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Cover Image: *Still Life with Asparagus*, Adriaen Coorte, 1697

OVERSEAS EDITORIAL TEAM

Editor

Rosie Allen: editor@rosl.org.uk; +44 (0)20 7408 0214

Design

zed creative: www.zedcreative.co.uk

Advertising

charlotte@parkwalkmedia.com
renata@parkwalkmedia.com

ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

Incorporated by Royal Charter

Patron HM The Queen

Vice-Patron HRH Princess Alexandra KG GCVO

President

The Rt Hon The Lord Geidt GCB GCVO OBE QSO PC

Chairman Helen Prince

Deputy Chairman Anne Wilkinson

Hon Treasurer Hamish Kean

Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street,
London SW1A 1LR; +44 (0)20 7408 0214;

Fax +44 (0)20 7499 6738; info@rosl.org.uk;

www.rosl.org.uk

CENTRAL COUNCIL

Anjola-Oluwa Adeniyi, Paul Arkwright CMG,

Ruth Bala, The Hon. Alexander Downer AC,

Nabeel Goheer, Richard Harbord FCA,

Alistair Harrison CMG CVO, Anthony Teasdale,

Susan Walton, Helen Prince,

Atholl Swainston-Harrison, Anne Wilkinson

Director-General

Dr Annette Prandzioch: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x201;

patodirectorgeneral@rosl.org.uk

Artistic Director

Geoff Parkin: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x325;

gparkin@rosl.org.uk

General Manager

Warren Miller: +44 (0)20 7408 0214 x203;

wmiller@rosl.org.uk

Director of HR

Sarah Banner: sbanner@rosl.org.uk

Membership

+44 (0)20 7408 0214 x214; membership@rosl.org.uk

For more contacts visit www.rosl.org.uk/the-team

Print Gemini Print Group: +44 (0)127 346 4884

The journal is published by the Royal Over-Seas League,

Over-Seas House, Park Place, St James's Street,

London SW1A 1LR. Any views expressed in editorial

and any advertisements included are not necessarily

endorsed by the Central Council.

ISSN 00307424



“You can enjoy elegant fine dining with wines to match, as well as being able to enjoy the usual club menu”

I hope you have had an excellent start to 2023. This edition of *Overseas* has a focus on food and drink, a topic close to all our hearts. We have been on a journey in this regard at ROSL, following our decision in 2020 to take catering in-house after some 16 years of being outsourced. We are constantly looking to improve our offering to members, and so last autumn we reopened the beautifully refurbished fine dining room, 1910, to great acclaim. You can enjoy elegant fine dining with wines to match, as well as being able to enjoy the usual club menu with club classics such as curry, fish and chips and pie. In addition, there's steak night, Sunday roasts, wine tastings, and live jazz music.

Early 2023 has also seen a refurbishment of our Duke of York Bar, making this much-loved space even more comfortable, and with a range of tempting cocktails on offer. This edition features an interview with the CEO of iconic department store Fortnum & Mason, where many of our members pop in to shop when they are staying at the Clubhouse. This year we will continue to host our popular themed wine dinners, and Food and Beverage Director Serge Pradier has many exciting events in the planning, so keep an eye out on our events page.

And for a mid-afternoon pick-me-up, you can do no better than Tea at ROSL, with cakes and sandwiches prepared by our Pastry Chef Jack. So, all good things to look forward to this year!

Dr Annette Prandzioch
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

From the EDITOR

The lengthening days and surging optimism of March feels like the perfect time to get enthused about food again. Christmas's excesses are a vanishing memory and – in the northern hemisphere at least – the dwindling darkness turns our minds towards the ingredients that energise and inspire us at this time of year; bright spring greens ready to pile on plates; hedgerows and trees bursting both with blossom and the promise of fruits and berries to come in a few short weeks; wild garlic and spring mushrooms emerging in the woods; and if you're in the southern hemisphere, then autumn and all its promise of indulgent, earthy flavours.

In preparation for a year of good eating, our in-house food experts at ROSL have been busy sourcing the best seasonal ingredients for our spring and summer menus; you can get a taste of the delectable ingredients used by Chef Elliot Plimmer on page 6, where I speak with some of our most interesting artisan producers to hear about the philosophy and practicalities behind sourcing and creating the produce used to supply the Club. From ethics-driven butchery to carbon-neutral cheese, a secret smokehouse reviving old traditions in London or the sixth-generation Bordeaux winemakers dedicated to quality, we're sure you'll agree that understanding the impeccable provenance behind the dishes in our 1910 Dining Room will make them taste even better.

Elsewhere, Abi Millar takes an in-depth look at the history of our 'fifth taste', umami and its influence on contemporary food trends from its storied beginnings in the East on page 10; Henry Jeffreys reflects on the meteoric rise of English wine – which is now challenging champagne for world-class fizz – on page 14; and Cindy Polemis presents a fascinating deep dive on food representations in art, and the hidden stories and messages they often have to share on page 22.

We also hear from Arts Curator Robin Footitt about his upcoming ROSL Exhibition showcasing the international artists we've platformed over the years on page 26, and Arts Manager Cerys Beesley updates us on her musical project with the Kenya National Youth Orchestra on page 34.

Wishing all of our members a bright and brilliant spring 2023, from all at ROSL.

Rosie Allen
editor@rosl.org.uk



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From ethically reared meat and environmentally friendly cheeses, to expertly picked wines and traditionally cured fish, all of the ingredients used in the 1910 Dining Room are thoughtfully sourced by our in-house team



The magic INGREDIENTS

A great dish is nothing without the best-quality ingredients and impeccable provenance. Rosie Allen meets the artisan producers behind our 1910 Dining Room menus, from a London smokehouse focused on traditional methods, to a heritage winemaking family in Bordeaux

Secret Smokehouse *The London smokery using traditional methods*



Secret Smokehouse founder, Max Bergius, hails from the West Coast of Scotland, where he began smoking fish at a young age. Staying true to the original ethos and techniques of London's previous generations of smokers, Max has honed his skills to produce handcrafted oak-smoked fish cured in London and supplying the city's most exciting new food ventures and premium restaurants. Here he tells us the secrets behind London's most intriguing smokery.

'Secret Smokehouse has always had a strong vision to cure and smoke fish to the very best quality. No frills, no twists, just solid, beautifully smoked salmon, trout, kippers and haddock. Keen to stay true to the original ethos and techniques of London's previous generations of smokers, our growing team have honed their skills to produce handcrafted oak-smoked fish cured in London to the highest possible quality. Our smoking technique includes only three elements: fish, salt and oak smoke.'

Our handcrafted smoked fish is produced using a technique called 'London Cure' which has remained the same since the 1800s. We take great pride in what we do, and in doing it well. Secret Smokehouse only uses fish produced to high welfare standards: all of our salmon is farmed in Scotland, then hand-filleted and oak-smoked on site in London using those traditional techniques.

We operate all-electric delivery vehicles for delivering to our clients in London, and have done since 2016. We use special

insulated packaging made from 100% sheep's wool called Woolcool. We have also been working very closely with some of our biggest corporate clients, such as Fortnum & Mason, and their sustainability teams, looking at ways make our packaging as sustainable as possible and are in the process of becoming a B Corp.

London Cure Smoked Salmon can only be produced in the East End of London, nowhere else! The salmon has a gentle smoke and a 'melt in your mouth' consistency which calls for simple preparation — perfect with brown bread and a squeeze of lemon or purely on its own. We are proud to have PGI certification (Protected Geographical Indication) for our London Cure Smoked Salmon, which we were awarded in 2017 when the PGI was first formalised. The PGI certification means that our products sit alongside Champagne and Parma Ham, which have gained this elusive and quality-guaranteeing recognition for truly outstanding and historically important products.

My favourite fish is our oak-smoked trout. This is what we set out smoking when we started and it's so beautiful because we source the best sea-reared trout from the West Coast of Scotland. Our fish are big and very fit unlike other trout products out there.'

ENJOY IT AT ROSL

Secret Smokehouse's London Cure is the smoked salmon of choice in the 1910 Dining Room, equally delicious enjoyed for breakfast or on a blini canapé.

Harvey & Brockless *The artisan cheese specialists*



Having spent years building relationships with some of the country's finest artisan producers, Harvey & Brockless has earned a reputation as one of the top curators of dairy goods and cured meats for restaurants and hotels across the country. Simon Yorke, Sales Director and grandson of the company's founder, Frank Day, tells us more about their origins and the evolution of the traditional cheese course.

'Sourcing niche, speciality cheeses and supplying some of the top kitchens in the country is extremely fulfilling and gives the most incredible farmers and producers an access route to some of the finest chefs in the world.'

We've worked this way since around 1970 when Frank Day, my grandfather, purchased a cheese wholesaler from a Mr Harvey and Mr Brockless. After finding some vintage Cheddar in the cellar, Frank's son, Michael Day ventured into London with the dream to sell into one of the most renowned retailers in the world: Harrods.

The Harvey & Brockless philosophy is rooted in quality and our suppliers are some of the most sustainable in the world: acres of carbon are sequestered in the grazing land that is home to the sheep, dairy cattle and goats that supply our cheeses, along with wild Scottish venison, managed in the least disruptive of ways and cured into some of the most

Our handcrafted smoked fish is produced using a technique called 'London Cure' which has remained the same since the 1800's



delicious salami in the country.

Our artisan producers make their livelihoods by working with the environment, rather than against it. For example, Winterdale Dairy are carbon neutral and Sharpham Dairy have just received their B Corp certification (a mark of ethical excellence). In our development kitchens, we are reducing waste for restaurants and hotels by increasing the shelf life of sauces and products they once had to make in house.

While the traditional cheese course is still an important way for us to experiment, learn and indulge, the incredible quality and accessibility of artisan products now makes it possible to include them in a range of plates over the courses. Whether it's a grilled goat's cheese salad, Taleggio Arancini, or Oglesfield on the house burger, speciality cheeses are now an opportunity for chefs to elevate a standard dish, as their customers have more and more understanding of their local artisans.

My favourite cheese at the time of writing is the Baron Bigod, from Fen Farm Dairy in Suffolk. They're a third generation dairy farm, and their

Montbeliarde cows are grazed on fertile marshland. You can tell how much care goes into the animals and the entire cheesemaking process from the taste. The result is a decadent, flavourful, brie- style cheese that's absolutely fantastic laid on a cheeseboard.'

ENJOY IT AT ROSL

Featuring creamy goat's and sheep's cheeses and a moreish blue, the 1910 cheeseboard is the perfect way to finish your meal, featuring a selection of seasonally changing produce from Harvey & Brockless's ethical producers.

NEW 1910 MENU
Feeling inspired to try some of these mouthwatering ingredients for yourself? 1910 Dining Room will be launching its spring/summer 2023 menu in April, with a new selection of seasonal dishes, expertly crafted by Executive Chef Elliot Plimmer to help you celebrate a new season of eating in style.

Finclass Butchers

The family-run butchers supplying London's finest restaurants



Founded in 1994 by the Hogg family, Finclass supplies high-welfare meat to some of London's most lauded restaurants. Mimi Ktisti, Sales Manager at Finclass, tells us more about its quality-focused philosophy.

'We've always promoted British produce first and foremost, and we only work with trusted farmers who use traditional farming methods with respect for the environment. We've definitely seen a shift in our customers wanting more meat produced this way. What's changed I think is that while, in the past, chefs knew the importance of sourcing the right produce, the general public is now more clued up and educated on the advantages of a good diet with good-quality meat. They want to know how the animal was reared and seek reassurance that it's had a good life.

When Finclass started back in 1994, hotels still had their own in-house

butchery departments, but the food scene in London was quickly changing. Chefs were becoming more innovative and required higher-quality produce and professional cuts, so there was really a gap in the market when we arrived.

The Hogg family became the first traders from Smithfield Market to specialise in supplying the catering trade and to this day, we are the only supplier from Smithfield with a state-of-the-art maturation fridge, so we can age the meat to perfection.

