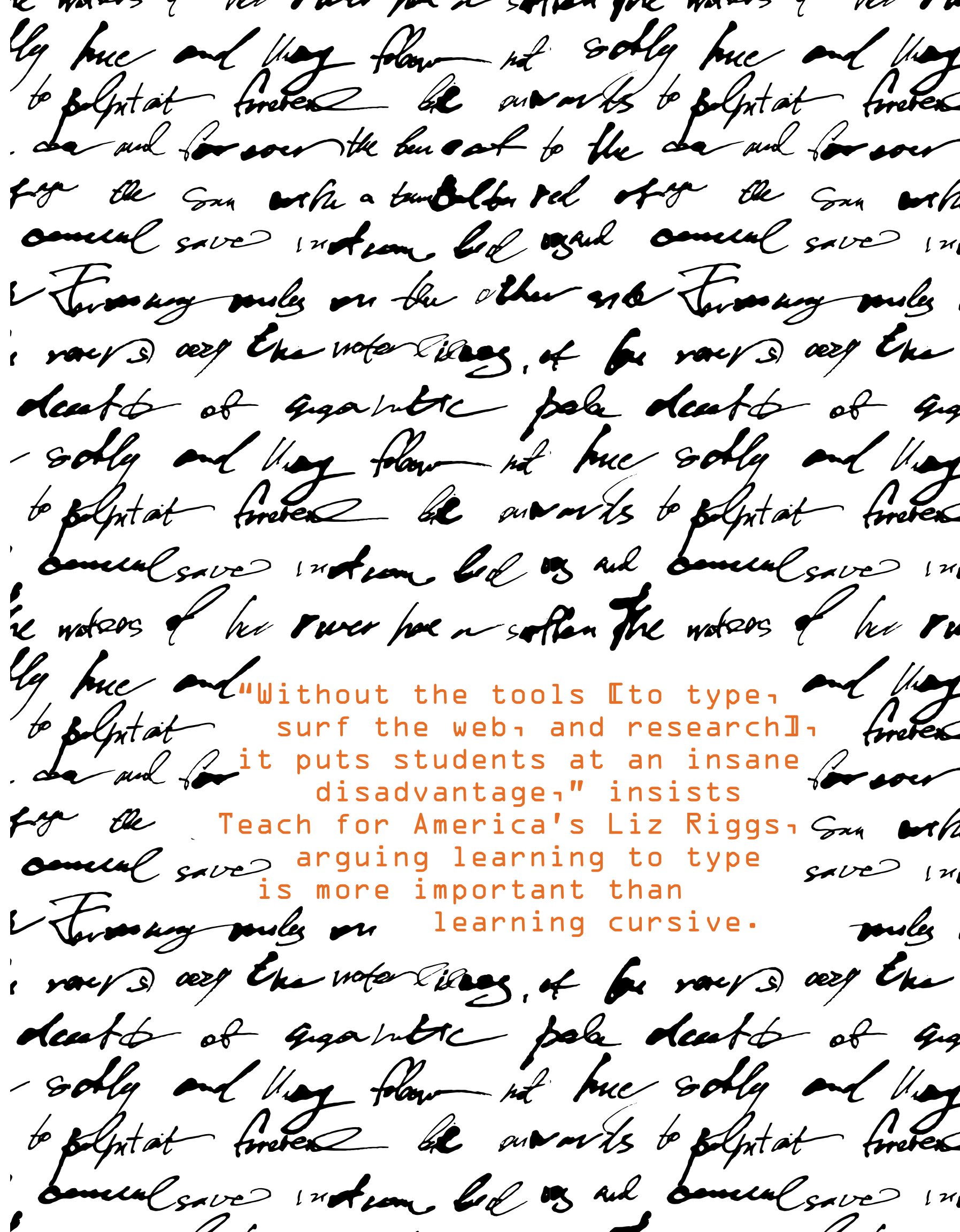
Spencerian script with looping oval letters (aka cursive) was taught in U.S. classrooms exclusively (no printing) from the 1860s to 1920s until the introduction of the typewriter increased the need for

speed in business correspondence. Competing curriculum demands ratcheted back the amount of time kids spent scrawling those tricky Zs (printed, as well as cursive) from an hour a day to 20 minutes or less in the early 1930s and ‘40s. And we’ve now come full-circle to the X mark of settlers. Today, the signature has been replaced on tax forms with an electronic four-digit code and accepted as an illegible scribble on a retail pin pad at checkout. Cursive signatures are not even legally required in the U.S. or any other country.

In fact, the plainest and cleanest signatures (often printed) are considered the hardest to forge. But to be frank, they’re losing their importance as most clerks don’t pay attention anyway. Proof: Humorist John Hargrave, in his book *Prank the Monkey*, told how he signed receipts with flowers and stick figures with no issue. He created a grid of 28 rectangles on a signature line for one; signed in hieroglyphics for another. Even when he wrote “I stole this card,” the receipt was accepted, the transaction went through.

That’s why many are proposing cursive really isn’t something to fight over. Let it go; fight a different battle. In his 2013 column “Let It Die. It’s Already Dying,” Morgan Polikoff, University of Southern California assistant professor of education, says pressuring children to squeeze in time for script between necessary tech classes “would simply result in a crowded, less-focused curriculum.”

“Reading cursive still matters; writing cursive does not,” says Kate Gladstone, director of the World Handwriting Contest and a proponent for handwriting, not loopy letters. “The evidence is that the fastest and most legible writers avoid cursive.” Gladstone has defended her claim against those vying to make cursive curriculum mandatory, like Senator Jean Leising of Indiana. After Indiana voted cursive was optional, the senator argued that if children “don’t learn to connect letters from left to



ly true and they follow not sofly true and they  
to p...at ... be ... to p...at ...  
... and ... the ... to the ... and ...  
... the ... with a ... of ... the ... with  
... saved ... led ... saved ...  
... only on the other side ... only ...  
... copy the ... of the ... copy the ...  
... of ... pale ... of ...  
... and they  
... flowers  
... with no issue.  
... Even when he wrote  
... "I stole this card," the receipt  
... was accepted, the transaction  
... went through.

right, it's going to be much more difficult for them to read and spell."

