

OVERSEAS

THE JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

A TASTE OF SUMMER
Culture, food and arts for the season ahead



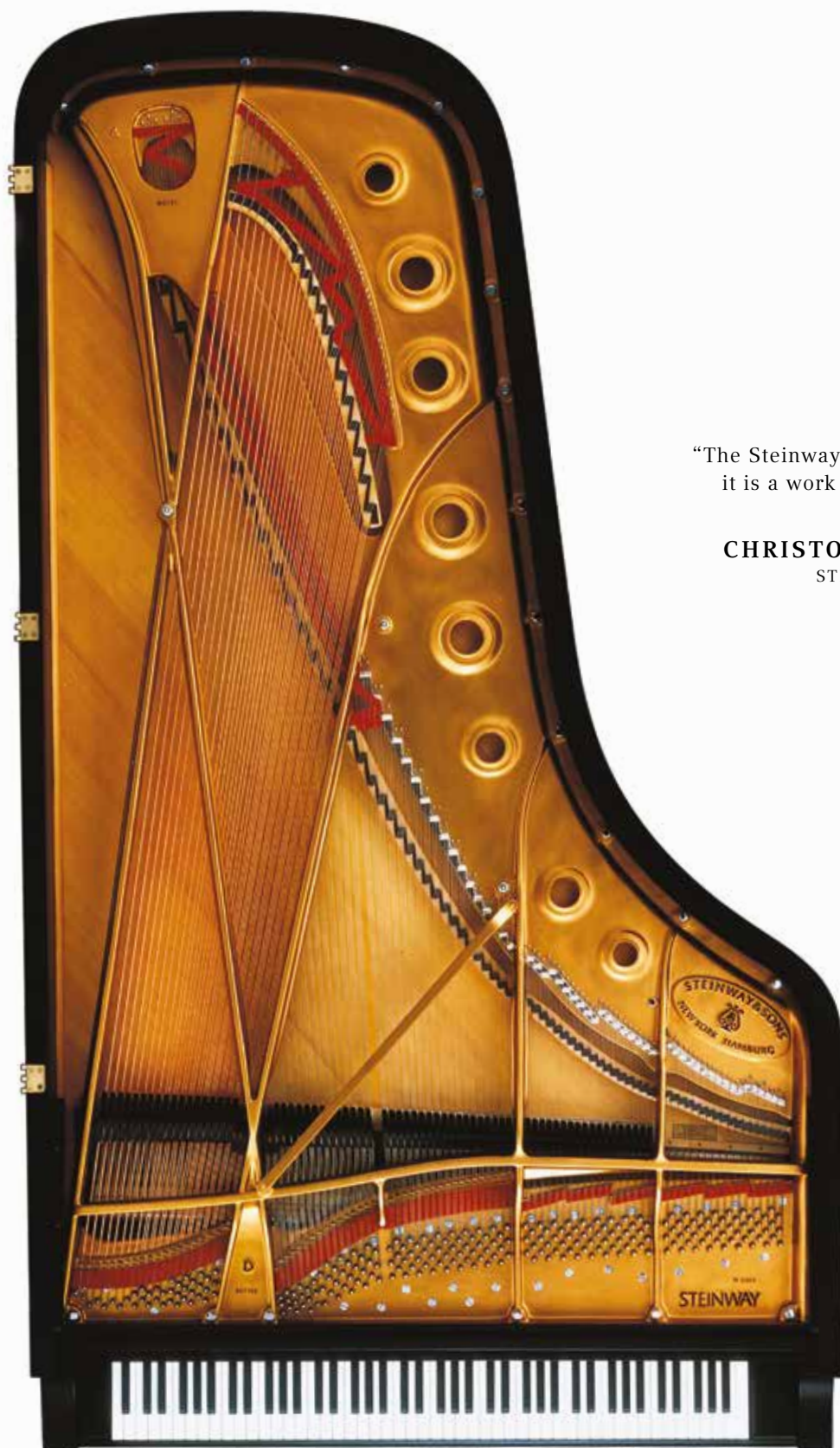
ROSL
ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE



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S T E I N W A Y & S O N S



The Royal Over-Seas League is dedicated to championing international friendship and understanding through cultural and education activities around the Commonwealth and beyond. A not-for-profit private members' organisation, we've been bringing like-minded people together since 1910.

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'We're delighted to present an edition of *Overseas* that celebrates all things cultural'



I'm always proud to remind visitors to Over-Seas House that ROSL is an institution above all else, and that an important part of our institutional role in promoting international friendship is in supporting young musicians and artists from around the world. In that spirit, we're delighted to present an edition of *Overseas* that celebrates all things cultural. I hope it encourages you to attend one of the wonderful arts events that we programme throughout the year and in particular consider attending the Gold Medal Final of our Annual Music Competition, at Wigmore Hall on the 19 June; the hottest tickets in town! We're also planning more jazz events in our beautiful garden, overlooking leafy Green Park, at its vibrant best during this time of year. Try out our new alfresco menu, created by our talented kitchen team to reflect the best local ingredients and flavours of the season.

And as summer lends itself to fresh starts, we'll be telling you more about the new ROSL website, which we hope you've already had time to explore; we put a lot of thought and consideration into how to make our digital presence as welcoming and user-friendly as possible for members, and we hope you're enjoying the modern, refreshed design, which nonetheless is faithful to our heritage. Charlotte Gray, who helmed this vital project tells us what made working with ROSL so special on page 6, and why preserving and celebrating our wonderful history has been so important. We were joined by former Prime Minister of Portugal and President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso for a fascinating talk earlier in the year, along with respected journalist Nick Ferrari. You can read a report on these events in the News and Views section towards the back of the magazine. Keep an eye out for more talks and discussions as part of our Public Affairs series, which will be taking place throughout summer and beyond, featuring a roster of fascinating guests from the political sphere.

Dr Annette Prandzioch
DIRECTOR-GENERAL

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Keep up to date with the very best
summer events happening at ROSL

As summer rolls in here at the Clubhouse, we're indulging in all things cultural; maybe a book enjoyed in the leafy oasis of our garden; a concert performed by the talented musicians that grace the stage of our Princess Alexandra Hall; or hearing the fascinating inspiration behind a literary work from one of the many authors that come to speak at Over-Seas House. We're incredibly proud to be at the heart of so many wonderful artistic endeavours, and this edition of *Overseas* is a celebration of that, featuring a cornucopia of eclectic pieces to accompany you through the warmer months. On page 14, author and friend of ROSL Stephen Bates gives us a preview of his forthcoming book about political fixer and fraudster Maundy Gregory, who scandalised 1920s Britain with his 'cash for honours' misdeeds under the Lloyd George Government. We're also delighted to feature an interview with Ravindra Rathee, whose revelatory book *True to their Salt* uncovers the history and experience of Indian soldiers in the age of the British Empire. Elsewhere, poet and lyricist Grahame Davies muses on the musical selections for King Charles III's Coronation, and we meet our new Arts Curator Louis, who'll be managing a wonderful calendar of visual art events throughout the year.

Music lovers won't want to miss my discussion with CEO of the Royal Albert Hall James Ainscough on page 28, in which he discusses why it's so vital that we support musicians in these trying times, as well as revealing more about the workings behind the stage at the hallowed hall itself. And given that a delicious plate of food or aromatic glass of wine is a form of art too, we'll be meeting some of the artisan suppliers behind our spring and summer menus, with Director of Food and Beverage Serge Pradier curating the cream of our wine list for you to enjoy.

Wishing you a wonderful summer
from all at ROSL.

Rosie Allen

editor@rosl.org.uk



A FRESH LOOK

You might have noticed that our website is looking a lot sleeker, more modern and easy-to-use of late, thanks to our digital refresh.