Our signature cut is the Dorchester cut rib of beef, our exclusively grass-fed beef which is matured on the bone. It always tastes its best roasted with seasonal vegetables, roasted potatoes, Yorkshire puddings, gravy – the full trimmings basically! And it's an ideal cut for an amazingly luxurious Sunday roast.

ENJOY IT AT ROSL

All of the meat on our 1910 menu is sourced by Finclass and changes seasonally depending on Elliot's menu, from the delicious canon of lamb to our 30 or 60-day aged ribeye steaks.

Maison Sichel

The Bordeaux winemaking dynasty



Maker of our ROSL house red, Chateau Angludet, and custodian of the iconic Chateaux Palmer in Bordeaux, Maison Sichel has been making and sourcing wines here since 1938, with roots in the wine industry going back to 1856. Here, Max Sichel tells us what makes a great house wine.

'From my point of view, a great house wine needs to do a few things: it should have good freshness and be easy to drink. You don't want something too big or too heavy as people will be fed up after their first glass! You need a wine with a good freshness and balance, that represents a specific terroir. I also, of course, think it's better if it comes from the Bordeaux region to respect the tradition, the prestige and the history with the UK. A great family story to share about the house wine is always good too!

A great wine reveals a terroir; we help the vines and the fruit deliver all the secrets of the land by limiting the impact of the winemaker. The Bordeaux terroir is unique thanks to its location, soil, climate

and the thousands of years of experience we Bordeaux winemakers have. There have been vines here since Roman times, so Bordeaux knows how to produce some of the best wines in the world.

Family is the strength of our business in so many ways. Seven generations brings a lot of credibility to consumers, clients and also the fine wine producers of our region, so we have access to the most prestigious wines in the world. A family business is also a nice place to work as it allows us to agree on a quality-first focus; we strongly believe that's the way to do business.

2022 was very hot and dry, so while the vintage is looking good it is very small quantity. There's lots of promise, just tiny volume!

The best way to enjoy Maison Sichel wines is with friends and family, though I also love doing blind tastings so we have the opportunity to discuss them.'

ENJOY IT AT ROSL

Enjoy the surrounds of our newly refurbished Duke of York Bar with a glass of our house red, Chateau Angludet in hand. Available at the bar or in the restaurant.

It's the fifth basic taste, and key to why spaghetti Bolognese is so delicious. So why did umami take so long to be recognised in the West? Abi Millar finds out

IN SEARCH OF

UMAMI



Many of us will remember learning about the 'four basic tastes' at school. As any eight-year-old could tell you, we have taste receptors for sweet, salty, sour and bitter, each of which are concentrated on particular regions of the tongue.

This tongue map theory, which dates back to 1901, has been roundly debunked from several angles. For one thing – as you can easily test yourself – there are receptors for all those flavours on every part of the tongue. But there's another issue too, which speaks to a century of Western bias in food science. The model misses out a fifth basic taste: umami.

Often translated as 'savoury', or sometimes as 'deliciousness', umami is the common denominator linking roasted meats, shiitake mushrooms and Parmesan cheese. It's ubiquitous in Asian condiments like miso, and provides the depth that some of us love about Marmite.

'The rich savoury taste that lingers after having tomato sauce, long-cooked stews, or barbecue ribs – that's umami,' says researcher Dr Kumiko Ninomiya, director of the Umami Information Center. 'The umami taste has unique characteristics – it lasts longer than other tastes, increases salivation, and its sensation spreads throughout the tongue.'

Although its precise qualities are surprisingly hard to pin down, Ninomiya suggests thinking of it as providing a 'mellow sensation', a 'fullness of taste that

fills the mouth', or a sense of 'deep flavour, harmony and balance'. To get the full measure of umami, she advises taking a small piece of sundried tomato, without added salt, and chewing it 20 to 30 times before swallowing.

'You'll first notice some sweetness and acidity, followed by a subtle and indescribable sensation that coats the tongue and lasts a long time,' she says. 'You might not think of this sensation as a kind of taste, but it's umami.'

From discovery to acceptance

The story of umami really begins at the turn of the 20th century, when Japanese chemist Kikunae Ikeda was studying in Germany. During his stay, he noticed a subtle taste common to foods like tomato, asparagus, cheese and meat. Once he returned to Japan, he realised that dashi (a traditional soup stock made from kelp) had exactly the same taste quality.

'He began a study to identify the key chemical substance in konbu (kelp) responsible for this unique taste,' says Ninomiya. 'In 1908, he found that glutamate was the key taste substance in konbu and the taste was common in various kinds of foods.'

He coined the term 'umami' for this taste.'

Ikeda presented his findings at the International Congress of Applied Chemistry in 1912, but his presentation met a muted reception among the mostly American audience. (Revealingly, the paper wasn't translated into English until 2002.)

'You'll first notice some sweetness and acidity, followed by a subtle and indescribable sensation that coats the tongue and lasts a long time'

Not to be deterred, Ikeda went on to commercialise monosodium glutamate (MSG), which he called *Ajinomoto* (essence of taste). The product was hugely successful and Ikeda died a rich man, despite the largely unfounded controversies that would later dog MSG.

Japanese researchers started studying umami in earnest in the 1980s, and by the 1990s a trend for 'molecular gastronomy' was stoking Western interest in Asian cuisine. In 2002, American scientists finally identified umami receptors on the tongue.

'This was an epoch-making study to show that umami is one of the basic tastes,' says Ninomiya. 'Before that, there were many Western researchers who said that umami was a taste just for Asian foods.'

To put it simply, a 'basic taste' is one that can't be produced by combining the others. There is still some controversy about whether there are only five – fat, spiciness and even calcium have all been proposed as contenders for a sixth – but umami's status is now definitive.

'The molecular mechanism at the level of the umami receptor, and the physiological signalling to the taste centre in the brain, are well understood scientifically,' says Dr Ole Mouritsen, professor of gastrophysics and culinary food innovation at the University of Copenhagen. 'But umami is not yet coded in our language the same way as the other basic tastes. You would not have asked me 'what is sweet?', for instance.'

How to get the most from umami

As scientists now acknowledge, umami is the taste imparted by glutamate (the most abundant amino acid in the body), together with two additional molecules (inosinate and guanylate) that dramatically amplify the flavour.

'This effect is called umami synergy and it is very strong,' explains Mouritsen. 'It explains why food combinations like konbu and katsuobushi in Japanese dashi, or eggs and bacon in an English breakfast, are powerful pairings. Cheese and ham, same thing.'

The upshot is that, if you want to create an umami-rich meal, you should combine different sources of umami in the same dish. Dashi – the definitive umami food source –



KIKUNAE IKEDA

The man who gave umami its name and identified the chemical basis of the flavour is Kikunae Ikeda, a Japanese Chemist and Professor of Chemistry. Allegedly he was inspired to uncover the secret of umami when one day, at a family dinner, he noticed that the dashi broth in his soup was more delicious than normal; it was the addition of kombu, a species of brown macroalgae, that was adding this deeply savoury and delicious dimension to the soup, and it set him on a voyage of discovery to learn how the flavour element really worked.

contains glutamate from the dried konbu, inosinate from the dried bonito flakes, and guanylate from the dried shiitake mushrooms.

'Foods that we think of as being high in savoury flavour contain glutamates,' says Jackie Bailey, an analytic chemist and founder of the UK-based koji brand Umami Chef. 'If you combine these with foods that are rich in inosinate and guanylate, the flavour you taste

'Experiment with flavours and you'll quickly discover that almost every dish can be improved with an extra umami note.'

will be boosted further than eating one of these individually.'

To use an example from Western cookery, tomato sauce is rich in glutamate. Add in some beef (full of inosinate and guanylate) and sprinkle over some Parmesan (one of the most glutamate-rich ingredients in Western cuisine) and you have a downright umami explosion – in the form of a Bolognese sauce.

'Add a spoonful of miso to sauces, grate cheese on tomato dishes, add a splash of fish

sauce to stocks,' suggests Bailey. 'Experiment with flavours and you'll quickly discover that almost every dish can be improved with an extra umami note.'

Umami foods, then, have always been part of our diets, whether or not we have historically thought about them that way. If more persuasion were needed, we could point to the composition of breast milk. The very first food many of us sampled, at a point when our tastebuds were still developing, derived its flavour mostly from lactose (sweetness) and glutamates (umami).

A cross-cultural phenomenon

If anything, the mystery is not about umami's centrality to flavour, but why such an essential aspect remained hidden in plain sight for so long.

'It's probably due to two reasons – only in the 2000s were umami receptors found and a clear physiological mechanism established,' says Mouritsen. 'Culture-wise, it's probably because we in Western cuisines have no single ingredient like Japanese dashi that is so clear and clean in umami.'

Whereas dashi is umami in its purest form, Western soup stocks also contain substances like sucrose (sweet) and organic acids (sour). Even Marmite and Parmesan – both about as umami-rich as Western food gets – have a saltiness distorting the umami flavour.

Ninomiya often gets asked whether the Japanese have a higher sensitivity to umami. Her answer is always 'no' – studies have shown that umami sensitivity doesn't vary between cultures. The issue is that many people elsewhere struggle to identify the sensation.

'Each geographical area has unique traditional umami ingredients – finding these materials to make an umami story is my big research question,' she says. 'Miso, soy sauce and dashi are good ingredients to talk about for Japanese people, but for people in the UK I talk about Cheddar cheese, tomato sauce, Oxo, Marmite. In Nigeria, I analysed dawadawa – fermented locust beans – before giving a lecture on umami.'

As umami becomes better known in Western cultures, it is getting harder to recall a time when we thought just in terms of sweet, salty, bitter and sour. The 'fifth taste' it may be in food chemistry parlance, but umami is quite possibly the most foundational aspect of deliciousness.

FINDING UMAMI AT ROSL

Executive Chef Elliot Plimmer: 'I think that umami is a really interesting concept, and you'll find it in our menus, but usually quite unintentionally! For example, a risotto with the combination of mushrooms and Parmesan ends up being packed with umami flavour without you necessarily realising it, as Parmesan is one of the easiest ways of adding umami. We also utilise those savoury flavours when we make our roasted pepper and tomato soup; at the end of cooking we add a 'gastric' which is made by boiling vinegar and sugar. If you have ever had Heinz tomato soup, the gastric is what gives it that distinctive flavour.'

So while umami isn't something we go looking for, it's something that inadvertently adds loads of flavour to our menus.'



SPARKLING SUCCESS

The rise and rise of English wine

Wine Writer Henry Jeffreys charts the meteoric rise of England's wine industry and its now iconic sparkling wine, from humble beginnings to its champagne-challenging status today



Winemaker Charlie Holland oversaw Gusbourne's Fifty One Degrees North (inset, opposite), testing against the likes of Krug and Cristal.

Will Davenport who makes organic wines in Sussex recalls the fierce debate in English wine circles in the late 1990s about crossing the £20 threshold. Would anyone pay that much for an English sparkling wine at a time when you could buy a nice champagne for £14? Just over two decades later and Gusbourne in Kent has just released a wine called Fifty One Degrees North that costs nearly ten times that. In recent years there's been something of an arms race in English sparkling wine with Chapel Down, Nyetimber and others releasing increasingly expensive wines.

Charlie Holland, the winemaker at Gusbourne, says they did extensive testing against their French rivals like Krug and Cristal before coming up with the £195 price tag. It's certainly a phenomenal wine and evidence of a swagger in English wine that wasn't there even five years ago. It makes the late '90s look like ancient history. How did the industry come so far so quickly?

As any taxi driver will tell, 'it's global warming, innit?' The 1970s and early '80s were what English wine pioneer Peter Hall at Breaky Bottom calls the BAW - bloody awful weather - years. Even the heatwave vintage of 1976 was ruined by a rainy autumn. But something began to change in 1989 and 1990 which were both very warm. 1994 was the year things really took off right with regular summer temperatures over 30 degrees centigrade up to the scorching 2003 vintage. There were still disastrous years like 2012 but you could now make a palatable wine in England more often than not.