Not true, Gladstone countered: "6-year-olds who haven't learned to write cursive can still read *The New York Times* masthead, the Campbell's soup logo, and the Declaration of Independence – all written in cursive."

Yet what we might lose if cursive goes away and handwriting in general follows is a little bit of ourselves. Come across a dusty notebook squirreled away in your parents' attic and you'll laugh not only at the loopy little heart with a childhood love's name in it, but also the intricate penmanship that shows the care with which you penned it. That sense of individuality is seen in the way we cross our Ts, dot our Is, and whether or not we close our Os (see "Personal Letters," right). Still, there are other ways to show individuality in the digital age – different fonts, a new profile picture, or even the content we post.

"The bottom line is that we are all human beings; we're not machines," says Barbara Getty, cofounder of Handwriting Success. "A walk is very personal, our talk is very personal, and when you hear a voice, you know who it is. Our handwriting, it's our visual personal stamp. I hope we never lose it." And perhaps it will last for a while among the computers, finding a niche in the resurgence of hand-painted vintage signs and as a college electives course, Handwriting 101: The Lost Art. #

## PERSONAL LETTERS

Does your handwriting really give away who you are? Graphologists believe how you write can show more than 5,000 personality traits.

### SLANTS

**TO THE RIGHT:** more sociable.  
**TO THE LEFT:** potentially a wallflower.  
**NEITHER:** a tendency to be logical and practical and guarding emotions.

### SIZE

**BIGGER:** more outgoing.  
**SMALLER:** more likely to be introspective, but also maintains a focused personality.  
**AVERAGE:** well-adjusted and adaptable.

### CROSS YOUR Ts

**AT THE VERY TOP:** ambitious, optimistic, and has good self-esteem.  
**IN THE MIDDLE:** feels confident and comfortable in his/her own skin.  
**SHORT CROSSES:** a sign of laziness and a lack of determination.  
**LONG CROSSES:** determined and enthusiastic, but might be stubborn, as well.

### SHAPES

**ROUNDED LETTERS:** creative and artistic.  
**POINTED LETTERS:** intelligent, but aggressive and intense.  
**CONNECTED LETTERS:** makes decisions carefully.

### The Algonquin Round Table

At the end of World War I, New York City found itself a hub for aspiring writers, and **THE ALGONQUIN HOTEL** ([algonquinhotel.com](http://algonquinhotel.com)) was its epicenter. It started as a welcome back party one day in June 1919 for *The New York Times* drama critic Alexander Woollcott. The group had so much fun, they came back the next day, and the day after that, sharing ideas, witty stories, and opinions in the literary vein as they dined on free celery and popovers provided by owner Frank Case. Its members included *Vanity Fair* writers Dorothy Parker, Robert Benchley, and Robert E. Sherwood. Their greatest accomplishment was founding *The New Yorker* magazine, offered gratis to all hotel guests today.

# THE NEW SKYLINE

SELLAR PROPERTY GROUP

The Gherkin, the Can of Ham, the Cheesegrater, and the Walkie-Talkie. They're just a few of the celebrity super structures rocketing up within the City of London, casting long shadows over St. Paul's Cathedral and its historical brethren in the process. Their prominence is the product of rock star architects, Blade Runner aesthetics, and budgets the size of Western Samoa's GDP. But can the Square Mile continue to balance preservation and progress?

BY MICHAEL PERSSON

**I**N 1987, PRINCE CHARLES DROPPED A BOMB at the Corporation of London Planning and Communication Committee's annual dinner when he said, "You have to give this much to the Luftwaffe. When it knocked down our buildings, it didn't replace them with anything more offensive than rubble." His biting salvo was aimed at architect Richard Rogers's plan for the redevelopment of Paternoster Square in front of St. Paul's Cathedral. The year prior, another Rogers's creation, the 312-foot Lloyd's of London building, had gone up and with it any pretense that *Ye Olde London* would ever be the same.

The City of London still occupies the same configuration of its Roman origins and acreage. The city, or Square Mile as it is known, is different from the City of Westminster and the other 32 boroughs that make up England's sprawling capital. Its governance isn't determined by the British government or the Queen; rather, the City of London Corporation has ruled this area since the time of William the Conqueror with an unassailable autonomy that today protects the interests of the financial institutions within its borders. Such power explains the physical alteration of this area that serves the city's needs, strokes the corporate egos of its wealthy tenants, and utilizes a finite piece of land to its maximum potential. It also explains a favorable balancing act between its world-renowned past that, on one side, includes the Tower of London, St. Paul's Cathedral, and Tower Bridge and on the other the forces of progress. It is a favorable dichotomy because a skyscraper on its own lacks cache. But a skyscraper woven in to a scape that includes ancient and iconic architecture, now that's an eye-popping destination – and the city knows it.

## THE LIMITLESS SKY

According to David Thompson, a London tour guide known for his architectural acumen, the church was the great commissioner of buildings and where the city is concerned, it was unquestionably so, especially after the Great Fire of 1666: "The city has always been a high-rise place, built to be seen from afar. Its city walls have contained it, and so growth has been predicated on rising up, thereby increasing land values." With the Victorian Age came the tearing down of many of the city's churches to make way for commercial space. And in the succeeding century and a half, the accumulation of wealth and power of the Mile's titan financial institutions has demanded greater monuments to their position and influence.

I remember a school trip to see Rogers's 1986 Lloyd's building and its provocative *Bowellism* architecture, where the structural guts of staircases, elevators, electrical power conduits, and water pipes were on the outside. My teacher could only shake his head at what had invaded this space that he and other Londoners considered immutable and untouchable. "Richard Rogers showed temerity and boldness in his massive building," notes Caroline Dale, the author of *Skyline London: A Guide to the Finest Views from the Capital's High Points*, "...a lit building...nobody had a lit building in the City of London then, and reflecting the blue gantries, nonetheless."