With the aim of providing a better online experience for members, we spoke to the team behind the project about how they've moved ROSL into a new digital age

A lot has changed in the past decade, not least the digital landscape. But while here at ROSL we've fully embraced social media to keep members up-to-date on our latest news, YouTube to broadcast our talks and events, and emails to stay in touch with you all, our website has long been overdue a bit of an update. Following a period of research and web building, we were thrilled to launch our refreshed website to members in April this year. Working alongside D-G Dr. Annette Prandzioch and Head of Brand Kate McIntosh, the project has been led by Charlotte Gray, marketing and brand specialist who dug deep into our archives to make sure that the new-look ROSL website reflected the ethos and philosophy that makes ROSL unique. Here she tells us about the motivation behind the project.

Charlotte: Over the past few years, ROSL itself has been refreshed and re-energised as an institution through extensive refurbishments such as the 1910 Dining Room and Duke of York Bar, along with a new culinary offering and high-profile public affairs programme. As the organisation has naturally evolved in order to meet the demands of its global membership, Annette and the team rightly felt the website also deserved a contemporary, revitalised look and feel to keep pace, mirror today's ROSL and its future aspirations. We set out to create something innovative, yet timeless and aligned with ROSL's heritage that members could feel inspired by and proud of.

At the start of the project, Annette and the ROSL team were clear on their desire to ensure that the organisation's history, Royal Charter and decades of prestigious art, music and culture were absolutely reflected through the web design. Along with the usual considerations of accessibility, exceptional user journey, vibrant imagery and informative content, it was imperative that ROSL's ethos, heritage and history were front and centre. As members are well aware, the Club's iconic architecture, stories and people immediately engage you from the moment you step through the doors of Over-Seas House.

We set out to create something innovative, yet timeless and aligned with ROSL's heritage that members could feel inspired by and proud of

To do this we spent time reviewing incredible archival material, much of it preserved through the vast archive of *Overseas* magazine, the Club's journal founded by Sir Evelyn Wrench in 1915. As the website evolves and grows, the intention is to ensure as much historical material as possible is available through the site, and we are proud that over 16 years of *Overseas* can now be explored online. We were committed to ensuring the awe-inspiring crest and architectural details specific to ROSL and Over-Seas House and familiar to members were consistently woven throughout the design. We were fortunate to be able to do this by commissioning an innovative 3D animation of the original crest. From the outset we agreed that no one image or 30 second video could ever be far reaching enough to capture the absolute essence of ROSL, but by adopting the mystical crest, with its inescapable connotations of travel,

A NEW DIGITAL EXPERIENCE



Respecting our heritage

We were keen to respect the 114 years of history and heritage that we hold so dear at the League; by utilising our iconic crest and archive material we've paid homage to our past in a modern way



Dining and entertaining

We've made it easy to book a table and explore our menus before you visit the Clubhouse, with breakfast, lunch, dinner and afternoon tea menus available to whet your appetite



Arts and events

Our What's On pages round up our calendar of events in one place, showcasing our concerts, book talks, public affairs series and much more

internationality and adventure, and motto *Ubique Navigavimus*, translated as 'voyaging everywhere', we could achieve this in an imaginative way.

I've worked with many institutions and members' clubs over my career, but the international nature and warmth that pervades the organisation and the membership makes ROSL stand out. Members are located all over the world but are all bound by this thread of internationality and a great pride in the Club's global ethos, a reminder of Sir Evelyn Wrench's progressive vision over 100 years ago. ROSL today exudes non-partisan inclusivity; everyone is welcome. The Clubhouse is also the true definition of a hidden gem; tucked away down Park Place, through discreet gates, three unique

properties from Georgian to art deco, which make up Over-Seas House. Members can enjoy an incredibly diverse programme of events and public affairs, dining, arts and culture – all under one roof. The ultimate surprise is to then discover the garden, overlooking Green Park, which is a coup in central London. ROSL is a very special place, and this has been a very special project.

Digital wizardry

Working alongside Charlotte was a carefully selected digital agency, Deep, which was tasked with creating a website that felt modern and fresh, while keeping usability and ROSL's history and heritage front of mind. Charlie Eiles, Strategy Director of Deep tells us about the considerations taken when designing the site: 'We had to ensure

that the user journey was a careful balance of the inspirational yet functional. ROSL's regal colour palette, and introduction of a new serif font to the guidelines allowed

us to begin to play with bold, rich design elements. Mixed with new visuals and fresh imagery, the website started to come to life. We designed two options for the ROSL team to consider and developed the concept with Charlotte to refine these.

For members and non-members, the key pillars and history of ROSL had to be reinforced. We did this by placing accommodation, events, public affairs and dining throughout the site to engage users, have them visit the site for longer and encourage bookings online. The 3D logo was created to reflect the heritage of the Club and mimics the original crest relief proudly displayed above the entrance to Over-Seas House. By making the crest more modern, it works perfectly as a digital asset.

ROSL has a number of different audiences to consider, that had to have specific user journeys catered for during the strategy and planning stages. We also had to be sympathetic to the history of ROSL, making sure we included timelines, historical information and archived news.' ➔

HOW TO ACCESS THE SITE

Visit www.rosl.org.uk and simply login using your existing email and password, all details remain the same. We'd encourage those members who have not yet provided us with an email address do so, this will enable you to access the site in its entirety, book rooms and dining, and enjoy dedicated members' content. Please email the membership team at membership@rosl.org.uk



THE ROSL CREST

The story of our coat of arms

The homepage of our new website features a rather magical-looking 3D digital model of our crest, featuring the recognisable sea beasts, ship logo and *ubique navigamus* motto that members know and love, brought to life with modern technology. But what does our coat of arms actually mean? We delved into our archive to find out.

Five years after ROSL was founded, Sir Evelyn Wrench commissioned a striking cover for the initial cover of *Overseas* magazine from the artist Macdonald Gill, depicting a stylised sailing ship on the high seas. Used for more than 40 years, this represented the notion of the ROSL as an international organisation reaching out around the globe. In 1960, the Over-Seas League was granted the bestowal of the title 'Royal' and with it a coat of arms, which combined the iconic ship logo and additional symbolic devices (more on that below). The Latin motto reinforced the maritime imagery.

A story in a 1960 edition of *Overseas* magazine reports on the bestowal of the coat of arms, and the symbolism behind it:

'A Coat of Arms for the Royal Over-Seas League': To mark the bestowal of the title 'Royal' by HM The Queen and the granting of a coat-of-arms to the League, a small ceremony was held at Headquarters on February 3 when Bluemantle Pursuivant of the College of Arms, deputising for Garter King of Arms, handed over to the League's Grand President, Lord Mountbatten, the Letters Patent pertaining to the League's coat of arms. This was covered by a large number of press and television representatives and the opportunity was taken to announce details of the Golden Jubilee Appeal and some of the special functions arranged to celebrate the Jubilee.

Booking events and making reservations online

Members have been front-of-mind when it came to redesigning the website and making the overall experience as enjoyable as possible across desktop, tablet and mobile. Book Club dining, afternoon tea or an overnight stay as you travel through the site. Browse our events and talks and purchase tickets, find out what's coming up at the Club, arrange a reciprocal visit or dip into past editions of *Overseas* Journal and much more.

www.rosl.org.uk



The summer 1960 edition of *Overseas* announced the granting of our coat of arms. It includes the iconic ship emblem and an array of other symbolic images, such as the two sea beasts supporting the crest, and our motto which is still used today

'Some notes on the symbolism' by JP Brooke-Little, Bluemantle Pursuivant of Arms

By Letters Patent bearing date the seventh day of January 1960, Armorial Bearings with Supporters and also a Badge were granted to the Royal Over-Seas League. The ship, which was a well-known emblem of the League, finds itself in a sea-scape on the shield of arms. To eliminate any possibility of confusion with any other coat of arms containing a ship,

a distinctive border of clouds has been introduced. This is an ancient and charming heraldic way of depicting clouds; a similar border may be found on the arms granted to the Worshipful Company of Mercers of London in 1568.

The crest which surmounts the helm is a terrestrial globe, supported by a black and a 'carnation' (flesh-coloured) hand.