'Could' being the operative word; England hadn't suddenly become California, those warmer summer days would not matter without



'Their commitment was vindicated when a group of French industry professionals pronounced it a very fine vintage champagne'

experienced professionals to make use of them. After the second world war, English wine had been the preserve of retired colonels and the *Good Life* brigade but by the late '80s there were homegrown winemakers like Peter Hall with a number of vintages under their belts who were discovering what worked and what didn't.

But it was still a shoestring industry compared with other wine-producing countries. This changed in 1988 with the arrival of two ambitious Americans, Sandy and Stuart Moss, who bought a farm complete with Tudor manor house, Nyetimber in West Sussex. Rather than the usual German varieties favoured by English winemakers, they planted chardonnay, pinot noir and pinot meunier with the ambition to make a rival to champagne. Most people at the time thought they were mad. Stuart Moss, who died in July 2022, told me a story about an official from the Ministry of Agriculture who said that they would be better off planting apples. Moss snapped back: 'we didn't move 4,000 miles to grow apples!'

With a fortune made selling dental equipment, he had the means. They hired probably the most experienced winemaker in England, Kit Lindlar, and a French vineyard consultant called Jean-Manual Jacquinet, one of the very few who spoke English. Jacquinet was not impressed with the standard of English wine when he arrived: 'At that time it was very bad. The still wine was awful; sparkling wine was worse.'

Their commitment was vindicated when the first vintage, a 1992, was shown blind by Jancis Robinson, wine writer for the *Financial Times*, to a group of French industry professionals who all pronounced it a fine vintage champagne. It would go on to win award after award. The Queen was a fan; it replaced champagne in



Gusbourne Estate in Kent focuses on the classic grape varieties of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier



Nyetimber in West Sussex with its iconic Manor House, has helped transform English wines

the royal household for the first time in history. The ambitions of two Americans transformed English wine. The baton was taken up next by Mike Roberts at Ridgeview who planted in 1995. One of his wines beat the might of Piper Heidsieck and Charles Heidsieck to win best sparkling wine in the world at the Decanter awards in 2010. In 2017, the French paid English wine the ultimate tribute when Taittinger planted vines near Faversham in Kent. Its first wine is due to come out in 2024.



Henry Jeffreys is a drinks expert and award winning wine writer. His 2016 book *Empire of Booze* won a Fortnum and Mason award and he has written for *The Guardian* and *The Spectator*, and is Editor of *Master of Malt* magazine.

wine will taste green. One estate, Danbury Ridge, in Essex, the driest part of country, has cracked it producing ripe pinot noirs with an almost New Zealand intensity of fruit even in difficult years like 2021. They are expensive at the moment but show what is possible with the necessary money and ambition.

Danbury Ridge is owned by a man with deep pockets as is Nyetimber but it's not all about billionaires. The industry is so varied now with innovative young people taking over industrial urban spaces, buying in grapes and making weird and wonderful wines.

English wine is never going to be cheap, the cost of labour is too high and yields are too low, but you can find exceptional quality now in the £15-20 bracket if you know where to look. There are producers who are discovering that those much-maligned German varieties that built the English wine industry can, in the right hands, produce superb dry wines for fans of muscadet, sancerre or albariño. Hell, there's even some actual albariño planted in

Kent that in a warm year can take on the best of Spain. We've come a long way from the BAW years.

Stepping out from champagne's shadow

In the '90s and '00s, English wine looked to Champagne for inspiration, and it proved a good model especially as you can make palatable sparkling wine from not entirely ripe grapes. But now the still wines are having their moment thanks to warmer temperatures and, with lots of trial and error, growers are learning how to ripen fruit more fully.

In 2016 Chapel Down startled everyone with the ripeness of its Kit's Coty Chardonnay 2014, grown on a special patch of chalk near Maidstone. Other producers realised that with the right site and sufficient work in the vineyard, England's answer to chablis could be achieved. Red wines have proved harder because you have to have a perfectly ripe skin or the

According to Visit England there are over 400 vineyards dotted around England, from the beautifully craggy coasts of Cornwall to the pastoral idylls of Yorkshire and Suffolk. Wine tourism has really taken off in England in recent years and many vineyards are now set up for tours, with accommodation and restaurants on-site to help you make the most of your visit. English wine week, which takes place on 17-25 June this year, is a perfect time to try some homegrown still wines and fizz.



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Tania Dolvers Photography London



INSIDE FORTNUM & MASON

From inventing the Scotch egg and sustaining Shackleton's explorers on their Arctic expeditions, to being the first retailer to stock Heinz baked beans, the evolution of Fortnum & Mason is a fascinating one. Rosie Allen talks to CEO Tom Athron about the secrets behind the iconic brand's continued success and how they have stayed relevant since their beginnings in 1707

You've worked at other great British institutions such as John Lewis. What initially drew you to Fortnum & Mason? Did F&M surprise you or challenge your expectations when you got started in the new role as CEO?

If fun careers are shaped by accountability and stretch, then the John Lewis Partnership gave me both over 13 happy years, first in a trading role in the department stores business, then as CFO at Waitrose, the Partnership's supermarket arm. The search for more of this stretch 'fix' led me to Matchesfashion.com in 2018, an online luxury fashion business, but after a couple of years the opportunity arose to lead Fortnum's, and I needed no persuading. Whenever asked, this was always my perfect job, and given its extraordinary history, fulfilling this role is an honour and a privilege.

How to define Fortnum & Mason – department store? Luxury food hall? Grocer to the Royal Household? Albany's corner shop? Art gallery? Afternoon tea? All good efforts, but none of these alone quite hits the mark, and for me this is its appeal – our Piccadilly flagship is unique, distinctive, impossible to pin down. It is also surprising. Deep red carpets on the ground floor, a velvet handrail on the stairs, important works of art on the walls. The whole shop is a joyous assault on the senses, and every day I watch customers young and old light up as they cross our threshold.

As consumer demand has shifted so significantly online, most retailers have come under almost insurmountable economic pressures – Fortnum's distinctiveness makes it impossible to copy and so is a critical source of competitive advantage. Most of the products we sell are only available through Fortnum's (with over 80% of them sourced within the UK), and family ownership (the Weston family have held the business for over 70

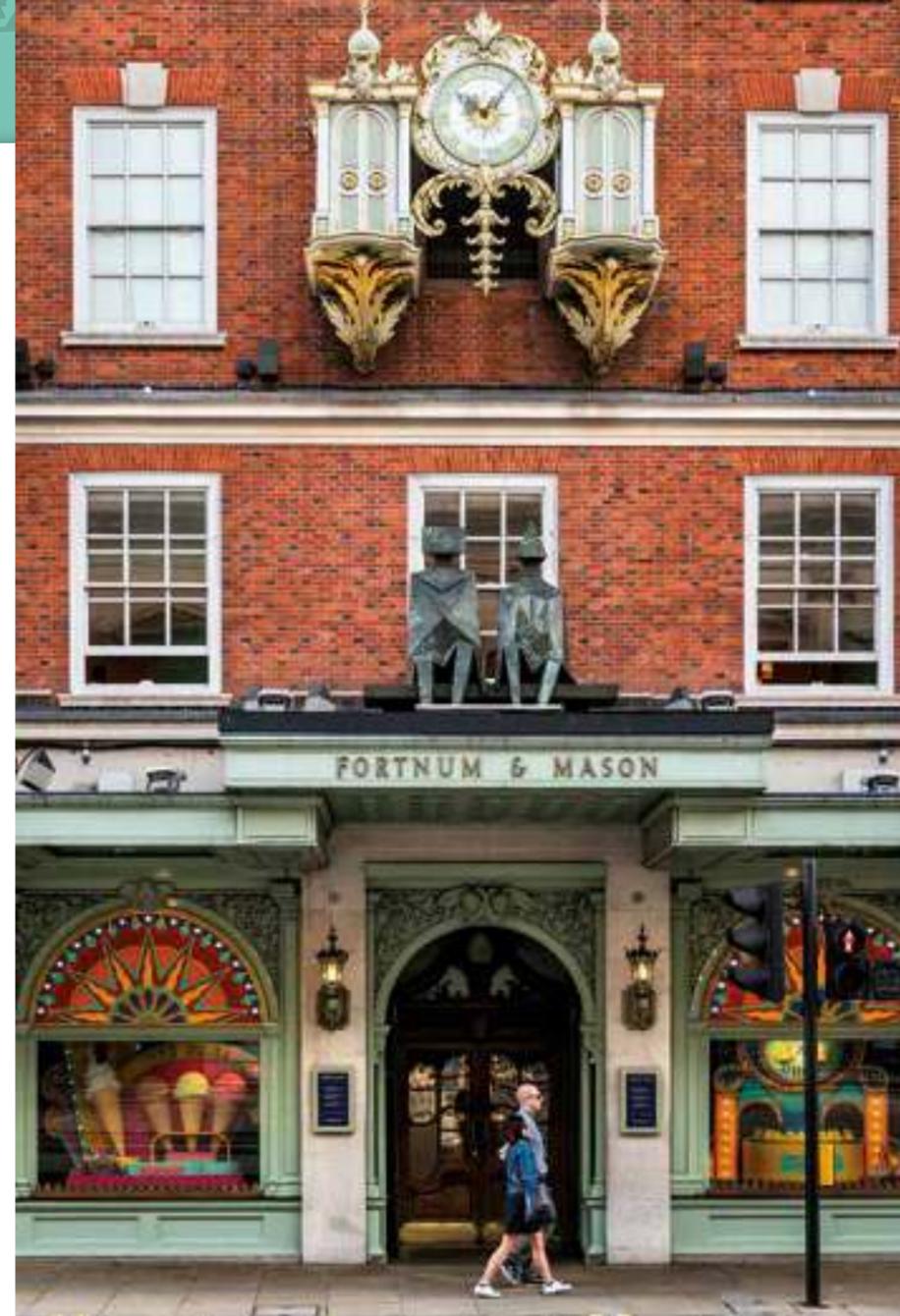
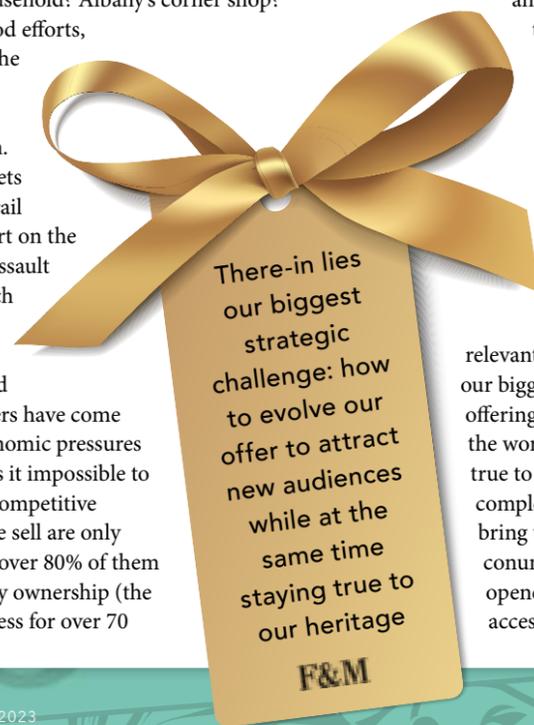
years) means we can take a long-term view on investments in our future. The culture of humanity and stewardship that stems from this sits very comfortably alongside my own values, and so when the call came, it just deepened the appeal.