The "Lloyd's effect" served notice to the Square Mile's oldest façades. From here on, the city would be inspired by hair-raising architectural anarchy, ultramodern skyscrapers high enough to rise above the emblematic fog. Estimates say that by 2015, inventory of neck-straining skyscrapers will exceed 15. Its current clutch of buildings reads like descriptions from a future world: the 755-foot, 185 million GBP Heron Tower on Bishopsgate; The Gherkin on St. Mary's Axe that stands more than three times the height of Niagara Falls; The Shard at 32 London Bridge Street, Britain's tallest building at 1,017 feet; and the 541-foot Broadgate Tower with its 240 million GBP price tag that's clad in enough glass to cover the surfaces of 154 tennis courts.

The banking deregulation of 2000 provided the millions to build, but it wasn't until Foster & Partner's 30 St. Mary Axe tower, affectionately known as "The Gherkin" and universally recognized for its Fabergé egg façade, came along that public opinion warmed toward what was perceived as a very "American" way of doing things. In no uncertain terms, it was a game changer. Notes Peter Wynne Rees, the city planning officer of the Corporation of London of this icon, "Every poster campaign, TV soap, and feature film underpinned its credentials by an appearance of The Gherkin – like a glamorous star in a walk-on role."

In 2004, my father, an Englishman of dour skepticism toward all progress, sent me, his U.S.-based son, an image showing a gymnast vaulting on The Gherkin. The slogan read, "Make Britain Proud: Back the Bid." It was London's visual case for hosting the Olympic Games. My father's accompanying note read, "How is anyone supposed to know that this is London?" Thompson, the tour guide, believes that The Gherkin, while not responsible for London's successful 2012 Olympic bid, did help to show London, as

(Above) The city's "façadist" era once provided the architectural fix for war-torn London, but super structures like the Cheesegrater have signaled a new dawn; (opposite) it takes 311 steps to reach the top of The Monument, commemorating the Great Fire of 1666 and now dwarfed by buildings around it; (previous spread) The Shard doesn't need light to serve as a beacon.

(BOTH PHOTOS THIS SPREAD) MARK READ PHOTOGRAPHY







he puts it, “beyond its usual heritage-obsessed image, as both a historic and progressive city. Visitors today still recognize The Gherkin from that image.”

## THE PLAN AND ITS MAN

My father and Prince Charles aren't the only ones to pine for the days of that heritage-infused skyline. “Nowadays, the landscape of London is completely transformed – has somehow burst in to a kind of small Shanghai,” was how Francesco Bandarin, the assistant director-general for culture of UNESCO, summarized his criticism of London's rampant building last year. UNESCO has pinpointed Tower Bridge, the Tower of London, and St. Paul's Cathedral as potential casualties of this upward frenzy. By way of countering, London's deputy mayor for planning, Edward Lister said in 2013, “You cannot allow development to be stalled in a city like this. London has grown by 600,000 people in just the last five years. And we will be over 9 million people before New York. That's the pressure that the city's under.” The “squeeze” is palpably real, but so are the laws that protect its vintage monuments.

The London Plan took effect in 1937. It is the strategic spatial backbone and guiding light by which development and heritage coexist in the capital. “It's not chance the way London looks,” says Dale, who wrote her book not because of a scholarly connection to the subject, but as a Londoner excited by the remarkable changes. “It's constantly under review and protection. Take Tokyo, for example, where you have these enormous buildings surrounding a single house in a high-rent district because the owner isn't willing to sell. The entire look of an area can be determined by a single individual.”

In contrast, within the plan is the “St. Paul's Heights” provision that protects the cathedral after it became obscured from Blackfriars Bridge in the 1930s by Faraday House. There are eight sight lines that are sacrosanct. These invisible tunnels are protected and nothing, not even the fastidious corporate whims of Lloyd's et al, can infringe upon them.

Charged with juggling these impenetrable sight lines with the city's rising look is Rees. Standing in his preeminent role as the city planning officer for the Corporation of London for almost 30 years, his stewardship of the city's skyline has affected the most radical change. The tall and hawkish-looking man with a helmet of black cropped hair and a physique akin to one of his angular superstructures has brokered a harmony between preservation and innovation. He has had the vision to cluster the new generation of tall buildings so as not to make his cherished skyline like a fang-toothed bite.

Rees has no favorite architect, no pet projects. And he requires no counsel regarding any construction above all from the Prince of Wales, who holds little sway once he passes



LLOYD'S BUILDING & ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL MARK READ PHOTOGRAPHY



(Clockwise from top left) The Gherkin's rounded dome has become a City of London icon and point of orientation; known as the “Inside-Out-Building,” the Lloyd's Building is recognized by the Government's English Heritage office as one of the key edifices of the modern epoch; it's almost laughable that St. Paul's Cathedral was London's tallest building until 1962, but its significance still prevails above all others.



into the City of London's domain. Here, Rees is king, and while he acknowledges that building tall in the city has nothing to do with "re-branding" and everything to do with "success," the city's image during his tenure has been galvanized as a place that isn't so much as flashy as it is a testament to its position in the world.

## A 21ST-CENTURY VILLAGE GREEN

For all its power to do what it deems right by the weight of the pound (the currency, that is), the buildings erupting out of the Square Mile have also taken on a seemingly civic-minded bent. Over the past years, the Corporation of London has implemented a policy that all new developments must include a high-degree of "public gain." When the Cheesegrater and Walkie-Talkie open this year, they will offer a sky garden and an elevated garden and observation deck, respectively.

Developers see such inclusions as being incentive for the planning authorities to grant approval. Yet it has had its public boon. With this has come renewed life to an area that was always dead after the workday. Rees once reasoned as to why the city had so few restaurants and hotels: Bankers only took liquid lunches and required a hotel room for little more than an hour. One New Change, christened the "Stealth Building" when it was completed in 2010 at the end of Cheapside (one of the city's most historic streets), is exemplary of this new hospitality. Its 60 shops and restaurants include ventures by Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsay. In this way, the city has reverted to a time of the village green, a place where a game could be played and a pint enjoyed.