It symbolises the fact that the sphere of activity of the League is the sphere itself. The supporters, winged sea beasts, symbolize communication by land, sea and air. That one has a lion's head and the other a unicorn's is a graceful compliment to the League's Patron, Her Majesty The Queen. The badge is the old badge of the League, with the colours but slightly altered, and the motto meaning 'We have sailed everywhere.'

If you'd like to speak to Charlotte Gray about branding and marketing, please visit copybureau.co.uk





72ND ROSL ANNUAL MUSIC COMPETITION EST 1952

GOLD MEDAL FINAL 2024

19 June, 7.30pm, Wigmore Hall

Join us in the beautiful surroundings of Wigmore Hall, as our four winners of the ROSL Music Competition solo section finals compete for the prestigious ROSL Gold Medal and £15,000 first prize; an unmissable night of music awaits.

Visit rosl.org.uk/events for more details.

INDIAN SOLDIERS

TRUE AND THE BUILDING TO OF THE THEIR BRITISH EMPIRE SALT



Recent decades have seen a huge reflection on our understanding of the British Empire and the human cost of our past colonial ambitions; Ravindra Rathee's revelatory book *True To Their Salt* re-examines and remembers the role of Indian soldiers in the building of the Empire, and their experiences of this tumultuous period.

Rosie Allen speaks to him about what inspired the book, and how he hopes it will impact our understanding of one of the darker chapters of our collective history

Could you give our members a summary of what *True To Their Salt* is about and what the key themes are? In regards to the title, why did you choose this phrase in particular and how does it relate to the themes of loyalty and betrayal in the book?

True To Their Salt is about the pivotal contribution Indian soldiers made to the British Empire and Great Britain's development from a small, relatively poor island to a dominant military and industrial power. The book aims to bridge the knowledge gap that exists about Indian soldiers' contribution to Britain's history and rise, by examining key themes in turn of the history of the sepoys in British service and looking beyond the well-trodden snapshot of the two world wars.

Amidst debates about decolonising the educational curriculum, and what we celebrate and reconcile from our history, it is important that the UK understands the critical contribution of Indian soldiers over two centuries to the prosperity of this country. The UK has an equal claim over these soldiers as India does, and maintaining their memory and history is of critical importance to harmonious race relations within the UK, as well as international relations with emerging countries.

'Eating salt' was a common term for receiving pay in the subcontinent. The expression harked back to times when salt was perhaps used as currency. In the subcontinent, those who are loyal to their employers are considered 'true to their salt'. The phrase has a deep emotional meaning, particularly for soldiers. So much so that the soldiers who betray their employer are pejoratively called *namak haram* meaning 'untrue to their salt'.

...each year, my son celebrates Remembrance Day at school, and yet he and his school mates know very little about the contributions of Indian soldiers during the world wars

The inspiration for the book came from a personal perspective, regarding your grandfather's experiences in British India's colonial army. Could you give us some background on how this inspired the book?

This book started as a personal research project. As a child, I heard stories from my grandfather of his experiences during the Second World War. My grandfather served in the Middle East theatre during the Second World War as part of the PAI Force. After his death, I started researching his war service, and realised that there was a much bigger story to tell. It then struck me that each year, my son celebrates Remembrance Day

at school, and yet he and his school mates know very little about the contributions of Indian soldiers during the world wars, let alone the two preceding centuries. In a way, this book is as much for my son and his school mates, as it is about my grandfather and his comrades.

Which discoveries shocked or surprised you most about this element of history while you were researching the book?


The shortage of military manpower resources within the UK compared with its strategic rivals during the 18th and the 19th century is not widely known. For example; France, Britain's main rival during empire building, had a population 2.5 times that of the UK in 1700, and 1.5 times in 1820. Not before 1899 would Britain be able to

match the French population. In comparison, India's population was almost 19 times that of the UK in 1700, although it did decline to eight times that by the end of WW2. Access to the military labour market in the subcontinent allowed the British Empire to match and prevail upon its strategic rivals.

The related surprise was how little this global strategic presence cost the British exchequer because the Indian Army was paid for by Indian revenues. British defence spending — except during the time of conflicts with major European powers — stayed tiny while it possessed India. Defence spending was below 3% of the net national product during most of the 19th century, and averaged little more than this figure between 1870 and 1913. This is not much higher than Britain's defence budget today, and far less

than the equivalent percentage spent on defence during the Cold War. In comparison, the army in India absorbed almost 50% of central government revenue, even in peacetime, under the Raj. Today, India spends around 2% of its GDP on defence.

What's the main takeaway you'd like readers to come away with after reading *True To Their Salt*?

A deep understanding of the British Empire, and thus Britain today, is impossible without assessing the role of the key instrument that enabled the Empire in the first place: the Indian Army and its soldiers. As Britain exits the EU and starts to build trade and cultural relationships with countries across the world, 



Ravindra Rathee

started his career as a journalist with the *Times of India* in Delhi, writing on human rights and conflict resolution. After graduating from St Stephen's College in Delhi, he studied for an MA in Politics at the University of Hull as a British Chevening Scholar. For the last two decades, he has worked as a banker. This is his first book, stemming from extensive research on the military life of his grandfather.

its diplomats, politicians and citizens should understand the special contribution of India and its soldiers to the Britain of today. The term 'special relationship' is taken to mean Britain's relationship with the US, but it is from India that the past, and more importantly the future, of Britain has been and will perhaps be shaped.

How do you go about the process of researching and planning a book as historically rich as this?

Thank you for your generous comments about the research behind the book. Frankly, as I do not come from academia, I do not have a set process for researching and planning a book. I started with reading other books first and kept notes of various source materials. Thereafter, it was a case of delving into archives to find out what else existed that could be used to build a complete picture. Many old unpublished manuscripts are now being digitalised, and available online in some cases. For other data points, it is slow but ultimately rewarding research into various archives in UK and India. The British Library is a particularly rich source for colonial history, as are National Archives in Delhi and London.

Do you think we still have far to go in terms of literature and art addressing Britain's role in colonialism?

There is significant interest in Britain's colonial history today, and how we represent, mark and remember that history. Amidst debates about decolonising the UK curriculum and remembering all who contributed to Britain's past, present and

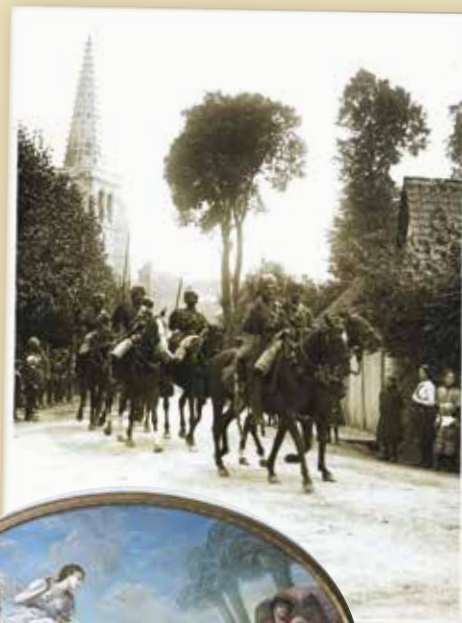
future, it is important that students and citizens in the UK understand the critical contribution of Indian soldiers over two centuries to the prosperity of this country. Instead of the negative, combative approach of denouncing characters and statues, this book suggests a more positive and perhaps more broad-reaching alternative: recognising, celebrating and remembering the millions of Indian soldiers who served British interests over two centuries.

What's next for you as a writer?

I am interested in exploring the reasons for the collapse of the military command and control structure in India during the late 17th and early 18th century. This collapse of the military command and control structure allowed European trading companies to prevail in the ensuing 'civil war'. The victory of the European trading companies, even if it looks inevitable with hindsight,

was not certain if the emergent indigenous powers in the subcontinent collaborated to establish a state structure to replace the ailing Mughal state. Why it did not happen, and successes, even temporary, against European powers when the native powers acted in concert is an area I am deeply interested in.

True To Their Salt: Indian Soldiers and the British Empire is available to buy now.