I joined for Christmas 2020, overlapping with my predecessor for a few weeks before taking control in early January 2021 just as the country went into a five-month lockdown. Joining at this time was not easy – the human limitations of remote working, fast-changing customer behaviours and growing financial pressures, as well as the health impact on our people from Covid itself – but my team were fabulous, we were all determined to use the downtime well. Several priorities presented themselves quite quickly: we focused all our operational efforts on accelerating our online capacity and improving the Fortnum's experience for our customers.

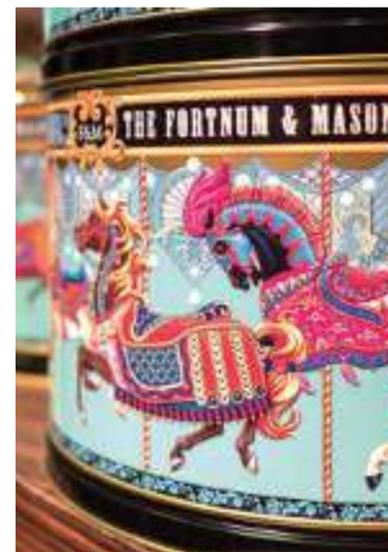
This focus then gave me the time and space to think about the longer-term, post-Covid direction of Fortnum's, which will be centred around extraordinary food and drink, impeccable service, and unforgettable experiences. We will continue to build our brand globally, but with our Piccadilly flagship at our heart.

Fortnum & Mason is an incredibly iconic brand – how have you managed to bring along a younger, more digital audience while staying true to your heritage and history?

Invention and reinvention are important hallmarks of Fortnum's history, and we talk a lot about how we can become more relevant, to more people, more often. There-in lies our biggest strategic challenge: how to evolve our offering to attract new audiences (I am not sure I like the word 'modernise') while at the same time staying true to our heritage. This is an ongoing task – never completed – but I would pick out three areas that bring to life our particular approach to this conundrum: Firstly, our online business has opened up our brand to those who don't have easy access to our London shops or our outpost in



From its iconic Piccadilly shopfront to its world-famous artisan food and drink, Fortnum & Mason has become one of St James's best-loved institutions, and is just a stone's throw from Over-Seas House



Fortnum and Mason's HQ at 181 Piccadilly features an ornate clock (built in 1964). It features William Fortnum and Hugh Mason who turn to bow to each other every hour, on the hour



We have also noticed how storytelling on social media is attracting a younger, more foodie following that brings new faces to our brand

F&M

Hong Kong. We now have thousands of our products listed online and continue to change everything from search to checkout to make the process easier and quicker. As a result, well over a third of our business is now online and, far from this growth evaporating as our shops reopened, we saw that growth continue throughout 2022. We have also noticed how storytelling on social media is attracting a younger, more foodie following that brings new faces to our brand – and this extends to having a presence on TikTok, and live streaming content to customers in China shopping on our own site.

Secondly, we have launched a series of supper clubs, many in conjunction with food writer and critic William Sitwell, which has attracted a younger, more foodie audience into Fortnum's, who are seeking great dining experiences beyond restaurants. We invite fabulous up-and-coming chefs from around the country to come and cook, and the evenings are sociable, fun and convivial, and an interest in great food is the common thread. Details of future dates are listed on the Fortnum's site and many of our diners have become regulars – including one couple who came to the first supper club on their first date, and have been to every once since! We have recently extended this idea to include chefs' cookery book launches in our series of 'food behind the pages' supper clubs – we started with Ruth Rogers' new book from The River Café in October and they continue to be a great draw.

Thirdly, having a clear point of view on sustainability is now critical, in particular to a new generation of customers. Our chefs fundamentally believe that when sourcing our food, the more effort we take to protect the soil, or the seabed, or the communities that produce our ingredients, the better the food tastes, and we have

adopted this belief as the inspiration for a new restaurant in Piccadilly called FIELD at Fortnum's – an informal, welcoming restaurant in a prime position on our ground floor that champions sustainably sourced, high-integrity ingredients – and it has now become one of my own favourite lunch spots in London. Come and try it for yourself, and you'll see what I mean!

Are there any interesting stories from the brand's history that you're able to share?

Fortnum & Mason was founded in 1707 when a footman to Queen Anne (William Fortnum) asked for permission to take the used candles from the Royal Court at St James's Palace, melt the beeswax, recycle them back into candles, and sell them from a site on Piccadilly close to where the current shop stands today. He went into business with his friend and landlord, Hugh Mason, and the business was born. 1707 was an important year in British History. It saw the signing of The Act of Union which brought together Scotland and England under one crown and one government, which makes Fortnum & Mason as old as the United Kingdom itself.

The business soon started importing spices and exotic foods from around the world, and its spirit of innovation started when the Scotch egg was invented by Fortnum's chefs in 1738. In 1886, Fortnum's became the first grocer in the UK to stock HJ Heinz's new Baked Beans, and the store supported explorers and missionaries as they toured the globe – Shackleton's Antarctic expeditions and Hillary's Everest attempts were both victualled by Fortnum's.

Fortnum's relationship with the Royal Household includes the Royal Warrants, first granted in 1910 by Queen Alexandra.

We currently hold two Warrants, granted by HM Queen Elizabeth II, and by Charles, then Prince of Wales which will now formally expire in 2024 before any decisions on new Warrants being granted. We also recently held a nationwide pudding competition to honour the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, which was won by Jemma Melvin from Southport with her Lemon Curd and Amaretto Biscuit Trifle, with the award being presented by the now Queen Consort, Camilla, here in Piccadilly.

We have recently installed beehives on the roof at Piccadilly, and sell the honey in our shop, in numbered jars. The first few jars from the autumn harvest are always sent as a thank you to the Monarch, on the basis that the bees are most likely to be foraging for nectar from the gardens at Clarence House and Buckingham Palace.

What's the curation process behind a product getting the Fortnum & Mason seal of approval?

Our focus on extraordinary food and drink means we put in every effort to ensure our products are worthy of the label. Our buyers have the best palates in the industry so we can be confident our jams, teas, biscuits, cold meats and mince pies are truly extraordinary.

Many of our suppliers are small, artisanal craftspeople who are truly passionate about the things they make, and we have been working with some of suppliers for many decades. Our biscuit supplier is a small family business based in Lancashire who worked with us to develop our famous Lossus range (you must try them, they are the best biscuits you will ever eat); Our tea is sourced from around the world, sailed up the river Tyne and blended for us by a family firm in Newcastle; Our chocolates are truly hand-made by a family in Hove on the South Coast.

The best bit about being a food retailer is the tastings! I am always being asked what I think of this pork pie, or this sea bass dish, or this pastel de nata. The tastings are taken seriously – I'm often



TOM ATHRON

Tom's dream food hamper from Fortnum and Mason's would include a smoky coffee blend and deliciously chocolatey ginger biscuits



Sandringham Blend Coffee £13.95



Gingerlossus biscuits £19.95



Oscietra caviar £160.00

excluded on the grounds that I think everything tastes delicious – only the best products find themselves on the shelves, and the process can often take over a year to complete.

F&M is probably best known for its wonderful food hall and in particular your wicker hamper. If you could fill your dream hamper with F&M goodies, what would you choose?

Oh, that is easy, I think about this a lot. I'd start with savoury treats, including a pork pie, half a dozen fennel and chilli pork sausages, made on-site, some truffled nuts and a pot of Welsh Rarebit to spread on my toast before grilling. Our new range of mayonnaises are included in this hamper, with some Pata Negra Spanish ham freshly cut off the bone, and some cheese (probably our Roquefort to add to a pear and endive salad).

Biscuits play an important role in my dream hamper – Gingerlossus in particular, with dark chocolate and that hit of spicy ginger at the end – as do salted caramel Florentines. We recently set up a same-day 2-hour delivery service in London, in-part to provide emergency Florentines to peckish Londoners.

At this time of year, I would include some mince pies (never eaten cold – always warmed in the oven for ten minutes), and some tea and coffee – specifically Sandringham Blend Coffee (slightly smoky and aromatic – right up my street) and a box of loose-leaf Countess Grey Tea.

Lastly a tea pot – made in Devon from Cornish china clay by Feldspar, Jeremy and Cath Brown's fine china business – beautifully crafted, hand-painted, and for me the epitome of modern British luxury.

And maybe, if I was feeling extravagant, a few grams of Fortnum's Oscietra caviar. I would pop a few of these tiny, jet-black salted beads atop a drop of crème fraiche, itself balanced on a small fresh blini the size of a fifty-pence piece, towering with Fortnum's organic smoked salmon. Perfection.

Explore your London

Why not explore this London landmark yourself this spring, situated as it is just a stone's throw from the Clubhouse? There's plenty to enjoy in St James's as the days lengthen and the weather brightens, including Bond Street, Buckingham Palace and the West End, plus stunning views across London's iconic skyline and Green Park's emerald green lawns. Our luxury accommodation makes a comfortable home-from-home to explore the very best of the capital; for more details and room rates visit rosl.org.uk/accommodation



FROM PLATE TO PALETTE

Cindy Polemis looks at the symbolism of food in European art and tries to decipher the visual language of still life that gives us food for thought



Pieter Claesz -
Still Life with Peacock Pie

I have to confess to being somewhat ambivalent about the concept of tasting menus in fine restaurants. These culinary journeys were originally inspired by the French idea of *degustation* — primarily reserved for wine tasting — but from the 1990s they began popping up on menus at top restaurants around the world as a way of pairing wine with different, often exotic, dishes; each tiny course a delectable calling card, an edible *curriculum vitae*, to showcase the talents of superstar chefs. At L'Enclume, one of Britain's most sought-after restaurants, your taste buds can romp through courses ranging from 'fritter of Duroc pig and smoked eel, lovage and fermented sweetcorn, to green succulents 'picked moments ago', cooked in sea water with miso butter, to west coast brill, kale leaves and razor clams from Gairloch, smoked pike perch roe and Welsh truffles, to Kendal Mint Cake stones, honey pastilles, blackcurrant teacake, marigold cornets and Cartmel grapes... that's just four of the 15-course menu. This is an extravaganza of eating, an extraordinary indulgence and delicious for sure, but what it might all inflict on one's gastric juices does not bear too much scrutiny.

These show-stopping tasting menus of today remind me of the 17th-century Dutch Golden Age binges on canvas. Still life compositions of overlaid tables filled with food were intended to focus the mind on the artist's talents as well as on economic abundance, (it was not called the Golden Age for nothing), temptation, and a soupçon of sex and mortality.

Mounds of expensive foodstuffs, as shown in Pieter Claesz's *Still Life with Peacock Pie*, or Joris van Son's *Still Life With Lobster* were genuinely served up. Bills of fare of great Baroque feasts often read like inventories rather than menus. Take for example James II's coronation banquet in Westminster Hall in 1685. The king and his new wife, Maria di Modena, sat down alone to a table laden with 170 different dishes. One dish consisted of 'twenty-four puffins, cold' and another of 'four fawns, two larded'. Although van Son appeared satisfied with a single lobster on his table, and L'Enclume offers just a tasty morsel of west coast brill and smoked pike perch roe, their majesties tucked into 12 lobsters at their post-matrimonial bash.

The depiction of food in art shows us that food was as much about power, status, life and death,

('food rots-so do we', underlines the trope in art of *memento mori*; 'remember you will die') as it was about filling an empty hole. It was also about what you placed on your table: bedazzling dining room bling whose craftsmanship was created to astound.

Tableware wrought in gold and silver, known as plate, was a perfect way to show off to elite circles for the sheer hell of it.

The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge owns a splendid nautilus shell cup made in London in 1585, most probably by a goldsmith from Antwerp.

It is made up of an exotic south-east Asian shell, engraved in China, with silver gilt marine inspired fittings, including a figure of the god of the sea, Neptune, bronco-busting a writhing dolphin that forms the stem. As if that were not enough, a giant silver lobster crawls inside the cup, ready to stick his frightful pincers up your nostrils as you sip your wine. Lobsters symbolised wealth, gluttony, and temptation, and due to their ability to walk both forward and backward the lobster also took on untrustworthy and unpredictable meanings.