Offers Dale, "The skyline has had its problems (sunlight reflecting off the Walkie-Talkie's glass cladding melted parts of various cars, leading newspapers to rename it the 'Walkie-Scorchie'), but the City of London and London as a whole will continue to rise."

To come is the Scalpel at 52–54 Lime Street reaching 620 feet, UBS's UK headquarters at 5 Broadgate, the 37-story 100 Bishopsgate building, as well as a 558-foot building inspired by the neo-Gothic architecture from the *Batman* movies – no, really – located on 40 Leadenhall Street.

When I was a boy, my father would enjoy nothing more than taking his son and guests visiting from afar to get, as he put it, "a stellar view of London." We'd trudge off to the city to climb the 311 stairs of The Monument, the 202-foot structure dedicated to the Great Fire, and emerge to see London from what, at the time, was a bird's-eye view. A few years ago, we rekindled the tradition, arriving at the top more tired than decades ago only to realize that Dad's stellar view hadn't changed, but all around us were new vantage points that redefined our understanding of what a bird's-eye view of London had become. #

(Above) Opened in 2013, the 87-story Shard is currently the tallest building in the EU; (opposite) the Coq d'Argent restaurant and rooftop gardens at No. 1 Poultry is one of the city's new sociable draws, where the skyline views come paired with its signature Swedish Flower Martini.

(PANORAMIC) SELLAR PROPERTY GROUP; (GARDEN ROOFTOP) MARK READ PHOTOGRAPHY



## In Its Epicenter

A stay at **THREADNEEDLES** ([hotelthreadneedles.co.uk](http://hotelthreadneedles.co.uk)) is a microcosm of the City of London itself. Located in the heart of the financial district, its stained-glass dome above the lobby dates back to 1856 when the listed building served as the head office of the London City and Midland Bank. Adding to its "boutique" feel are the old Victorian walnut walls and cool marble floors that, when dressed with contemporary styling and décor, reflect London à la mode. An up-tempo dining scene at the on-property Bonds Restaurant & Bar and curtain-call views across the city and St. Paul's Cathedral from the Penthouse suite complete the definition of a stay in a modern capital cloaked in an ancient city.

# TOMORROW MUSIC



(MIK JAGGER) KEVIN WINTER

(BAND) CLAIRE O'ROURKE

For those who bemoan the end of groups like The Beatles' and The Rolling Stones's "cutting-edge" styles, they may want to take another listen and check their rock history.

## THERE ARE NEW BANDS. AND NEW RENDITIONS OF CLASSICS. BUT HAVE WE REACHED THE END OF THE ROAD FOR WHOLLY NEW SOUNDS IN MAINSTREAM MUSIC?

BY CAMILLE SWEENEY

### THERE'S NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

— it is the complaint you often hear from aging Boomers and even Gen Xers about today's music scene. There is a sense that everything is pastiche. Pick a style from the past, rehash, remix, slap on some attitude, and voila, you've got a band. On a panel of music critics assembled at a recent SXSW music conference, the venerable critic Ed Ward, rock music historian of National Public Radio, formerly of *Crawdaddy!*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Creem*, announced that he'd stopped listening to new music 15 years ago.

The question of originality, *authenticity*, is itself, not a new one. Let's go back 50 years to a time when musical titans walked the earth — Bob Dylan, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones. These acts that we hold up as true originals actually got their start by doing covers of the music *they* loved. Fans conveniently forget that before Bob Dylan became the Bob Dylan that we know, he appropriated an entire style of folk from Woody Guthrie, imitating Guthrie's vocal tics, talking blues style, even his Dust Bowl

accent. The Beatles spent years as a cover band playing American rock and roll before they ever wrote a song.

To borrow, appropriate, and incorporate musical ideas is how music has been passed down through the ages. "A band has to take time to develop ideas and then discard them to build something new and excellent on it," critic Ward told me.

Each band constructs its own musical genome made up of all its myriad influences and inspirations — an Elmore James slide guitar lick, a Robert Johnson moan, Chuck Berry's rollick, James Brown's funky chicken footwork; keep adding on and you've got the genome of The Rolling Stones. It's what happens *after* the DNA has been transplanted, what you do with that musical information — be it melody or rhythm, instrumentation or style — that offers the possibility of creating something new.

But in the digital age, newness is not so easy. Back in the analog world, a group like The Stones who brought the blues to a mainstream audience was an emissary of the unfamiliar. Today, the Internet has made

this musical discovery process possible from your couch. Unlike Dylan, who traveled to meet his mentor Woodie Guthrie in a rest home, or Keith Richards, who selected his friends based on who had records that were worth stealing, now an aspiring artist can pick any act they're into on Pandora and, in less than 12 seconds and for the next 12 days, hear that act's genetic kin. And so will everyone else who picked that same "station."

All of recorded music available, stored, or streaming on anyone's device at any time diminishes the value of what's happening *today*. People can curate their own online cultural libraries. In a single hour, you can watch a wondrous Woodie Guthrie performance, a flashy Beyoncé video extravaganza, and Kurt Cobain's famous MTV *Unplugged* acoustic set. The result? Pop music culture is less of a shared experience – despite the ironic ability to "share" it online. Or as Ward put it: "Music has lost its central place in our culture."

So what's a band to do? On the one hand, there are the straight recyclers – the bands who simply reach back and appropriate a style that has been off the radar for long enough that 20-year-olds might find it fresh. And if an artist does it well enough, he or she can gain a following. The Strokes, for example, mined garage rock. Alabama Shakes plays a kind of roots rock that would have fit right on the bill of the Fillmore East circa 1969 with Janis Joplin.

These bands recycle, albeit at the highest level, but the problem with many songwriters today who incorporate retro elements, says David Penn, who has made a business of demystifying songwriting on his popular site, *HitSongsDeconstructed.com*, is "they stay too true to the original sound rather than to give the song enough of a fresh spin."