FURTHER READING

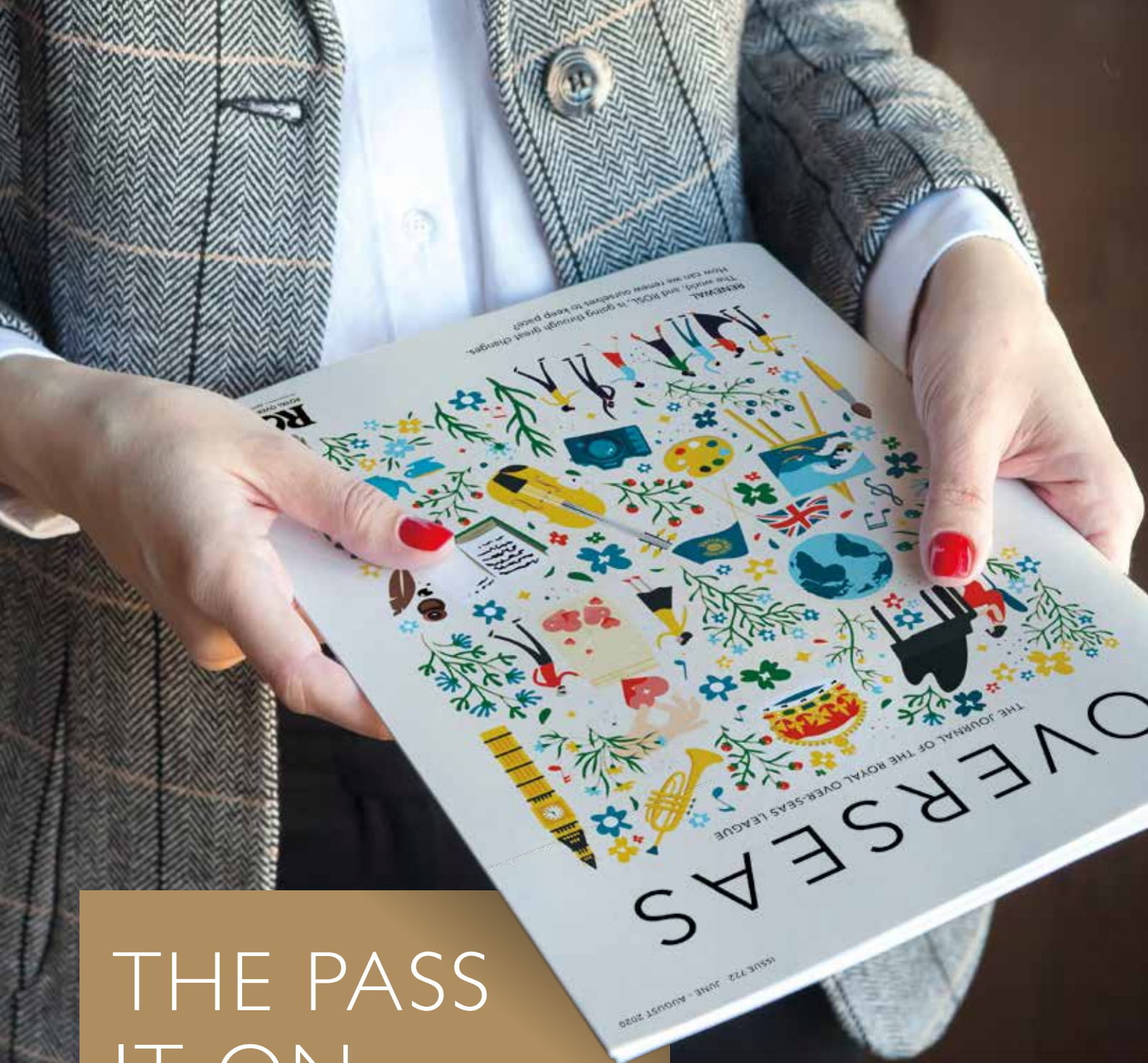
Empireworld: How Modern Britain is Shaped by its Imperial Past, Sathnam Sangera

An illuminating tour through the hidden legacies and modern realities of British empire that exposes how the present-day UK is actually rooted in its colonial past, by respected journalist Sathnam Sangera

Empire: What Ruling the World Did to the British, Jeremy Paxman

The broadcaster and journalist travels the globe in search of the characters, motivations and principles responsible for an empire that has influenced the modern world, politically, technologically and socially.





THE PASS IT ON PLEDGE

When you're finished with your copy of Overseas, please don't throw it straight into the recycling, pass it on!

We're encouraging our members to spread the word, so if you know any non-members that might enjoy reading the articles and the great window they provide into the world of ROSL, please pass it on to them.



ROSL
ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

NOTES ON A SCANDAL

The recent 'Cash for Honours' affair may have felt like a thoroughly modern scandal, but as friend of ROSL Stephen Bates discovers in his upcoming book, the sale of honours and favours for party donors is nothing new. Here, he gives insight into the fascinatingly insalubrious Maundy Gregory and how his fraudulent activities rocked the government of the 1920s



The name of Arthur John Peter Michael Maundy is largely forgotten now except by the most hardened political geeks, but a century ago he was such a power in Whitehall and Westminster that Parliament eventually passed a law which was aimed at curbing his activities.

Certainly he is the only person ever to be prosecuted under the Honours (Prevention of Abuses) Act of 1925.

Maundy Gregory as he was known in government and opposition circles at the time (the long list of first names tended to be used interchangeably) was an honours tout, a man who sold knighthoods and baronetcies on behalf of both Liberal and Tory parties for cash. Well dressed, dapper, plump and pomaded in appearance, softly-spoken, unctuous and plausible in manner, a monocle dangling from a cord around his neck, Maundy was a fixer – for a price.

If you wanted to buy a knighthood, you could trot along to his plush office in Whitehall, almost opposite Downing Street, and he would put you on the list for a payment of £10,000 which according to the Office of National Statistics computes to the equivalent of more than £760,000 today. The same happened if you were after a baronetcy which would cost you four times as much, a little over £3million in 2024 prices.

It made Gregory a good living in commission – more than £2.2million a year in today's terms – and he lived in a palatial house. 10 Hyde Park Terrace was a more than useful address – if one of the three telephones on his desk rang while he was with a client he would break off and tell them it was Number 10 calling.

And honours were not his only form of income: he also owned a publication called the *Whitehall Gazette* and *St. James's Review* which was printed on heavy white paper to make it look official. Actually, however, it published promotional articles for those who paid to have their names and profiles in the paper.

The feature: 'Officials I have met' included senior figures such as the Archbishop of Canterbury or the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, who did not have to pay but whom Gregory could boast of knowing, but also businessmen and visiting maharajahs who paid through the nose for their flattering interviews. It was not the sort of magazine which sold on news stands but a thousand copies were circulated to embassies, clubs, MPs and Government departments to make it seem influential.

Later ventures included his ownership of the Ambassador Club in Mayfair where Gregory could schmooze clients and the Deepdene Hotel near Dorking, a large Victorian Italianate country house, which quickly became notorious for dirty weekends and adulterous relationships.

But it was the touting of honours which made Gregory notorious. It was the emergence of a coalition government during the latter part of the war which had given him an opportunity. David Lloyd George, the Liberal politician and wartime minister had ousted his predecessor Herbert Asquith

in December 1916, splitting the party and thereafter had become Prime Minister at the head of a coalition government with the support of the Conservatives.

If he wished to build a new body of supporters out of the ruins of the Liberal Party, Lloyd George, never the most scrupulous of operators, needed to raise money fast and Gregory was introduced to him by the Prime Minister's Chief Whip Freddy Guest. The sale of honours was not new: baronetcies were originally devised as titles in the days of James I in the 17th Century to raise money for his coffers, but after the First World War, they took on a new semi-official dimension. Lloyd George himself saw nothing wrong in the practice; as he told the Tory MP JCC Davidson, it was not like the US where giant corporations owned political parties: 'Here a man gives £40,000 and gets a baronetcy. If he comes to the leader of the party and says you must do this or that we can tell him to go to the devil.' In three years it is thought Gregory raised up to £2million for Lloyd George.