Accoutrements for the tables of affluent diners could be linked to economic circumstances in surprising ways, such as a bizarre tureen made in the shape of a trussed-up roast capon. In the late 1790s, the combination of war with France and several failed wheat harvests at home, meant that flour in Britain was in short supply, and the Royal Household forbade its use for pastry. Staffordshire potters rose to the challenge by making stoneware dishes to mimic pie crusts. The tureen was intended to hold a poultry or game pie. The makers even included holes to show where the 'bird' had been removed from the spit.

We look for symbolism in representations of food, but the visual language can keep us guessing. The art historian Mariet

Westermann has devoted much scholarship on the significance of meticulously painted lemons in 17th-century Dutch still life; not just an artistic afterthought but key to understanding society at the time. Lemons were a luxury product and to have one on your table was a sign of your undisputed position in high society. Asparagus was also associated with luxury, prosperity, and abundance. Louis XIV of France declared it the king of vegetables. Sexual undertones could also lurk in those firm spears: the 17th-century English herbalist Nicholas Culpepper claimed that asparagus 'stirred up lust in man and woman'.

One of my favourite depictions of the cabbage is the truly weird *Baker of Eeklo*, painted in the late 16th century by Flemish painters Cornelis van Dalem and Jan van Wechlin. Legend had it that those who wanted to change their appearance or reverse the effects of aging could go to the Eeklo where they could have a new head baked for them. The old head would be carefully cut from the torso, kneaded, glazed and placed in the oven. In the meantime, a green cabbage was placed over the torso to stem the bleeding, and await the oven-ready

head. But as anyone who has ever baked bread knows, disasters can happen. This is a cautionary tale of how vanity can lead to a full head of leaves.

Depictions of food throughout art history have given us backdrops for both life and death and enabled artists to show off their talents and convey hidden messages. We actively seek out the symbolism to make sense of these visual feasts; but remember, for every succulent peach there is a rotting pear that lurks behind, reminding us of the transience of life and giving us food for thought!

Lemons were a luxury product and to have one on your table was a sign of your undisputed position in high society



Cornelis van Dalem and Jan van Wechlin
- *Baker of Eeklo*



Joris van Son - *Still Life With Lobster*



Cindy Polemis is an art historian and an independent lecturer. She has a B.A in History from Oxford University and as a mature student she graduated from Birkbeck College, London University with a B.A and then M.A. in History of Art. Since 2016 she has been an official art guide at Tate Modern and Tate Britain and is an accredited lecturer for The Arts Society, as well as lecturing at ROSL on several occasions.



Adriaen Coorte - *Still Life With Asparagus*



Abraham Mignon - *Still Life with Rotting Fruit and nuts on a stone ledge*

SEEING THE WORLD

International, the exhibition currently on display in the Central Lounge, is a survey of the Royal Over-Seas League's impressive alumni of artists who have received support from us over the past decade. Our Visual Arts Curator Robin Footitt details how ROSL helps young artists globally in their development through residencies, competitions and awards.

In the past 18 months alone, the Royal Over-Seas League has exhibited 231 artworks made by 128 artists from 27 countries. As curator this has been quite a challenge to develop a consistently engaging programme, showing important modern artists such as Marc Chagall, Dame Elisabeth Frink and work loaned from The Francis Bacon Estate, linking them with established names in contemporary art like Sunil Gupta and Pixy Liao, and most importantly following ROSL's dedication to providing opportunities for young and emerging artists to have the highest quality platform to display their art, voice ideas and develop future projects growing alongside their own ambitions.

The story for *International* as an exhibition is to showcase a selection of this development and to raise awareness of the important work of the Royal Over-Seas League in establishing many artists far and wide. The roots of its current visual arts programme originate from the launch of the ROSL Annual Exhibition in 1984; indeed the longest serving visual arts purchase prize was established just one year later and is still awarded annually to a graduating student in MA Ceramics and Glass at the Royal College of Art, gifted to the winner of the Annual Music Competition Overseas Awards. We also run

a biennial Photography Competition, established in 2019 which is completely free to enter and a wonderful opportunity to discover some new global photographic talent with £3,500 of prize money (launch details of this year's competition *ROSL PHOTO 23* can be found on page 32).

Since 2000, ROSL has been committed to artist-in-residence opportunities for international artists to present and promote their work in the UK for the first time and over the past five years we have selected two participants annually to develop their practice during a two-month stay across The Art House, Wakefield and ROSL, London each autumn. In 2021 we were also fortunate to receive a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for our first Royal Over-Seas League Artist-in-Residence working both at Over-Seas House and in partnership with the Griffin Schools

Trust, providing artist workshops relating to heritage and identity for Year 5 pupils (8-10 years old) at Riverley Primary School in Leyton, East London.

International displays work from Isabella Agbaje, Joey Chin, Viil Coward, Madhu Das, Nisha Duggal, Muhammad Amdad Hossain, Tirtha Lawati, Shake Makelele, Cole Ndelu, Samuel Nnorom, Shubhodeep Roy and Dimple B Shah. The exhibition is on view at Royal Over-Seas League until 16 April, for further information contact roslarts@rosl.org.uk

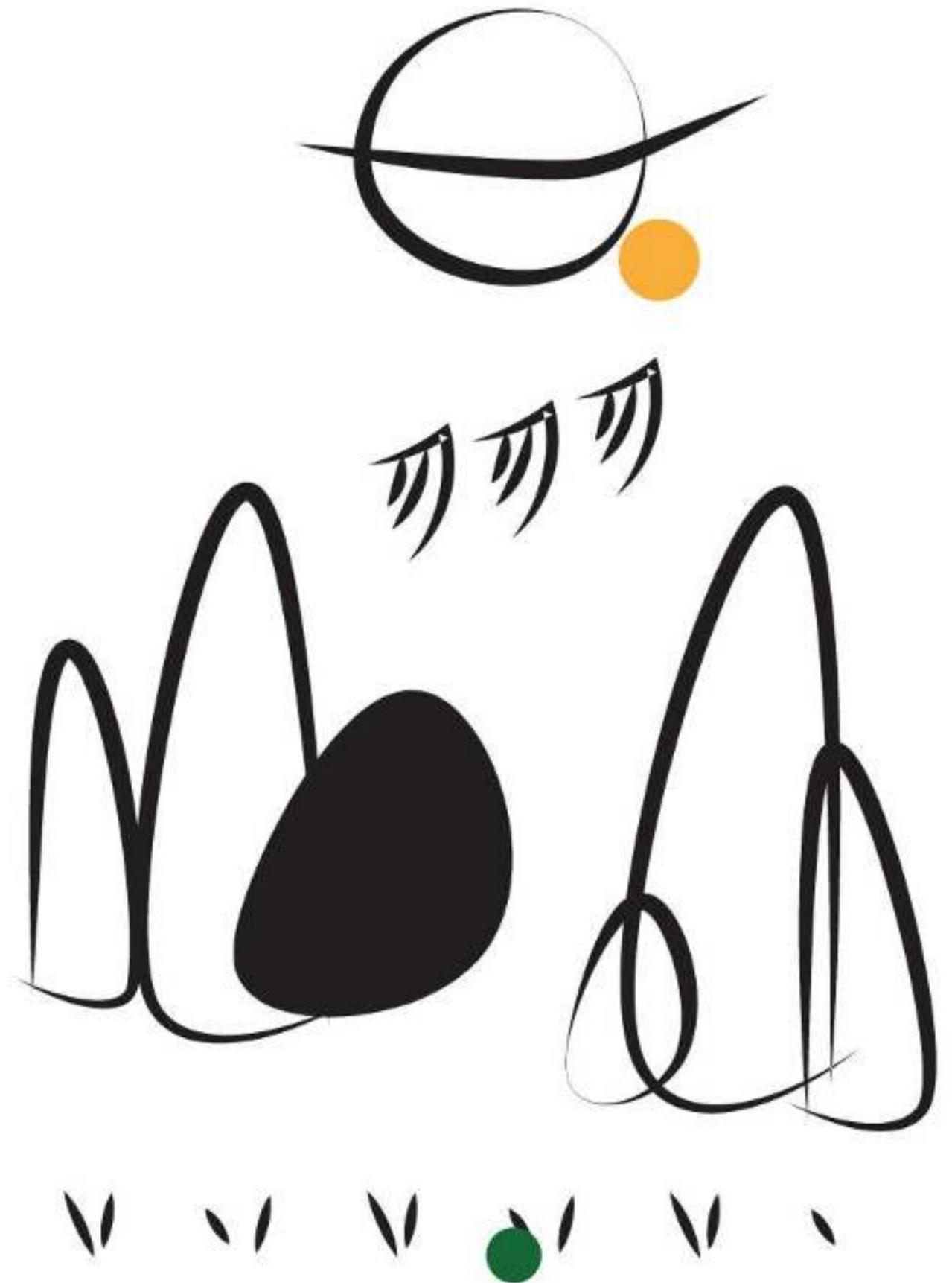


1. Joey Chin

2018 ROSL International Residency with The Art House, Wakefield SINGAPORE

'It is difficult to consider my time as an artist in residence before expressing how I appreciate ROSL ARTS' commitment in maintaining engagement with the artists it has worked with. I sometimes forget that it is a Commonwealth organisation, but this is precisely why I think ROSL ARTS is successful at what it does: establishing and fostering long-term relationships through continuous engagements, like the upcoming exhibition. In that sense, there is a lot of heart involved and I think the arts management team goes beyond thinking about art.

What I truly valued during my time in Wakefield was the freedom to explore, experiment, test, bumble about, learn and to be very intimate with the process. Actually, it did feel like winning the art equivalent of lottery, being selected for the residency.' 🍊





2. Muhammad Amdad Hossain
2019 Madiha Aijaz Young Photographer of Promise, ROSL PHOTO 19
BANGLADESH

'When I was awarded the Madiha Aijaz Award for a Young Photographer by ROSL, I was at a very early stage and since then my career has taken off, as I have received a lot of work, inspiration and prize money.

Being a photo enthusiast, I have been travelling near and far to depict interesting human stories for the last few years. My passion is to explore the different aspects of human life and document them. Through my photos, I want to share my unique perspective and experience with all. I strongly believe in the power of photography in changing people's perspective towards social changes and issues.'

3. Dimple B Shah
2019 ROSL International Residency with The Art House, Wakefield
INDIA

'I had an unforgettable experience during our show at Manchester Contemporary Art Fair. I was performing 'Negotiating Body Emotions and Stains' - a one-on-one interactive piece, and one woman from the audience who participated in this work was so emotionally moved with my performance ritual of healing that she had tears in her eyes and felt emotionally consoled. Later she thanked me that my performance was very helpful for her. In Wakefield a lot of people collaborated in my performances, and they were kind and helpful.'

4. Cole Ndelu
2019 ROSL International Residency with The Art House, Wakefield
SOUTH AFRICA

'The Art House was my first international residency; it was fun because it gave me the freedom that I needed to grow as an artist. I did my first text and photo installations during that residency; I've continued with that text project and integrate text into my practice. I recently presented it at my Open Studio during my time in residence with The American Academy in Rome as an Artist Protection Fund Fellow.'

5. Isabella Agbaje
2019 Camera Winner, ROSL PHOTO 19
NIGERIA

'Winning the ROSL Camera Prize at the end of 2019 catapulted me from a passionate artist to a professional photographer. Since then, I've been able to raise another \$2000 in addition to the prize money and invest all that into procuring a better camera lens. The competition also allowed me into some very dignified rooms. For example, I was fortunate to meet with former High Commissioner of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to the United Kingdom, His Excellency George Adesola Oguntade CFR, CON.'