Val Haller, a music columnist for the *The New York Times* and founder of *Valslist*,

spends her time pairing vintage artists with emerging ones whose music evokes a similar sound, much like the Grammys producers have done with their live mash-ups. "I listen to new music every day, all day, listening for the similarities that make sense to me," says Haller. While she is thrilled to hear something familiar, she is also on the hunt for what's new, "listening for differences," in order to bridge quality music from the past with what she considers to be quality music from the present. That's how she has come to pair Dion and the Belmonts with Matchbox 20, Crosby, Stills & Nash with the Local Natives, Supertramp with the Goo Goo Dolls.

But is there anything out there that's truly original?

**TODAY, IN A SINGLE HOUR YOU CAN WATCH A WONDROUS WOODIE GUTHRIE PERFORMANCE, A FLASHY BEYONCÉ VIDEO EXTRAVAGANZA, AND KURT COBAIN'S FAMOUS MTV UNPLUGGED ACOUSTIC SET. THE RESULT? POP MUSIC CULTURE IS LESS OF A SHARED EXPERIENCE – DESPITE THE IRONIC ABILITY TO "SHARE" IT ONLINE.**

and startling sounds: the experimental electronic rock duo Ratatat, gypsy punks Gogol Bordello, South African ravers Die Antwoord, freak folk artists Coco Rosie, to name a few.

What these bands don't have, and likely never will, is mass appeal. The sprawl of the Internet, the diffusion of information and corporatization of the music industry, including radio (which critic Ward accuses of catering to rock critic kiss-of-death, "middle-of-the-road" taste) makes it almost



(Above, left) The writer argues that the Alabama Shakes hasn't done much new but still do a darn good job of channeling late-'60s rock; (above, right) for all the mainstream radio play, critics still embrace Mumford & Sons as something new because of the band's ability to blend folk and rock.

JOSHUA BLACK WILKINS



(MUMFORD & SONS) BABEL - ALBUM ART; (THE ROLLING STONES) MATT CARDY





(CAROLINA CHOCOLATE DROPS) MICHAEL WILSON

The Grammy Award-winning Carolina Chocolate Drops is a string band plucked seemingly straight out of the Blue Ridge Mountains. That is, until you hear them do a truly fresh spin of Blu Cantrell's 2009 "Hit 'Em Up Style (Oops!)" that has more than one million YouTube hits.

impossible for original but niche bands to reach a large audience. They're not going to get much airtime on Clear Channel or get their picture on the cover of *Rolling Stone* – which may not make much of a difference anymore anyway. Hip, challenging, and quirky originality may get a band like Sleigh Bells a song license deal for a car commercial, but Sleigh Bells is not going to appeal to Boomers who fill up stadiums to sing along with Bruce Springsteen or teens who fill up stadiums to sing along with Taylor Swift. A quality band's only hope for more mainstream success today might be a viral video. ("Thank you, Internet." Signed, Macklemore.)

Can a band today be truly original and still break through to mainstream consciousness? Morris of *Variety* says emphatically, yes. He described being somewhat reluctant to see a Mumford & Sons show a few years back, admitting that he wasn't expecting much more than retreat. But he says he was dead wrong: "It was the greatest show I've seen in ages. Astonishing."

As *The New York Times* music critic Jon Pareles reiterates, they've added freshness and raw energy to folk rock by uniting the age-old troubadour impulse with instincts of arena-scale rock. And their mass appeal – uplifting melodies and sweet vocal harmonies, plus de rigueur banjo picking – has made them a commercial powerhouse.

Less formidable commercially, perhaps, but even more virtuoso, is the Carolina Chocolate Drops, a Grammy-winning string band who reinterprets centuries-old traditional mostly African-American music, incorporating new elements – a human beat-boxer, a variety of percussion, including bones (that one band member calls the "insanity factor"). Like a Dylan or a George Harrison (who learned sitar from Indian classical music master Ravi Shanker and was the first to use it on a Western Pop recording on The Beatles's "Norwegian Wood"), members of the Carolina

Chocolate Drops have meticulously sourced their sounds, even in the case of band member Rhiannon Giddens making a trip to Gambia to study the akonting, the banjo's forerunner. Both bands are emissaries of sounds of a bygone era, updated and, in some places, ingenuously recombined to put them at the top the charts.

But perhaps no band mixing elements of old and new has recently done so more successfully than Daft Punk, the French electronic dance music duo, on their album, "Random Access Memories." Daft Punk wanted to re-create not just the sound of disco, but disco's entire ethos, where everyone – gay, straight, black, white, male, female – meets in Dionysian dance floor freedom to stay "up all night to get lucky." The last thing they wanted to do, though, was create some stilted homage. Instead, they came up with a brilliant counter-intuitive strategy: Ditching the digital recording signature sound of the disco era, they recorded "Get Lucky" painstakingly with

live instruments. Veteran disco producer Giorgio Moroder, who worked on the album, explained: "They had to add something new. It's still dance. Still electronic. But they give that human touch back." And by allowing for the sonic imperfections of live musicians and vocalists, Daft Punk was able to spin the disco sound in a new direction and take it all the way to the top of the charts.

To create something original that resonates with the culture of today, artists will likely always be reaching back to go forward. And that's nothing new. In response to a critic who, in 1971, accused The Beatles of ripping off certain black musicians who the band covered, John Lennon wrote: "...We didn't sing our own songs in the early days – they weren't good enough... We loved the music [of black American rock 'n' roll] and wanted to spread it in any way we could... It wasn't a rip off, it was a love in."

And so yesterday becomes today becomes tomorrow. And the beat goes on. #

**TO FIND SOMETHING TRULY ORIGINAL, YOU'VE GOT TO TALK TO A LOT OF PEOPLE, GO ON BLOGS, SEE SHOWS THAT DISAPPOINT YOU, GO TO A RUSSIAN NIGHTCLUB IN CONEY ISLAND AT MIDNIGHT TO CATCH A BAND YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF.**



### The Golden Oldies of Tomorrow

Music critics and historians posture what tracks of the last decade will be spinning on "golden oldies" stations a few decades from now. You decide if they're right.