Matters came to a head with the 1922 honours list which saw such dishonourable names put forward amongst others as Sir Joseph Robinson, a South African gold and diamond trader who had been convicted of fraud and Sir Archibald Wilmamson whose oil company had traded with the Germans during the war.

It moved even George V to protest at Robinson's award which the king said must be regarded as an insult to the Crown. Robinson was persuaded only with difficulty to refuse the honour.

The scandal contributed to the fall of Lloyd George and the end of the coalition government a few months later and by 1925 Stanley Baldwin's Conservative administration was prepared to pass legislation, even though they had been active themselves in selling honours.

Thereafter Gregory was more discreet, selling foreign honours such as Papal knighthoods but the end came in 1933 when he tried to sell a knighthood to a naval officer Lieutenant Commander Edward Billyard-Leake who reported the attempt forcing a prosecution. The prospect of Gregory spilling the beans about how many honours he had sold and to whom alarmed both Liberals and Tories and they managed to hush things up. In return for keeping quiet, Gregory would be fined just £50 and sent to prison for two months. When he got out would be taken to France, found an apartment in Paris to live in and given an annual pension of £2,000. He died in 1941 after being arrested by the Germans.

The sale of honours and favours for party donors still has the power to cause a scandal as the present government has discovered, but its roots are deep and long and the ghost of Maundy Gregory still hovers, chortling, in the background.

FURTHER READING FROM STEPHEN BATES



**The Poisonous
Solicitor**



**God's Own
Country: Tales
from the Bible Belt**



**Royalty Inc.:
Britain's Best
Known Brand**

Stephen Bates is a former senior correspondent at the Guardian. His book The Man who Sold Honours will be published by Icon in 2025.



Songs of Praise

THE MUSIC OF KING CHARLES III'S CORONATION

Writer, poet and lyricist Dr Grahame Davies CVO oversaw the musical programme for the Coronation of King Charles III in May 2023. Here he gives us insight into the music performed at the ceremony and the process behind the selection

The Royal Over-Seas League not only has a long-established and treasured Royal connection, but also a well-deserved reputation for its support of music and of the Commonwealth, three elements that featured strongly in the Coronation of King Charles III.

Many members gathered at the Clubhouse on 6 May 2023, within sound of the cheering crowds on the Mall, to watch the historic spectacle unfold on the big screen, conscious that this was truly the experience of a lifetime; the vast majority of people in the UK were too young to remember the previous Coronation, of Queen Elizabeth II, in 1953.

Those of us who were privileged to be involved in the arrangements for the Coronation were very conscious of the need to balance the traditional and the contemporary so that the ceremony would draw on the best of the great works of the past, but would also speak to the very different society of today.

As Deputy Private Secretary in the Royal Household, it was my task to put the King's wishes into practice in the Coronation's musical programme. His Majesty is a lifelong supporter and patron of many of this country's great artistic organisations, and is a hugely knowledgeable, passionate and committed supporter of the performing arts, with vast experience of the repertoire,

singers, and musicians. As a result, with His Majesty's active engagement throughout the process the Coronation music was very much a reflection of his wide-ranging tastes.

We had only six months to agree the programme, to commission new work, to assemble the performers and to rehearse all the pieces to the highest possible standard. It is a tribute to the incredible professionalism of the team who came together for the occasion that it was all accomplished so smoothly. Composers, musicians, soloists, producers, choirs, technicians, Abbey staff and broadcasters all worked together with a shared sense of purpose to ensure that the occasion would be worthy of the great tradition of which it was a part.

The solemn and sacred liturgy of the service provided the framework, but this still allowed for a great deal of scope for creativity, as traditional liturgical elements could be set to new music, or, in some cases, to new languages: as with the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, which is traditionally sung in its English translation but which was this time also sung with verses in Welsh, Gaelic and Irish – the first time those languages had been used in the Coronation.

Of course, no Coronation could be complete without Sir Hubert Parry's spine-tingling *I Was Glad* or Handel's glorious *Zadok the Priest*, and those pieces, and others from the superb history of British ceremonial music, were some of the building blocks of the musical programme. But there was also a strong desire to reflect contemporary music as a way of showcasing the nation's extraordinary musical talent. In all, counting the two hours of pre-service music, and the service itself, 12 new pieces were commissioned – more than for any previous Coronation.

Five of the new compositions were by women - the first time music by female composers has been heard at a Coronation. The new pieces spanned a spectrum of styles from Andrew Lloyd Webber's choral anthem *Make a Joyful Noise*, to the ethereal harmonies of Roxanna Panufnik and Tarik O'Regan, via the cinematic drama of Patrick Doyle's *Coronation March*, and the gorgeous triptych of variations on the Irish hymn tune *Be Thou My Vision* by Nigel Hess, Shirley Thompson and Roderick Williams. Pieces by the Master of The King's Music, Judith Weir, and an arrangement of the lovely Welsh folk tune *Tros y Garreg* by Sir Karl Jenkins also featured, while the veteran of sacred music, John Rutter, produced special arrangements of many pieces to adjust to the limited number of orchestral instruments the packed



Left to right: Coronation music advisor David Whelton, soprano Pretty Yende, composer Sarah Class and lyricist Grahame Davies are pictured at the Abbey after the Coronation

Abbey could accommodate. And for the first time ever, the Welsh language was heard in a Coronation in Paul Meallor's awe-inspiring *Kyrie*, delivered with earth-shaking power by the great bass baritone Sir Bryn Terfel.

At the special request of His Majesty, a choir of singers in the Greek Orthodox tradition, the Byzantine Chant Ensemble, who had been assembled especially for the occasion, sang a Greek psalm, while The Ascension Choir, again recruited especially for the day, performed Debbie Wiseman's Gospel-stye *Alleluia*. Sarah Class's epic classical crossover soprano solo *Sacred Fire* was performed by the great South African singer Pretty Yende, who became the first African to perform solo at a Coronation, to the great acclaim of her home nation. The Commonwealth connection was also present in other ways, as two of the composers and one of the three vocal soloists were of Jamaican heritage, while Iain Farrington's upbeat *Voices of the World*

organ composition featured traditional tunes from 12 Commonwealth nations.

The Coronation Choir under the direction of Westminster Abbey's Andrew Nethsingha, and the Coronation Orchestra, under the expert baton of the Royal Opera House's Sir Antonio Pappano, set new standards for musical excellence, not to mention stamina, by providing an incomparable richness of sound throughout a demanding programme

under the gaze of a television audience of hundreds of millions for more than four hours.

It did not feel like four hours. Even for those of us in the Abbey who had been seated long before the

**All who were present
could not fail but
be impressed by
this unforgettable
demonstration of His
Majesty's love of music**

pre-service music began, the occasion seemed to fly by, as the Mendelssohn tune puts it, on wings of song. All who were present, or who will have watched or listened to the broadcasts and recordings, could not fail but be impressed by this unforgettable demonstration of His Majesty's love of music, and the way the Coronation provided such an incomparable showcase for the musical talent of the countries of which he is King, and the Commonwealth of which he is head.

Grahame Davies is a Welsh author, who has won numerous prizes, including the Wales Book of the Year Award. As a much-sought-after lyricist, he collaborates extensively with composers and wrote the words for the song 'Sacred Fire', by composer Sarah Class, which, performed by South African soprano Pretty Yende, was one of the musical highlights of the Coronation of King Charles III in May 2023.



GOING FOR GOLD

For music lovers, our AMC Gold Medal Final (June 19) will be the event of the summer, in which our four winners of the ROSL Music Competition solo section finals compete for the prestigious ROSL Gold Medal and £15,000 first prize. Former renowned winners include Jacqueline du Pré *cello*, Melvyn Tan *harpsichord* and Barry Douglas *piano*.

We've got an exciting calendar of music events planned for the rest of the year too. Turn to page 42 of the magazine for more.