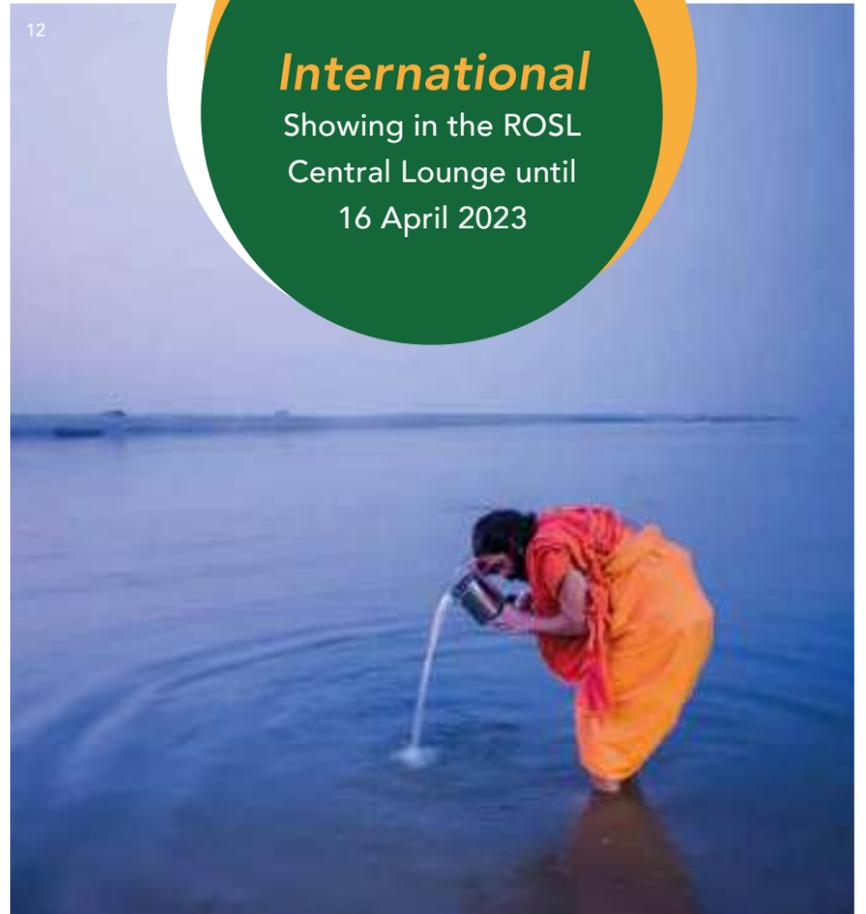
6. Madhu Das
2022 ROSL International Residency with The Art House, Wakefield
INDIA

'The Art House residency has given me my first-ever major solo show in the UK (Summer 2023), a breakthrough at this point in my career. During the eight weeks I started engaging with TAH community/studios and it was overwhelming, the residency opened the possibility to explore medium, material, and subject. I worked with new materials for the first time and this experience is very new to me trying to achieve the unknown through the process.'

7. Nisha Duggal
2021 ROSL Artist-in-Residence with Riverley Primary School, London
UK

'(The residency) was a really interesting context for me to work in and allowed me to tie together various threads in my research that had developed over a few years around heritage, spiritual consequences of colonialism and feelings around belonging, access and privilege.

I enjoyed making *Landed* (flags presented in ROSL courtyard during 2021 and shown on display in the Central Lounge as a part of *International*). Working in a sculptural context was new for me having mainly concentrated on film previously. I've since moved on to make my first collaborative permanent public artwork last summer.'



International
Showing in the ROSL
Central Lounge until
16 April 2023



8. Samuel Nnorom

2022 ROSL International Residency with The Art House, Wakefield
NIGERIA

'At the time I was offered an international residency by ROSL in partnership with The Art House, I was struggling to survive as an emerging artist. My works were still alien to my community and only a few people could relate to my art. A few months down the line every curator, gallery, collector, dealer and institute started offering me solo exhibitions, group shows, art fairs and global recognition.'

I made great memories during my visit to ROSL and my time at The Art House in Wakefield. Visiting Frieze Art Fair, 1-54, V&A Museum, the Tate Modern and Tate Liverpool, White Cube and more, helped me experience art differently from the history books.'



9. Tirtha Lawati

2021 Camera Winner, ROSL PHOTO 21
NEPAL/UK

'I was working full time to fund my personal project and after I was awarded the 2021 Camera Prize by ROSL I was able to use the grant to further fund my ongoing project. Since then, I have been able to document the Nepali Diaspora youth in the UK which was published in *Dazed*.

I had a great experience while staying in ROSL and I got to invite a representative from MAP agency to have a look at the exhibition and my portfolio to get career advice on what I needed to do and work on.'



10. Shake Makelele

2010 ROSL International Residency with Hospitalfield, Arbroath
KENYA

'After the residency in Hospitalfield I participated in a group exhibition with the other residents at OXO Tower in London and ever since then I have had a good working relationship with ROSL. During this time, I was able to visit various galleries in London, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dundee and I met many artists from different countries all over the world – USA, Jamaica, Trinidad, India, Australia and Nigeria to name just a few! I still keep in contact.'



11. Viil Coward

2017 ROSL RCA Ceramics & Glass Award
NORWAY

'When I was awarded the ROSL RCA Ceramics & Glass Prize I was in my final year of a master's degree at Royal College of Art. It inspired me to focus my career on the element of glass work that I loved the most, coldwork and cutting. Rather than diversify I have developed my expertise in this particular field. This has involved working with other artists to develop, using their work as a place to hone my skills. Having spent the last three years developing my skills, it's fitting that the ROSL be the venue for my re-emergence as an artist from this intense period.'

The piece that I made was awarded to Abel Selaocoe (2017 ROSL AMC Overseas Award winner) was the first with large panel cuts in a more random order. It was a risky piece for me to put forward, and I was very doubtful about its effectiveness. But after meeting Abel and hearing his positive reaction to the work it gave me the confidence boost I needed to keep going.'



12. Shubhodeep Roy

2021 Madiha Aijaz Young Photographer of Promise, ROSL PHOTO 21
INDIA

'The Royal Over-Seas League has made such a huge impact on my life that I want to admit that today whatever I am doing, whatever little things I am achieving, every bit of motivation and inspiration I have, all are due to all the motivation I have got from ROSL. Today, my photographs have been exhibited in some of the major events around the world; I got a chance to represent my nation in 27th United Nations Climate Change Conference (2022), FIAP World Photographers Conference, 13th Annual Edition of The Festival of Ethical Photography (2022), the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (2022), and got selected for the prestigious 2023 Ras al Khaimah Fine Arts Festival in UAE.'

The award money has helped me to work on a project that I have always dreamt of working on. Varanasi, *A Place Where Death Is Celebrated* (on view in International) is a project which focuses on the connection of life and death in the city of Varanasi, a project dedicated to the memory of Madiha Aijaz.'

ROSL

PHOTO 23

Win up to
£2,000
IN OUR FREE-TO-ENTER
PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION



Isabella Agbaje, *Holding Hands*
ROSL PHOTO 19 Winner



Tirtha Lawati, *Nyauli*
ROSL PHOTO 21 Winner

Royal Over-Seas League is delighted to announce its biennial photography competition is now open for submissions! This year's theme is *Viewpoint*. Each entrant can submit up to five digital images of their choice taken in the past 18 months, tackling the subject however they wish. The previous competition received over 500 entries from 40 countries, collecting huge praise along the way from our selected industry judges for their quality and depth.

ROSL PHOTO 23 is free to enter, and offers £3,500 of prize money, an exhibition of shortlisted entries in London, winning images published in *Overseas* magazine and open to any photographer 18+ who is a citizen of a Commonwealth or former Commonwealth Country, the US, EU and EEA countries or Switzerland. ROSL will also accept images that have a link to current countries of the Commonwealth from entrants outside of the geographical areas listed above

To enter, visit: rosl.org.uk/photography

Photography panel includes

Seamus Murphy, documentary photographer and filmmaker, recipient of seven World Press Photo awards for his photographic work in Afghanistan, Gaza, Lebanon, Sierra Leone, Peru and Ireland.

Charlotte Jansen, journalist and author of *Photography Now: Fifty Pioneers Defining Photography for the Twenty-First Century* (Tate, 2021) and *Girl on Girl: Art and Photography in the Age of the Female Gaze* (Laurence King Publishing, 2017).

Jocelyn Bain Hogg, documentary photographer and educator, author of four photographic books including *The Firm* (Trolley, 2001), Course Leader at London College of Communication for BA Photojournalism and Documentary Photography.



PRIZES

1st Prize: £2,000, a trip to London for the exhibition opening on Thursday 8 December 2023 (including accommodation at Royal Over-Seas League), winning image published in *Overseas* Magazine and professional development support from ROSL ARTS

Runner-Up: £1,000 and winning image published in *Overseas* Magazine

The Madiha Aijaz Prize: £500 and winning image published in *Overseas* Magazine, awarded to a Young Photographer of Promise under 23 years of age

The shortlisted top 20 entries will be exhibited at Over-Seas House, 9 December 2023 – 4 February 2024

TIMELINE

Deadline for all entries is Friday 1 September 2023, 5PM GMT for full terms and conditions please visit rosl.org.uk/photography

The 20 images selected for exhibition and overall prize-winners will be announced on Friday 6 October 2023

The exhibition of final images will open at Over-Seas House on Thursday 8 December 2023, 6 – 8PM



1910
DINING ROOM

A NEW SEASON OF
DELICIOUS EATING AT ROSL

Spring is here and so is our new 1910 Dining Room menu; along with a delectable new selection of seasonal dishes concocted by Chef Elliot Plimmer, we're also introducing new cocktail options and a refreshed wine list to help you make the most of the season at the Clubhouse.



NEWS & EVENTS

The latest from our clubhouse; branches; and art, music, and education projects



Cerys's Kenyan Diary

ROSL ARTS Manager Cerys Beesley (pictured below) recounts the National Youth Orchestra of Kenya December Residential Course 2022, supported by the Royal Over-Seas League

Tafaria Castle, December 2022

This past December the Royal Over-Seas League and the Kenyan National Youth Orchestra (KNYO) partnered for the first time to bring the first KNYO residential course to fruition after a four-year break.

Supported by their umbrella charity and another amazing organisation, the Art of Music Kenya (AOM) the orchestra aims to help guide and support the ambitions of the young musicians, many of whom are graduates of the sister programmes, Ghetto Classics and SafariCom Youth Orchestra. For many of them, KNYO is the next step in their musical careers.

The Royal Over-Seas League is supporting this project by sending four tutors accompanied by a member of the ROSL ARTS Team to provide excellent quality teaching on the residential course, as well as making the course financially possible thanks to a generous legacy

from the estate of Mr Robert Wainwright, Ian and Susan Pettman and the ROSL Foundation.

On 12 December we woke up to a very snowy London and made our way to City Airport in the hope that we would be able to make it to Amsterdam to get on our connecting flight to Nairobi. After four hours sat in the airport a plane arrived to take us to Amsterdam. Unfortunately, we missed our connecting flight and were forced to stay the night in Amsterdam. The next morning, we were up very early to get on a plane to Paris and then after a very stressful connection at Charles de Galle, we made it to our second plane to Nairobi. Arriving that evening, and with remarkably only one missing suitcase, we were taken to a lovely lodge in Nairobi to spend the night.



MEET THE TUTORS

Jordan Black British clarinettist and ROSL Prizewinner. He has appeared as Guest Principal with the Philharmonia, London Philharmonic, London Chamber Orchestra and Royal Scottish National Orchestra.

Imogen Davies London-based oboist Imogen Davies is currently the second oboe of the Philharmonia Orchestra and dedicated oboe teacher.

Jane Lindsay Scottish cellist and established freelance musician. Jane has worked with many of the major London orchestras including the LSO, Philharmonia and BBC Symphony.

Joe Richards Percussionist. Joe performs all over the UK and abroad, in a huge array of musical contexts, ranging from work as a contemporary solo artist, to that of an orchestral, chamber, West-End and session musician.