"All the Single Ladies," Beyoncé

"I Will Wait," Mumford & Sons

"Crazy," Gnarls Barkley

"Ho Hey," The Lumineers

"Get Lucky," Daft Punk

"In Da Club," 50 Cent

"Rehab," Amy Winehouse

"Rolling in the Deep," Adele

"Tighten Up," The Black Keys

"Hey Ya!," Outkast

All contributors to the list made one big distinction: "Golden oldies of tomorrow" aren't necessarily the "best" songs of an era but rather those with the biggest pop impact and catchiest compositions.

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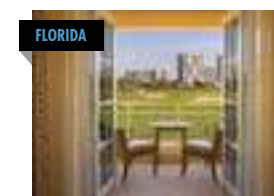
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*Celebration*  
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#### BLUE MOON HOTEL

*Miami Beach*  
An art-deco landmark; sexy and sophisticated atmosphere makes it one of South Beach's hottest night spots, where bright young things come to be seen.



#### WINTER HAVEN

*Miami Beach*  
Sleek meets chic at this Ocean Drive property with the beach a stone's throw away, a private outdoor lounge a few floors up, and the Miami scene everywhere you turn.



#### CASTLE HOTEL

*Orlando*  
Reminiscent of Disney's famous castle, this retreat set in the heart of Orlando packs comfort, style, and easy access to downtown into one elegant gem.



#### GRAND BOHEMIAN HOTEL ORLANDO

*Orlando*  
With captivation found in 150 rare works of art, a spa, nightly jazz, and indulgence to suit every need, leaving luxury like this is hard to do.



#### CASA MONICA HOTEL

*St. Augustine*  
Spectacular views of Matanzas Bay and upscale alfresco dining gilds an award-winning reputation of this 19th-century Spanish-style gem.



#### HOTEL DUVAL

*Tallahassee*  
A centrally located destination for business and social activity, where European boutique décor provides the backdrop to a youthful atmosphere and unsurpassed rooftop views from the be-seen scene of Level 8 Lounge.



#### EPICUREAN HOTEL

*Tampa*  
A mecca for any foodie with its signature restaurant (Elevage), superstar wines, and a personalized concierge to attend to guests' every desire.



#### GLENN HOTEL

*Atlanta*  
A customized itinerary created by a personal host underscores the special touch to everything in this downtown hotel with its rooftop views of Atlanta's skyline.



#### THE LODGE AND SPA AT CALLAWAY GARDENS

*Pine Mountain*  
Set within a 13,000-acre nature preserve, Georgia's mountain wilds are at your doorstep, be it on zip lines, via bird of prey demonstrations, or within the award-winning Spa Prunifolia.



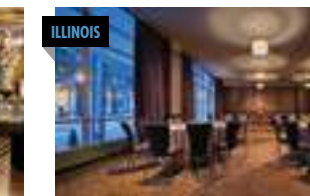
#### THE BOHEMIAN HOTEL SAVANNAH RIVERFRONT

*Savannah*  
An urban hotel with spectacular views of the Savannah River from the rooftop bar. Driftwood and brass form the mainstays of the avant-garde interior.



#### MANSION ON FORSYTH PARK

*Savannah*  
With 400 pieces of artwork, its own cooking school, and the Poseidon Spa all set within a Victorian mansion, you may never make it out to explore the charming Southern belle that surrounds it.



#### HOTEL CHICAGO DOWNTOWN (NEW)

*Chicago*  
Find yourself in the River North neighborhood, adjacent to the Chicago River, and just steps from world-class shopping on the Magnificent Mile.



**IOWA**  
**HOTEL BLACKHAWK** *Davenport*  
Opened in 1915, this renovated hotel mixes its history with an artful modern look, and where business, beauty, and even bowling are mainstays of its fine service.



**LOUISIANA**  
**THE SAINT HOTEL** *New Orleans*  
Angels and demons collide at this French Quarter retreat renewed, blessed with the buzziest restaurant in New Orleans (Tempt), rooftop bar (Halo), and sleek interiors head to toe.



**MICHIGAN**  
**THE HENRY** *Dearborn*  
This eclectic property filled with art and comfort by way of the famous "Henry Bed" was *U.S. News & World Report's* top Michigan hotel of 2013.



**MINNESOTA**  
**THE HOTEL MINNEAPOLIS** *Minneapolis*  
A historic bank building where wine tasting in the old vault is a part of the daily customs of the downtown-hub experience. Plus, the multimillion-dollar Concierge Lounge.



**MISSOURI**  
**THE RAPHAEL HOTEL** *Kansas City*  
Steps from historic and fashionable Country Club Plaza, this award-winning hotel found within a historic building offers fine dining at Chaz on the Plaza and luxury galore.



**IRELAND**  
**POWERSCOURT HOTEL** *Enniskerry*  
A sweeping 17th-century Palladian-style palace on Ireland's east coast south of Dublin mixes manicured gardens and lawns with access to two championship-caliber golf courses and a 30,000-square-foot signature spa.



**ITALY**  
**BOSCOLO MILANO** *Milan*  
A fashionable nexus of life and where Milanese hospitality shows off with future-modern décor, a swanky rooftop cocktail scene, and dining that is five-star top to bottom.



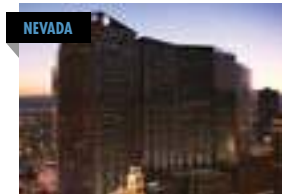
**BOSCOLO EXEDRA ROMA** *Rome*  
High in the heart of Rome sits this late-19th-century palace magnificently filled with two restaurants, flawless accommodations, and a terrace that overlooks the ancient city.



**BOSCOLO PALACE ROMA** *Rome*  
This Belle Époque masterpiece claims nine rare 20th-century frescoes, a cooking school, and one of the best locations in the Eternal City.



**BOSCOLO VENEZIA** *Venice*  
At this 17th-century palace with its own hidden garden, rooms come with high ceilings, chandeliers, opulent grandeur, and all the sites of the city just a gondola ride away.



**NEVADA**  
**THE COSMOPOLITAN OF LAS VEGAS** *Las Vegas*  
For the Las Vegas visitor who wants to bump and grind their way through gaming, dining, shopping, spa, and live shows in a slick environment — with a cosmopolitan sensibility.