THE SUMMER ARTS REPORT

Look ahead to a wonderful summer of arts with our ROSL Arts team's recommendations for plays, festivals, music and more taking place around the UK this season

LOUIS CHAPPLE, VISUAL ARTS CURATOR

Tate Britain Commission:

Alvaro Barrington

UNTIL 26 JANUARY 2025

My first cultural pick for this summer is the highly anticipated unveiling of Alvaro Barrington's Tate Britain commission. Taking over the museum's Duveen galleries, the prestigious yearly commission has previously been awarded to British art legends including Hew Locke and Chila Kumari Singh Burman. Venezuela-born Barrington is known for his expansive use of materials, motifs and techniques that reference his personal memories and cultural influences from music, pop culture and art history.

Glasgow International Festival of Contemporary Art

7 JUNE – 23 JUNE

Next, we head to Scotland for the Glasgow International Festival of Contemporary Art, Scotland's premier art biennial. This will be my first time visiting, but the diverse programme of exhibitions and events that spread across the city is undoubtedly worth the trip. Personal highlights this year include Kialy Tihngang and Ima-Abasi Okon.

RALLY Festival

24 AUGUST

For my final recommendation we are back in London in time for RALLY, a one-day festival inspired by DIY culture and



grassroots movements, celebrating London's music and arts communities. This is a convergence of the best South-East London has to offer in sound, electronic music and underground contemporary art. Personal highlights include Actress, Pearson Sound and Tash.

GEOFF PARKIN, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Fiddler on the Roof at Regent's Park Open-Air Theatre

27 JULY – 21 SEPTEMBER

Summer in London for me always includes a visit to the brilliant open-air theatre in Regent's Park. Among several new productions I will be choosing to see the classic Sheldon Harnick and Jerry Bock musical *Fiddler on the Roof*. Following the story of Tevye as he attempts to maintain proud Jewish traditions, in particular the visit of the 'matchmaker' to the village, as his five

From left to right: Alvaro Barrington - The Garden; Alvaro Barrington - Performance; Fiddler on the Roof; RALLY Festival



daughters challenge him in a changing world. Featuring songs including *Matchmaker*, *If I were a Rich Man* and *Sunrise, Sunset* this is a perfect way to spend a summer evening.

Buxton International Festival

4 – 21 JULY

ROSL is pleased to continue our partnership with the Buxton International Festival as we present ROSL 2023 Gold Medal winner Emile Souvage in recital (10 July at 11.15am) alongside a huge variety of events including opera, jazz and book events. Renowned in particular for their presentation of less-standard operas you can hear Haydn's rarely performed *La Canterina* and *Ernani* by Verdi, accompanied by the Orchestra of Opera North. The festival is wonderful to visit as the



venues are all a short walk from each other in a compact area – great for fitting several events into one day. And of course you will be on the edge of the glorious Peak District for some wonderful walks.

St Magnus International Festival, Orkney

21 – 29 JUNE

To experience some of the most remote art in the UK, making your way up to Orkney isn't a bad shout! The wonderful St Magnus Festival presents an annual programme of multi-genre music (mainly classical) alongside theatre and book events. Highlights for me include *Oh, What Comes over the Sea*, a recital of song given by Elizabeth Llewellyn and ROSL alumnus Simon Lepper, and *Sure on this Shining Night*, a late night concert of reflective choral music given by vocal ensemble Sonoro.

CERYS BEESLEY, ARTS MANAGER

Kiss Me Kate at The Barbican

4 JUNE – 14 SEPTEMBER

This Cole Porter jewel of a musical is probably one of my favourite shows of all time, and I probably shouldn't admit how many productions I have seen over the years. This brand new Bartlett Sher production taking residency at the Barbican over the summer promises to be a riotous farce, giving the audience a perfect view of all the backstage chaos and entanglements. In my opinion it's the perfect combination of a Shakespearean Comedy coupled with the Cole Porter classic wit, and a brilliant score to match.

The Tate's summer exhibition celebrates [Sargent's] works in all their sumptuous, richly detailed glory

Love Riot – Miracle Theatre Company

TOURING UNTIL END OF AUGUST

I have watched numerous productions by the Cornish Miracle Theatre Company, and they really have gone from strength to strength, seemingly doing their best to fill the cultural hole in the Cornish Cultural Landscape left by Kneehigh's closure in 2021. I'm very intrigued by their latest production, *Love Riot*, a reimagining of Hannah Cowley's 18th-century *The Belle's Stratagem* which promises to transport you to a world of scandal, matchmaking and unexpected twists.

So if you happen to be in or venturing towards the South West this summer, The Miracle Theatre's tour is definitely one to catch!

Lichfield Festival

4 – 15 JULY

As well as seeing some of our Prizewinners in the festival line up this year, Lichfield Festival always brings something fresh to the UK Summer cultural landscape. Highlights for me include the Brodsky Quartet performing all of the Shostakovich String Quartets over one weekend, seeing Ballet Cymru's incredible production of *Romeo & Juliet* performed inside Lichfield Cathedral and of course the unmissable recital (supported by the Royal Over-Seas League) with Emile Souvague (2023 Gold Medal winner) and Hamish Brown (2021 Collaborative Piano Winner) on Friday 5 July. Plus the season is littered with ROSL Alumni including Danny Driver, Jack Hancher and Amiri Harewood, proving what excellent taste the Lichfield programming team has.



ROSIE ALLEN, OVERSEAS EDITOR

Sargent and Fashion

UNTIL 7 JULY 2024, TATE BRITAIN

Sargent was renowned for bringing the socialites of 19th and 20th-century America and Europe to life in paint, using fashion as a powerful tool to convey their character and complexities on canvas. The Tate's summer exhibition celebrates the artists' works in all their sumptuous, richly detailed glory, using archive costumes to provide context and texture to a beautiful and rarely travelled collection of works. The beguiling portrait of *Madame X* with her scandalously strappy black gown and the beautifully dreamlike *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose* with its utopian depiction of a childhood scene, are highlights.

Theakston Old Peculier

Crime Writing Festival

18 – 21 JULY 2024

The glut of luridly detailed true crime documentaries that have filled streaming services of late has left me longing for the slightly morbid but less guilty pleasures of good-quality crime fiction, where there's space for stories to breathe and characters to be fully fleshed out. And for fans of eerie tales, Theakston's Old Peculier Crime Writing Festival, which takes place in the beautiful Yorkshire spa town of Harrogate, allows you to indulge across one long weekend, taking in talks from some of the genre's biggest names and newest voices. Discover exciting new talent, and enjoy a packed programme of panels, talks and inspiring creative workshops.

Visit rosl.org.uk/events for a full list of upcoming concerts, talks and exhibitions taking place at ROSL.



LET THE ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE BE YOUR LEGACY

Continue to support your 'home from home' in the heart of St James's by bequeathing a gift to ROSL in your will. Your generosity will enable talented young musicians and artists the chance to establish a career in the arts, and help safeguard the future of Over-Seas House.

If you would like to discuss a donation, legacy or gift in memoriam, please contact **Dr Annette Prandzioch**,
Director General: dgoffice@rosl.org.uk or call **Bree Neale**,
EA to the Director General: +44 (0)20 7016 6901.



ROSL
ROYAL OVER-SEAS LEAGUE

THE TASTE OF SUMMER

It's the season of abundance, with a cornucopia of fresh flavours, ingredients and culinary ideas set to refresh our jaded winter palates. Here we meet the producers behind some of the exciting new dishes and ingredients we're serving in the Garden and Brabourne Room this summer, plus our Director of Food and Beverage, Serge Pradier, picks the most delicious and interesting wines to enjoy from our carefully curated wine list

Meet the artisans

Behind our summer food and drink menus are a league of small quality-focused producers, family dynasties and maverick brewers, all creating premium ingredients and products for our kitchen and bar teams to craft the seasonal dishes and drinks they know you'll love.

HIVER BEER

Who'd have thought that by enjoying a refreshing beer, you could be doing your bit to save endangered bees? Well, by ordering a glass of Hiver you could be doing just that. Beginning life in 2013, with an aim to make delicious brews using local honey, co-founder Hannah Rhodes explains the secret of perfect flavour balance and a brief history of honeyed drinks.