Wednesday 14 December

This morning, we set off on an epic drive towards the north to catch up with the orchestra, a day later than expected.

Nairobi traffic is usually something to behold, but today there was an accident on the main road and suddenly our driver was following the multitude of cars winding new routes around the Nairobi suburbs, finally getting stuck on a narrow road for a couple hours, where we waited for the traffic to disperse. We wondered how easy it would be to harness the power of the Masai cows that were able to navigate the traffic with ease, unlike our mini-bus. After what felt like forever, the traffic started to move, and we were able to continue our journey north. Finally, after roughly 50 hours of travel with a couple of extra stopovers we arrived at Tafaria Castle and Resort to catch up with the orchestra and get to work.

After a brief rest, we met the orchestra and the KNYO team and they played us a bit of what they'd been working on with their conductor Levi Wataka before splitting into sectionals to get to know their tutors a bit better.



Thursday 15 December

After a morning briefing, the long day of sectionals started. The many hours of travel were taking their toll on the tutors, but the young people were so delighted to have them there that their enthusiasm drove them on. It was a technique-focussed day, as many of the young people had never had a lesson on their instrument let alone guidance from a specialist on their instrument. Most of them have been learning from YouTube, which considering how difficult some instruments are to even make a sound on, is very impressive.

It's getting colder in the evenings out here, not quite as cold as the temperatures the UK are currently facing but the Nairobi locals are suffering. Luckily some extra blankets have been found.

'The bond that has been established so quickly between the tutor team and the orchestra has been wonderful to watch'

News & views

ROSL NEWS

Friday 16 December

An early start to see the sunrise and a clear look at Mount Kenya in the distance; Tafaria is truly a beautiful prospect.

Since the tutors were still enjoying going through fundamental technique with their students, the group voted to drop one of the orchestra pieces from the concert programme so that they had more time to devote to the craft of their instruments. The bond that has been established so quickly between the tutor team and the orchestra has been wonderful to watch.

Saturday 17 December

After a slight lie-in and a later breakfast, the tutors were refreshed to start the day as this was the last day of rehearsals before the concert and the team started with a morning of sectionals, perfecting their respective pieces before we met before lunch to look at concert logistics

with so many changes. I leapt into action as a volunteer orchestra manager to stage manage these changes, putting my Annual Music Competition logistics experience to the test with my keen team of future concert managers, working

with me to make these transitions as smooth as possible, figuring out the quickest and best way to navigate the small stage and backstage areas. 📍



Along with running the project, there was time to take in some of Kenya's spectacular scenery and wildlife



After they played so well, the orchestra had a more relaxed schedule that evening and had a final session with their tutors to draw any last bits of technique and words of wisdom from them before the course ended.

Sunday 18 December

Concert day. After all the hard work that the musicians put in, we were determined to make this day as stress free as possible. We had a quick dress rehearsal and another look at stage logistics before sending everyone off for a quick rest before the concert.

After lunch, the owners of Tafari and their guests alongside some of Tafari staff and some of the local community gathered in the hall to watch the concert. Donned in matching black t-shirts proudly

emblazoned with the KNYO, ROSL and Tafari logos the orchestra started off with the Kenyan National Anthem and followed with Elgar's Pomp & Circumstance, cracking arrangements of Tshala Muana's Karibu Yangu and Jama Tutu's Nakupenda Kama Sukari for a brilliant first half. Then we went into the sectional pieces that covered everything from Bach to the Drunken Sailor with beautiful Christmas offerings from the wind section. Clarinet and flute tutor Jordan Black then stepped up to the conducting podium to start off the orchestra finale with Magnificent 7 and then Levi finished off the concert with a brilliant new piece called Kenyan Folk Fusion, which had the whole audience and orchestra dancing along.

After the concert finished, the orchestra went outside to take some photographs

with the Tafari Castle as the main backdrop but while we were waiting for everyone to gather the orchestra could not stop playing and continued jamming in the sunshine.

Once the orchestra had completely tired themselves out, we reconvened to watch the World Cup Final which had the whole resort divided as to who they were supporting and then had a relaxing final evening after that rather exciting finale.

Monday 19 December

After a later start than initially planned, it was time to make the long journey back to Nairobi. This time in the same coach as the orchestra and it was a much smoother journey for everyone. Upon reaching Nairobi the team made their farewells and went their separate ways to go and explore the city

All the ROSL Tutor team then took a few days after the course to treat themselves to a holiday and explore a bit more of the beautiful country of Kenya with safaris and sightseeing, which by all accounts was spectacular.

Projects such as ROSL's work with the Kenya National Youth Orchestra are only possible thanks to the generosity of our members – if you'd like to help us continue our endeavours in supporting music, art and education projects across the globe, then please do consider making a donation to the ROSL Foundation at www.rosl.org.uk/foundation



Fabric swatches to be used on the furnishings in the newly-refurbished Duke of York bar



A new look for the Duke of York Bar

The Clubhouse bar is the latest room to be refurbished as part of our ongoing project to modernise Over-Seas House for members

As many of you will have noticed, both the Duke of York Bar and Brabourne Room have been closed over the early part of the year to accommodate much-needed renovations, giving these well-used and much-loved areas of the club the attention and care they deserve. General Manager Warren Miller gives us some insight into the inspiration behind these redesigns and other plans for the future of the clubhouse. 'As two of the most-used areas of the clubhouse, the Duke of York Bar and Brabourne Room were well overdue a bit of a refresh to keep them as beautiful and welcoming as members rightly expect' says Warren.

'Aesthetically we wanted to hark back to how these facilities would have looked when the club opened back in the 1910s, whilst still feeling modern and fresh' he adds. Designer Afra Affara, who did a wonderful job of the Hall of India and the 1910 Dining Room, created a design for the Duke of York bar that incorporated the traditional dark blue colour associated

with the position of the Duke of York with a rich rust red. Combining plush blue velvet with Harris tweed on the bespoke furniture, which was handmade in Nottingham, is a tribute to the heritage of the room, while also feeling sophisticated and convivial – basically everything a club bar environment should be. Soft greys and pinks in the Brabourne room will make the most of the natural light which the room, with its wonderful large windows, attracts.

We'll also be installing a new long bar with a granite top, in keeping with the original bar design for the room, and eclectic classic and modern artwork.

Alongside the public areas of the clubhouse, renovations are planned for some of the bedrooms, with new beds and soft furnishings, and the corridors leading to accommodation, with modernised lighting making these areas much easier for members to navigate. Expect to see more improvements to the clubhouse throughout 2023.



Arts Festival comes to ROSL in July

Mark the first week of July in your calendar, because the ROSL Arts Festival is coming to brighten up summer. Taking place across four days between the 5 and 8 July, the festival will showcase a gloriously varied selection of performances, talks and participatory events. The schedule is slated to include guitar and piano trio recitals, a performance of the *Mikado* from the Gilbert & Sullivan Opera, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* performed in the garden, a ceramics and illustration fair, a portrait photography class, a wine tasting with live music, a chocolate masterclass in the ROSL kitchen and much more. More details will be released in the June edition of *Overseas*, our email newsletters and the ROSL website.

AMC returns to historic Wigmore Hall

ROSL 71st Annual Music Competition Gold Medal Final 2023 to return to Wigmore Hall

For the second year in a row, our Annual Music Competition Gold Medal final will take place at the storied and historic Wigmore Hall. Four exceptional soloists, selected from the Section Finals that take place in February and March at Over-Seas House will battle it out to win the Gold Medal and a further £15,000, which will be presented by HRH Princess Alexandra.

Expect some exceptional music-making in London's most prestigious chamber concert hall.

The final takes place on Wednesday 14 June 2023, and tickets will be available to purchase directly from Wigmore Hall.

Turn to page 42 for ticket details for the Section Finals.



Lady Willingdon portrait restored to former glory

A cherished part of the ROSL furniture, our beautiful portrait of Lady Willingdon has been given some much-needed TLC

Thanks to the generosity of ROSL Members Monica Seeley and Susan Oakes, along with The De Laszlo Foundation, the portrait of our first female Chairman, Lady Willingdon, has undergone extensive renovation. The portrait, which takes pride of place in the Drawing Room was looking rather tired, and in need of some restoration to restore the painting to its original splendour, and to reflect the vibrancy of Lady Willingdon's notoriously bold character. The portrait was painted in oils on canvas by Philip de László in 1924, and shows the Marchioness wearing a Star of the Order of the British Empire.

Who was Lady Willingdon?

Lady Marie Freeman-Thomas, Marchioness of Willingdon, served as our Chairman from 1941 to 1946. Her husband Freeman-Freeman Willingdon, Marquess of Willingdon would become the



From the back left hand side: Stuart Sanderson, Susan Oakes, Damon de Laszlo, Sandra de Laszlo, Katherine Field; Front left Helen Prince, Jenny Sanderson, Monica Seeley, Annette Prandzioch

22nd Viceroy of India, as well as the Governor General of Canada. In April 1930, Lady Willingdon took a canoe trip from Cowichan Lake to Duncan, via the Cowichan River, an event which led to the naming of the Marie Canyon, which sits along the river, in her honour. After her death in 1960, *The Times* paid tribute to her tenacity in her obituary which read; 'Her failing powers and clouded memory of the last years were a tragedy, but if she felt distress she never showed it, for plaintive emotion and self-pity were utterly alien to her. She was a delightful

hostess and the kindest of friends. She was no philosopher but eminently full of common sense, courage, and devotion to good causes.'

About the De Laszlo Foundation

Philip Alexius de László was born in 1869 in Budapest (though at this time known as Pest, before it was joined with Buda in 1873). From humble beginnings, Philip became a set designer, porcelain and maiolica painter and sign writer before being apprenticed in 1884 to the famous portrait photographer Sándor Strelisky. At 16 he won a place at the National Academy of Arts, and would go on to win commissions to paint several European Royal families. By the time of his death in 1937 he held 22 orders and 17 medals of merit bestowed on him by royal and presidential sitters. *The de Laszlo Archive Trust* is a charitable trust that was set up in 2004 by Damon de Laszlo, primarily for the funding and administration of the research and cataloguing of Philip de László's paintings and to preserve, catalogue and index the Archive.

We are very grateful to both Monica and Susan who donated half of the funds for this restoration, which were matched by The De Laszlo Foundation; their combined generosity has allowed the restoration of one of our most well-loved pieces of art to be completed.



Meet Composition Award winner Kai Kubota-Enright

We asked the winner of our Composition Award 2022 about their inspirations and musical beginnings



Kai, what's your background as a composer?

Since I was very young I've always had an interest in instrumental music and sound, and was known to snatch an earbud from my grandfather's Sony Walkman to listen to a bit of a symphony or opera.

This led to a desire to learn an instrument, and I began studying violin, piano, and also sang for many years in various choral groups. I was always altering and warping whatever music I was learning, which led to free improvisation that quite naturally flowed into various compositional practices. I began studying composition specifically after secondary education, and recently graduated with an

undergraduate degree from McGill University (Montreal).

I have many influences; composers like Debussy and Takemitsu have greatly informed my sense of colour and space; John Cage was important for opening my ears and helping me rethink the role of the composer. More recently the work of Pauline Oliveros has deeply resonated with me, and I have begun incorporating ideas of sonic mediation and deep listening into my composed works as well as my daily life. Aesthetically, I am also influenced by my experiences participating in rituals from the traditions of Japanese esoteric (shingon) buddhism – drumming, bells, chant, and

horagai are influences in my approach to melody, harmony, and time.

What made you enter the ROSL Composition Award?

I found out about it from my school, and it seemed like a fantastic opportunity to develop a piece and work with the London Sinfonietta. It was somewhat on a whim as I never expected to be a finalist, let alone win the commission.

How did you find the whole process of workshoping your piece?