**NEW MEXICO**  
**EL MONTE SAGRADO** *Taos*  
Designed with pueblo-style architecture, this eco-luxe retreat melds an artsy, laid-back, local vibe and exotic surroundings in northern New Mexico's Sangre de Cristo Mountains.



**NEW YORK**  
**THE ALGONQUIN HOTEL TIMES SQUARE** *New York*  
Home to the Round Table Restaurant and birthplace of *The New Yorker*, this swanky establishment in the heart of the Big Apple is a legend of luxury and the written word.



**CARLTON HOTEL** *New York*  
A Tiffany-domed staircase tops off the art-deco aesthetic to this elegant hotel, where the Millesime brasserie and balconied lounge define what is Midtown chic.



**THE LEXINGTON NEW YORK CITY** *New York*  
Smart, social, and sophisticated paying homage to the age of jazz, this newly renovated boutique legend is both personalized and world class.



**PORTUGAL**  
**FONTECRUZ LISBOA** *Lisbon*  
Where the city's jet set comes for the fizz of the Möt & Chandon Champagne bar. This 72-room boutique hotel is always alive and ready to serve.



**SPAIN**  
**AC BAQUIERA SKI RESORT** *Baqueira*  
Views of the Pyrenees from every angle and a chalet-chic aesthetic found throughout. Skiers looking for luxury need go no farther thanks to a cable car that brings you right to the slopes.



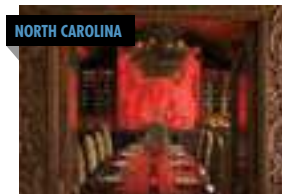
**AC PALACIO DE SANTA PAULA** *Granada*  
Located near the Alhambra, the renovated surroundings of this former convent and cloister offer a glimpse into the city's bygone past, luxury aside.



**AC PALACIO DEL RETIRO** *Madrid*  
Stained glass and frescoes about post-modern room interiors, where Lichtenstein and chrome meet timeless balcony views of the capital.



**AC SANTO MAURO** *Madrid*  
The 19th-century residence of the Duke of Santo Mauro lays claim to a classical ballroom that overlooks magnificent gardens in the district of Chamberí.



**NORTH CAROLINA**  
**GRAND BOHEMIAN HOTEL ASHEVILLE** *Asheville*  
Nestled in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the Tudor-inspired hotel of countless awards is just steps from the historic Biltmore estate. Don't miss the farm-to-table dining.



**THE SIENA HOTEL** *Chapel Hill*  
Italian-style, Tar Heel hospitality found in this Four Diamond-rated hotel, where luxurious décor and the outstanding Il Palio Ristorante await the refined traveler.



**TENNESSEE**  
**UNION STATION HOTEL** *Nashville*  
A restored railway station that's a National Historic Landmark comes with acres of marble and gold leaf, 137 high-tech rooms defying its age, and Nashville's hottest steak house, Prime 108.



**TEXAS**  
**HOTEL ICON** *Houston*  
A business traveler's dream by virtue of this turn-of-the-century bank building's downtown location, the hotel lets power brokers sip craft cocktails downstairs; upstairs, a Bath Butler is always on call.



**HOTEL ÉLAN RESORT & SPA** *San Antonio*  
A slice of Tuscan comes to Texas Hill Country in this grand estate resort, complete with the so-fresh Ripe Farmer's Market, a vibrant marketplace of food, music, art, and culture.



**AC PALACIO DEL CARMEN** *Santiago de Compostela*  
This former convent with medieval flourishes features wrought-iron balconies, inner courtyards, and wood-paneled ceilings contrasted by sleek, modern design.



**UNITED KINGDOM**  
**THE GLASSHOUSE** *Edinburgh*  
A funky nod to the unexpected comes in this Edinburgh gem, with rooftop gardens looking upon Calton Hill, central location to the historic city's sites, and its own curated art gallery.



**ST. ERMIN'S HOTEL** *London*  
Regally swank with chic design, St. Ermin's Hotel in London's St. James neighborhood is where visitors enjoy tables dressed in white linen, afternoon tea, and the very proper Caxton Grill.



**THREADNEEDLES** *London*  
A five-star boutique hotel among all of the City of London's sites mixes old with new, as seen through stained glass and European modern design fit for the sophisticate.



**CARIBBEAN**  
**SCRUB ISLAND RESORT, SPA & MARINA** *British Virgin Islands*  
The first private-island resort to open in the BVIs in more than a decade. Keep it active with sailing, diving, snorkeling, and more. Or, opt to let a good book and the sun going down be your guide.



**EUROPE**  
**BOSCOLO PRAGUE** *Prague*  
Within a refurbished 19th-century palace, frescoes mix with Prague's top Italian restaurant (La Cucina Restaurant) that tempts the senses with a cigar bar to serve up old-world relaxation.



**FRANCE**  
**L'HERMITAGE GANTOIS** *Lille*  
Once a medieval hospice, the hotel today is home to this Belgium border city's best restaurant, a museum of antique medical instruments, and à la carte luxury.



**HOTEL DE BOURGTHEROULDE** *Rouen*  
This 15th-century mansion with its 16th-century addition located in Normandy's capital offers style where modern décor meets Gothic architecture — and luxury in its one-of-a-kind spa.



**GERMANY**  
**HOTEL AM STEINPLATZ** *Berlin*  
Close to Theatre of the West, Victory Column, and the Berlin Zoo, this newly renovated art-deco property offers sweeping rooftop views of the Charlottenburg district.



**HUNGARY**  
**BOSCOLO BUDAPEST** *Budapest*  
The five-star hotel with its mix of Greek, Roman, Renaissance, and Baroque décor and architecture is as grand inside as what awaits within walking distance in one of the world's hottest travel destinations.



**SOUTH & CENTRAL AMERICA**  
**HOTEL & SPA DO VINHO** *Bento Gonçalves*  
Surrounded by vineyards, the grand ranch utilizes its wine-producing riches to create a unique experience in wining, dining, and relaxation courtesy of its vinotherapy spa.