'Sugar is a common addition in brewing; we use honey, a natural and local sugar instead. Honey beer as a style is also very traditional and people would commonly use honey as a brewing ingredient before hops started being imported in the 1400s. It was traditionally a party beer, being brewed ahead of festivals and weddings. In fact, the father of the bride would brew as much honey beer or mead as possible for the bride and groom to drink for the lunar month after the wedding. And so the weeks after a wedding became known as the honeymoon!'



We support British beekeepers by buying tonnes of raw British honey from independent beekeepers every year. In fact, every element of our beers is sourced in the UK, which keeps our food miles as low as possible. This is a big difference in the quality when hops and barley commonly come from Germany, eastern Europe, China and beyond. It also means that all of our pounds are spent in the local economy, so when you buy a Hiver, you can be sure that yours are too. We're also a London living wage employer.

Pasteurisation is essentially cooking a product and it's a way of making a product stable. The product will be heated to a very high temperature for a short, medium or long period of time, normally inside its bottle or container. The high heat will kill any natural microbes to prevent spoilage, for often several years. But in doing so, you lose flavour and nutrients; we don't pasteurise our beers and use only natural ingredients and methods.

When bitterness, sweetness and body are in harmony, you get a beer that is moreish. If you lager the beer or use citrusy hops then you'll be adding refreshment too, or if you're using speciality grain and roasted barleys then the flavours become richer but still very drinkable. Maturation is when you let the beer sit in tank for a few weeks before packaging, allowing the yeast to continue to slowly create alcohol and carbon dioxide. These small bubbles are absorbed into the beer. You end up with something that has a velvety texture from the natural carbonation as well as a long and clean flavour profile. Our beers take four to six weeks to produce, which is two to three times as long as mainstream beer production. Good things take time.

We love to come up with interesting and exciting food pairings depending on which of our brews you are sampling. For example our amber beer is a great match with salty meats and root vegetables and the Hiver Blonde works wonderfully alongside Manchego or sheep's cheeses and even alongside something spicy. Our Hiver IPA is fantastic with Malaysian curries, mature cheeses and dried fruit flavours, and Fabal Lager has a great way of cutting through anything creamy from a Caesar salad to a vanilla eclair.'

Visit @hiverbeer on social media or hiverbeers.com. Try Hiver in the Duke of York bar, Brabourne Room or Garden this summer

HACKNEY GELATO

Traditional gelato – the silky-textured and more refined Italian answer to ice cream – might be more associated with the sultry heat of the Med than the streets of East London, but Hackney Gelato is looking to change that. Combining Italian know-how with locally sourced ingredients, co-founder Enrico tells us how they're making some of the best desserts to be found in the capital.

'My co-founder Sam and I were chefs before we started Hackney Gelato; I had trained in Italy and then met Sam when we both were working at a Michelin-starred restaurant here in London. We both grew up eating this amazing slow-churned gelato back in Italy, and nothing we found in London could compare. We knew there were chefs crying out for great gelato and sorbetto, so we went on a trip back home. It was my godfather who introduced us to the master gelatieri of Sicily – he supplied the gelaterias with their ingredients. They taught us the importance of real ingredients and traditional slow churning techniques. More milk, less cream – cream is fatty and coats the tongue, dulling the flavour. More milk means less fat, and lets the authentic flavour of the ingredients be tasted more intensely. Londoners are all about clean

Chefs are precise and demanding and working with them year after year honed our craft and elevated our flavours



flavours and they really want to taste exactly what's on the tub. So we do just that with a range of flavours including clotted cream and strawberry – a quintessentially English combination; chocolate and roasted hazelnuts made with Piedmont hazelnuts; and raspberry sorbetto made using British raspberries. Quality ingredients, with no filler flavours.

When we first started, every recipe

we made was a unique collaboration with a top chef. Chefs are precise and demanding, and working with them year after year honed our craft and elevated our flavours.

They also want more daring flavours and are interested in pushing the envelope to create an exciting experience. Consumers can be daring too – but at the end of the day, what's most important to them is good flavour and a quality product. ➤

Hackney Gelato will be supplying our Garden and Brabourne Rooms with a selection of delicious gelato flavours this summer.





To celebrate Independence Day on 4 July, we'll be introducing a range of the Crusher wines from Don Sebastiani in California

HAYWARD BROS WINES

Sourcing the world's most delicious wines at the best prices comes down to two things – connections and experience. Thankfully our longstanding wine partners Hayward Bros have these in abundance, and have supplied ROSL for several years, working closely with the Food and Beverage team to come up with a varied and fascinating selection for both drinking and dining.

'The family wine business, Hayward Bros was established 92 years ago opposite Cannon Street station, at that time owned and run by Edwin and Albert', says Robert Hayward, the fourth generation of the family involved in the wine business, who today heads a small team that remains loyal to their origins of shipping good-quality wines into the country.

'Working together with Serge, we try to keep the Club's wine offering as interesting and varied as possible, and currently we are looking at some slightly lower alcohol

wines for the summer garden experience. This includes a Vinho Verde (a light, vivacious white from the damp north of Portugal) and a Riesling Kabinett with just a hint of juicy, residual sweetness.

To celebrate Independence Day on 4 July, we'll be introducing a range of the Crusher wines from Don Sebastiani in California. These wines come from grapes mostly harvested in the Clarksburg vineyard region, inland from Napa. The origin of the name comes from the point at which the vineyard owning Wilson family hand over to the Sebastiani family business who make these wines, as the grapes head into the crusher. While they are packed with flavour and ripeness, as expected from sunny California, the wines retain all of the charm and character that comes from Clarksburg fruit.'

Try The Crusher wines in the Duke of York Bar and the Garden from 4 July.



Beautiful California and in particular Clarksburg are known for their fruit-forward but elegant wines

SERGE'S SUMMER DRINKS CABINET

Director of Food and Beverage Serge Pradier personally tastes and curates the wine selection served in the Duke of York Bar and 1910 Dining Room, with a special focus on wines produced in the Commonwealth; 'Our fine and rare wine list boasts a selection of stellar names and depth of vintage. We are proud of our selection, ranging from medium-bodied Burgundies to full-bodied Californians, Australians and richly-textured Rhônes; all matching specific dishes across our menus' he says. Here he gives his recommendation for the best of the summer wines.

SPARKLING

De Venoge Champagne

This superlative grower Champagne from a producer dating back to the 1500s comes in a beautiful decanter shaped bottle and makes a delicious partner to olives and aperitifs. Try the Princess De Venoge Rosé Champagne which bursts with strawberry and gooseberry flavours, or the classic Cordon Bleu Brut, with crisp Granny Smith apple, lemon and honey.



ROSÉ

With its charming colour and versatility for enjoying with a huge range of foods, rosé makes a great choice for summer sipping in our beautiful garden overlooking Green Park.

AIX Rosé

A beautiful grenache-syrah-cinsault blend from a historic Provence producer, the red-fruited palate sings with notes of peach and floral aromatics, and bring to mind a sun-soaked day in the South of France.

WHITE

Riesling and other whites

I want to give a special mention to Riesling, a wonderful grape variety that to me is the quintessential summer white, with its steely minerality, citrus notes and floral perfume.

Bethany Riesling, Eden Valley, South Australia, 2016

Located in Barossa, Bethany's vineyards are west facing and benefit from cooling breezes during spring and summer. This extends the ripening season allowing the grapes to achieve the right level of sugar and acidity. Sings with notes of green apples, white peach, grapefruit and orange blossom.



Dr Loosen, Wehlener Sonnenuhr, Riesling, Kabinett, 2020 – 2021

Displaying a lively minerality and a delicate crisp acidity that perfectly balances the bright flavours of apple, white peach and citrus.



Sidewood Estate, Mappinga Chardonnay, Adelaide Hills, South Australia, 2018

A wonderfully flavoursome chardonnay with aromas of citrus, pear, ripe peach and honeydew melon on the nose. Following through on to the palate the flavours are enhanced with subtle hints of honey and nutmeg.