It was quite amazing. I had developed some very unusual conceptual ideas for the piece that I had never really seen before, and was not at all sure if

they would work in practice. It was something quite experimental that I only thought to make because I knew it was to be workshoped with a renowned ensemble. Despite this new challenge the sketch I created was realised beautifully, and the experiments produced very intriguing and promising results. It gave me a great sense of how these new concepts would work in practice and I am very excited to continue developing them for the larger-scale work that they will premiere.

What's next for you?

It's difficult to say. I am working on various other musical projects, some that are purely sound based, and some that are multimedia including several film-scoring projects. I am considering continuing my formal musical education but nothing is certain yet. Otherwise I am also considering spending a period in Tokyo to study traditional music as well as engage with the unique noise music scenes. In general I hope to travel more and expand my horizons. As long as I can continue to make things I think that will be enough.

In memory of Fatima Vanicek MBE



We were saddened to learn of the recent death of Fatima Vanicek MBE, who was PA to the Director General and worked for the League for 32 years until her retirement in 2011.

Fatima joined ROSL in mid-1979 as Secretary to the General Manager. In the mid-1990s she became Membership Secretary and shortly afterwards combined this role with that of PA to the Director General. She retired in 2011 after which she took on voluntary charity work. She was appointed MBE in 2011 for her services to ROSL. All at ROSL send our deepest sympathies and condolences to Fatima's family, friends and former colleagues at this time.

ROSL around the world

Our branches provide an opportunity for members in all parts of the world and across the UK to enjoy a range of social events close to home. To find out more about getting involved, simply contact your local representative

AUSTRALIA

Victoria

A group of Victorian Branch members and friends attended a tour of the historic Capitol Theatre in Swanston Street, Melbourne in November. Originally opened in 1924, the art deco theatre was designed by American husband and wife architects Walter Burley and Marion Mahony Griffin, and is the oldest of Melbourne's large picture palaces. ROSL member Mr Kenneth Park hosted the tour and with his incredible knowledge of all things Melbourne, made sure those attending came away from the tour with a greater appreciation of this heritage building, famous for its extravagant decor and abstract motifs. We'd like to thank Kenneth for his support of the branch.

We also held our Annual Christmas Reception at the British Consul General's Residence held in conjunction with the Australia Britain Society. The reception was held at the home of British Consul-General Mr Steph Lysaght and Victorian Branch members enjoyed celebrating the festive season. The evening was, as usual, very well attended and Melbourne's weather fortunately behaved itself. Pipe Major and Council Member

Andrew Spierings provided a wonderful musical welcome for arriving guests, and a generous raffle conducted by President Mr Ronald Williamson rounded off a most enjoyable evening. We are most grateful to the Consul General for his ongoing support.

The Victorian Branch Council concluded the year with their final meeting for 2022 held at the Australian Club and was followed by a festive Christmas lunch. The Council appreciated the welcome from our host Mr Kent Henderson, who provided a tour of the historical venue.

The branch looks forward to holding more events in 2023 – including the Angliss Luncheon in March/April, the Annual General Meeting on 23 May, and more. Please contact the branch Secretary for more details as they become available.

CANADA

Calgary

Congratulations are in order for Calgary Chapter president Madeleine King, who was recently awarded a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Alberta medal for her local work with ROSL. We'd like to thank Madeleine for



Tuesday, 21 March, London Group walk



Calgary Chapter president Madeleine King receiving her Queen's Platinum Jubilee Alberta medal

her hard work and dedication to the Calgary branch of ROSL.

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch

Sadly, the Christchurch branch of ROSL have made the difficult decision to wind up the branch as of the end of 2022. Branch President Judith Leckie will remain the point of contact for New Zealand ROSL Members, so please continue to direct all queries and contact to Judith at jrleckie@xtra.co.nz. We'd like to thank Judith for her leadership of the Christchurch branch for the past decade.

LONDON EVENTS

Poverty and Philanthropy in the East End of London 1660 -1945

Wednesday 8 March, 6pm, Over-Seas House
Join Tim Potter for a talk on poverty and philanthropy in the East End of London from 1660 to 1945. It's a great story of remarkable people helping themselves and others to escape from the grinding poverty that afflicted the area. Dr Barnardo, the Salvation Army, the match girls, Edith Cavell, Sylvia Pankhurst and Clement Attlee will all make an appearance.

London Group Walk: Poverty and Philanthropy in the East End

Tuesday 21 March, 12.50pm, Costa Coffee on Whitechapel Road
Join Tim for a walk through Whitechapel and Stepney in search of the philanthropy that flourished in the area. We'll see where the Salvation Army was formed; where a brewing

magnate gave away his fortune, and where Dr Barnardo educated street waifs. We'll also see a 13th-century church, almshouses dating back nearly 400 years, a 17th-century maternity hospital and the most remarkable sight to be found in any English University.

We meet at **12.50 in Costa Coffee, 275 Whitechapel**

Support Us

To allow ROSL to continue funding art and music education projects in the UK and around the Commonwealth, please consider donating at www.rosl.org.uk/supportus

Road, London E1 1BY.

It's very close to Whitechapel Station on the Elizabeth, District and Overground. Our aim is to start walking at 1pm. We end two hours later at Stepney Green station on the District Line.

Member-led activities

ROSL Book Group

The ROSL Book Group meets in person at the Club, as well as on Zoom for overseas members, on **Wednesdays**, once a month, to discuss primarily novels. The discussion starts at **6pm**, but we meet beforehand for a drink and a chat and afterwards for dinner (optional) at **7.30pm**. Dates of meetings with books: **15 Feb** *The Well of Loneliness*, *Radclyffe Hall*; **15 March** *If this is a Man*, *Primo Levi*; **19 April** *The Years*, *Annie Ernaux*; **17 May** *And Quiet Flows the Don*, *Mikhail Sholokhov*.

These sessions will be open to all ROSL members around the world. Members visiting the Club can join the Monday afternoon play.

Fees: Beginners' course at £220 for the 10 weeks, payable in advance. We hope to start mid-February. We need 8 players to start each course and once achieved we could start earlier than mid-February. Evening online Duplicate Bridge at £20 pp per session.



ROSL Backgammon Club

Meets on **Wednesdays 2-4pm** in the Drawing Room and for lunch (optional) at 12.30pm. New members are welcome.



Evening informal

Backgammon play. Members can play whenever they wish, once they have a partner. Please contact Stelina at stelinag@hotmail.com for further details and to be shown where the boards are kept. These must be returned to the correct location, every time.

ROSL Bridge Club

The Bridge Club meets at ROSL every **Monday 2-4pm** (except on Bank Holidays) in the Drawing Room to play ACOL Bridge. Once a month there is a refresher course with a truly excellent tutor at £20pp, all other play is free. New members are welcome. Lunch at 12.30pm is optional.

International Online ROSL Bridge Club:

10-week Beginners' Course online on **Tuesday evenings at 6.30-8.30pm UK time**, and Duplicate Bridge on **Thursdays at 6.30-8.30pm**.

ROSL Theatre & Opera Group

We go regularly to the theatre, opera, ballet and modern dance. We also go to Glyndebourne twice a year in Summer and Autumn.

To join any of the Member-led activities, please contact Eve at E.Mittleton-Kelly@mittleton-kelly.org.uk

CONTACTS

British Columbia

Elizabeth Murray Alexander
evmmurray@gmail.com
+1 604 922 1564

Calgary

Madeleine King
madeleine.king@telus.net

Christchurch

Judith Leckie
jrleckie@xtra.co.nz

Ireland

Palmer Carter
palmercarter@eircom.net

New South Wales

Contact tba
membership@rosl.org.uk

Ontario

Ishrani Jaikaran
www.rosl-ontario-canada.ca
rosl.ont@sympatico.ca
+1 416 760 0309

Queensland

Contact tba
membership@rosl.org.uk

South Australia

Graham Beckett
secretary@roslsa.org.au
www.roslsa.org.au

Switzerland

Dr Alan A. Chalmers
Coordinator for the German-Speaking cantons of Switzerland and the Italian speaking Tricino.
alan.chalmers@pharmainternational.ch
+41 61 483 09 78 / +41 763 789 987

Michael A. McKays
Coordinator for the French-speaking Suisse Romandie cantons.
michael@mckays.ch
+41 22 776 7520 / +41 79 768 5045

Tasmania

Stephen Jones
stephenj1@iprimus.com.au
+61 (0)613 558 95

Taunton

Contact tba
membership@rosl.org.uk

Victoria

Keir Watt
www.rosl.org.au
rosl@alphalink.com.au
+61 (0)3 9654 8338

Sussex

Micheal Beaman
beaman.m.w@yahoo.co.uk

Western Australia

Anthony Howes
+61 (0)8 9450 6050

News & views

HIGHLIGHTS

Enjoy a new season of entertainment with our calendar of events

Piers Lane Concert

Thursday 27 April, 6pm

Acclaimed Australian classical pianist Piers Lane was winner of ROSL's AMC Gold Medal in 1982, and since then his career has gone from strength to strength. With globe-spanning performances and five appearances as a soloist at the BBC Proms, we're delighted to welcome him back to ROSL for this very special spring concert.



Shout at Cancer

Monday 3 April, 6.30pm

A musical project which celebrates the survival instinct dwelling within each living thing and the power of the human spirit to overcome adversity. Thomas Moors and Philip Clemo present their 'choir of the voiceless', a group of laryngeal cancer survivors who are interpreting the recorded 'voices' of Hiroshima's survivor trees in song. For this extraordinary project filming techniques, including thermal imaging, infra-red, aerial, close-up and slow motion, are used to capture each tree's character in all its defiance and magnificence, accompanied by the inspirational choir.

RBA Rising Stars: exhibition private view

Tuesday 25 April, 6pm

Immerse yourself in a stunning collection of work from the stars of the future at this exhibition celebrating the bright young things of the contemporary art world. Hosted in partnership with the Royal Society of British Artists, this collaboration, now in its fifth year, showcases the extraordinary talent of 40 artists, all under 35, shortlisted for RBA Rome Scholarship 2023. Amongst other awards for the finalists is a one-month residency at Sala Uno, an arts centre in the heart of Rome. To confirm your place please RSVP at rosl.org.uk/events



Public Affairs Series: Matt Frei

29 March, 6.30pm

In the latest instalment of our Public Affairs series, we're joined for an evening of insight by Matt Frei, a British-German television news journalist and writer. Matt was formerly the Channel 4 News correspondent in Washington D.C and he is currently the Channel 4 News European editor and presenter of the evening news.

AMC Concerts

Annual Music Competition finals – Every week throughout March

Our AMC finals continue throughout March, featuring the brightest and best rising music stars, vying to win the coveted AMC Gold Medal Award 2023. A season ticket for the Annual Music Competition gives you access to each section final.

Dates include: Strings Final (7 March), Ensemble A (14 March), Ensemble B (21 March), AMC Overseas Final (28 March). Season tickets are available, or purchase individual tickets at rosl.org.uk/events

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Go online to get full details and book your next event at www.rosl.org.uk/events

AMC Strings Final
Tuesday 7 March

AMC Ensemble A
Tuesday 14 March

Oregon Wine Dinner
with Creek Phelps
Thursday 16 March

AMC Ensemble B
Tuesday 21 March

AMC Overseas Final
Tuesday 28 March

Shout at Cancer
Concert
Monday 3 April

RBA Rising Stars
Tuesday 25 April

Piers Lane
Thursday 27 April

Kris Garfitt CD Launch
Thursday 25 May

71ST

ROSL

ANNUAL MUSIC COMPETITION

EST 1952



AMC FINALS 2023

Now in our 71st year, our renowned competition boasts £75,000 in awards and has provided a springboard into the industry for scores of musicians. Join us to see who will join the illustrious ranks of our ROSL Annual Music Prizewinners and support the brilliant young musicians who take to the Princess Alexandra Hall stage.

Visit rosl.org.uk/events for more details

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