**COSTA RICA**  
**HOTEL PUNTA ISLITA** *Guanacaste*  
A refuge in the tropical wilds overlooking the ocean, surrounded by tropical forest, where horseback riding, surfing, and wildlife observation are all on the adventure menu.



**ASIA & AUSTRALIA**  
**PIER ONE SYDNEY HARBOUR** *(NEW) Sydney*  
A contemporary chic hotel located on the Sydney waterfront that offers stylish rooms and waterfront suites with panoramic views of Walsh Bay from Front Restaurant.



**INDONESIA**  
**THE STONES HOTEL — LEGIAN BALI** *Bali*  
A high-style oasis of calm set among Kuta's raucous party spirit. Perfectly situated as a launching point for exploring the full spectrum of the island's active and sanguine pursuits.



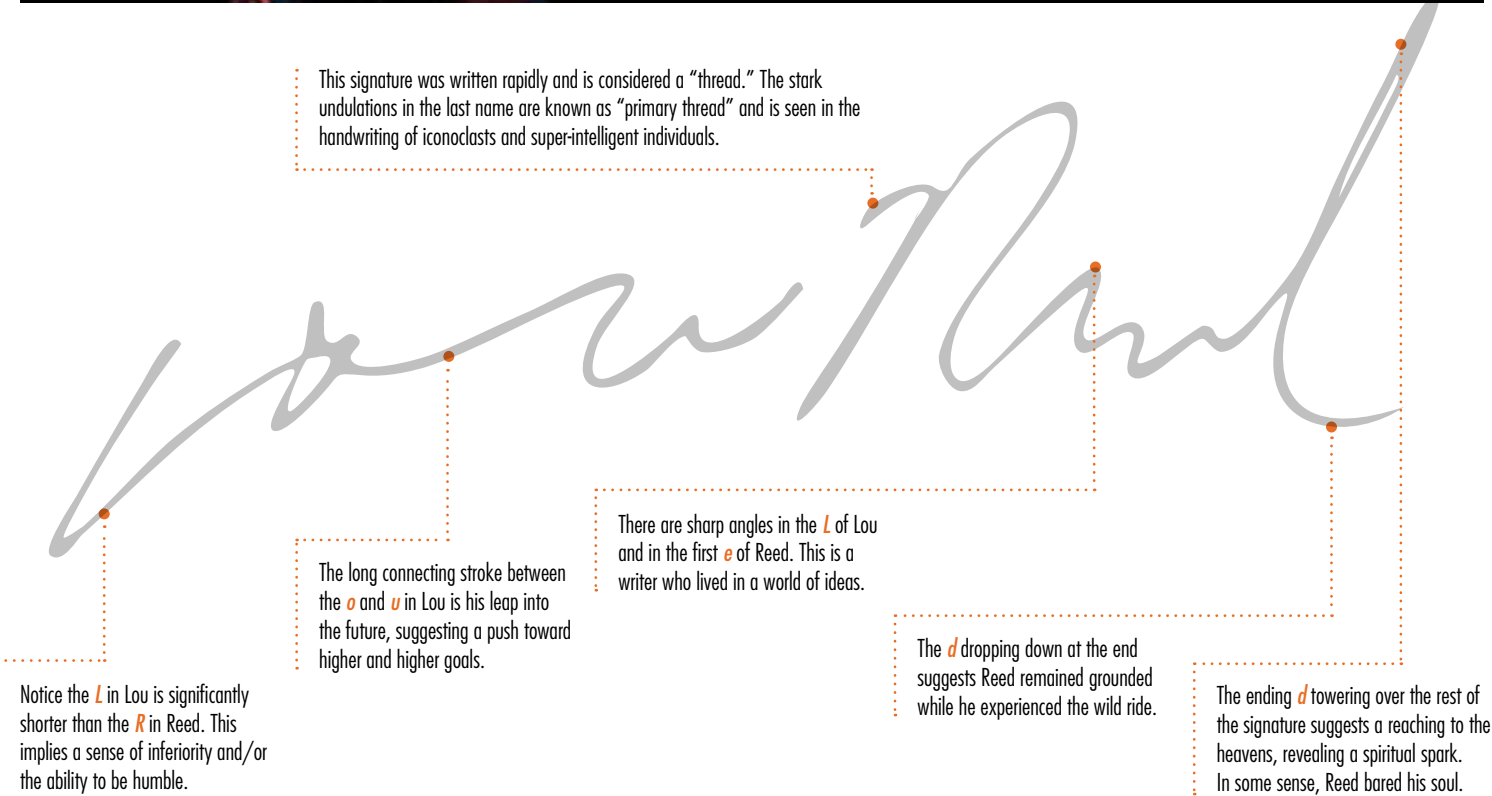
**JAPAN**  
**THE PRINCE SAKURA TOWER TOKYO** *Tokyo*  
A spacious garden, a relaxation floor, and bubble baths in every room are some of the unconventional offerings of this hotel located three minutes from Shinjuku Station.

# LOU REED *Proto-punk*



Until his death last fall, Lou Reed personified alt-rock for 50 years. His 1972 album *Transformer* left his “walk-on-a-wild-side” mark on generations of musicians. This autograph, signed in 1975, shows Reed to be less of a wild child in eyeliner and more of an honest character with a razor blade intellect.

This signature was written rapidly and is considered a “thread.” The stark undulations in the last name are known as “primary thread” and is seen in the handwriting of iconoclasts and super-intelligent individuals.



Notice the *L* in Lou is significantly shorter than the *R* in Reed. This implies a sense of inferiority and/or the ability to be humble.

The long connecting stroke between the *o* and *u* in Lou is his leap into the future, suggesting a push toward higher and higher goals.

There are sharp angles in the *L* of Lou and in the first *o* of Reed. This is a writer who lived in a world of ideas.

The *d* dropping down at the end suggests Reed remained grounded while he experienced the wild ride.

The ending *d* towering over the rest of the signature suggests a reaching to the heavens, revealing a spiritual spark. In some sense, Reed bared his soul.

Signature analysis by Marc J. Seifer, professor of psychology, and the former editor of *The Journal of the American Society of Professional Graphologists*.



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