RED

We've introduced magnums of red wine to the menu this summer and they're proving very popular – a real table centrepiece, perfect for a group to celebrate with. Red wine matures better in larger volume too, which makes these larger bottles extra special.

Armigero Sangiovese di Romagna Riserva, Emilia di Romagna, Italy, 2018

Expect red berry aromas with notes of vanilla, liquorice and anise, leading to a complex palate of dried fruits and cherry.



The Federalist Bourbon, Barrel-Aged Cabernet Sauvignon, 2017 – 2018

In the spirit of American craftsmanship, this unique Cabernet Sauvignon represents the bold, American tradition of aging in charred bourbon barrels. Sourced from Lodi in California, The Federalist Bourbon Barrel-Aged Cabernet Sauvignon intertwines bold fruit with rich, toasted vanilla and spice notes with a smoky caramel finish.



ROSL Club Claret, Château Argadens, France, 2018 – 2019

We're very proud of our house red which we source with real care from Château Argadens, owned since 2002 by the Sichel family, who are also part owners of Château Palmer. Their aim is to make the wine a benchmark within the Bordeaux Superieur appellation. Grapes are sourced from a parcel of 45 hectares located in Entre-Deux-Mers and the wine spends 12 months in oak barrels.



We also have an extensive range of cocktails, created by our expertly trained bar team who are always excited to see what members make of our new recipes.



ROSL

SUMMER PLACE FESTIVAL

4 – 7 September, Over-Seas House

Discover a cornucopia of cultural delights at the Royal Over-Seas League's Summer Place Festival this September

As summer draws to a close, the Royal Over-Seas League (ROSL) invites you to revel in the season's final rays at our Summer Place Festival. This four-day extravaganza promises an unparalleled celebration of the arts, weaving together a vibrant tapestry of music, art, workshops, wellness, and wine.

Wednesday 4 September

Opening with a recital by ROSL Annual Music Competition Alumni Leo Popplewell, you can experience a new side of our visual arts programme and partake in a curator-led tour and discussion, hearing about the collection of artworks showcased in the Notes from the Future exhibition. The evening crescendos with the Marmen Quartet's enchanting recital 'in-the-round,' offering a fresh perspective on their

captivating performance in the Princess Alexandra Hall.

Thursday 5 September

The festival's second day brings more musical performances and fascinating discourse; renowned author Andrew Lownie returns to the club to dive into the captivating narrative of 'Stalin's Englishman: The Lives of Guy Burgess,' one of his most celebrated books. Finish off the day in the Princess Alexandra

Hall with more of our brilliant ROSL Competition Alumni performing Mozart's Flute and Harp concerto, and Piano Concerto K.414 with string ensemble acting as our mini-orchestra for the evening.

Friday 6 September

Unleash your creative spirits in a still-life drawing class led by the esteemed artist Francis Martin. Amidst strokes of inspiration, participants of all skill levels



Friday 6 September,
Sam Jewison



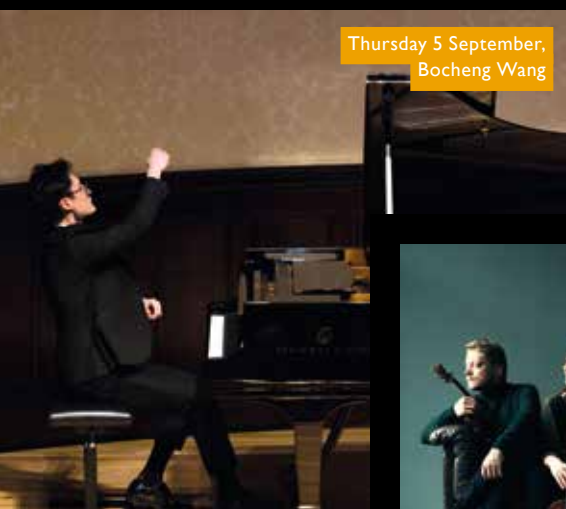
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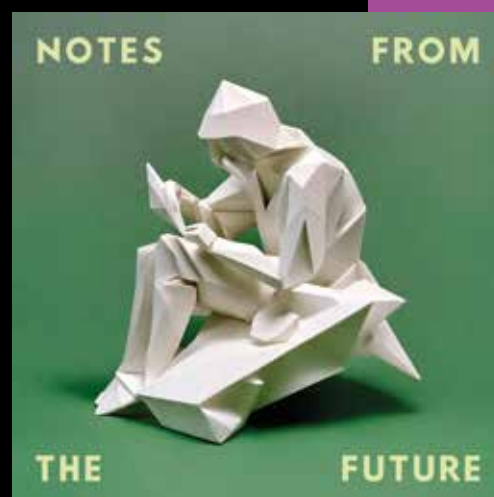
Thursday 5 September,
Gwenllian Lyr



Saturday 7 September,
Quartet the Lucky Dog
Picture House



Thursday 5 September,
Bocheng Wang



Saturday 7 September,
Buster Keaton in Sherlock Jr.



Wednesday 4 September,
Marmen Quartet



Saturday 7 September,
Gong Bath

can explore the timeless pleasures of observational drawing and painting.

To round off the evening, join us in the Princess Alexandra Hall to be serenaded by Sam Jewison as he breathes new life into the Great American Songbook, accompanied by the exquisite sounds of our Steinway piano.

Saturday 7 September

As the festival draws to a close, you're invited to unwind and relax with a

transcendent gong bath experience, followed by international wine tastings paired with live music from Annual Music Competition winners, courtesy of Davy's Wine.

The evening culminates in a cinematic masterpiece as Buster Keaton's iconic Sherlock Jr. graces the screen, accompanied by the enchanting live accompaniment of the Lucky Dog Picture House's cinema quartet.

With a lineup as diverse as it is captivating, the Summer Place Festival promises to be an unforgettable celebration of creativity, culture, and community. Join us as we bid farewell to summer in style at the Royal Over-Seas League.

Keep an eye on our events page at rosl.org.uk/events for more details

INSIDE THE Royal Albert Hall

There are few UK music venues more venerated and recognisable than the iconic dome of the Royal Albert Hall. Rosie Allen speaks to CEO James Ainscough OBE about the hall's success as one of Europe's most vibrant and thriving live music venues, how orchestral music is making a comeback and why established venues could be vital in ensuring the survival of grassroots music scenes

James, you used to hold a role as Director of Finance at the Royal Albert Hall before you took some time away; what drew you back in and how did it feel to come 'back home' following time away in another role?

The story starts with music, which has always been a huge part of my life. I spent my entire childhood making music but I was never good enough to be a professional. So it was my life really as a kid; I learned piano and cello and, because I was brought up in Yorkshire, cornet as well, so I could play in a brass band. Then I realised that

neither piano, cello or cornet really turn girls' heads! So I picked up bass guitar and started playing in some contemporary bands, but I loved every genre really – classical music, chart pop; I played in jazz bands, rock bands, sang in a choir, played in an orchestra. So I learned to love this whole array of music while regarding none as 'better' than the other. And that's what the Royal Albert Hall reflects to me, this great veneration of all styles of music. Over the last year we've seen the Proms which is the world's largest classical music festival, all the

way through to Rae, an amazing soul R&B singer and a rapper called Loyle Carner, all these wonderful artists. There aren't many venues in London or even the UK that display the same range in what we're putting on.

Usually they're specialised such as Wigmore Hall, or the Royal Opera House – but not many do everything, and that's why we're special. Plus we're also a charity which is really motivating to be part of, because it means that everything you generate commercially goes back into the charity. We don't get any external support which means we have to operate



James Ainscough

James joined the Royal Albert Hall as CEO in spring 2023. He previously held the roles of Director of Finance and Chief Operating Officer at the hall 2008 - 2017. As CEO of the Help Musicians charity 2018-2023, he oversaw the distribution of £20million of financial hardship funding, the provision of a multi-million-pound career-rebuilding support programme, and the launch of the Music Minds Matter charity.

commercially and that means we do as many shows as we can. So normally around 400 shows per year – we're allergic to empty seats and work really hard to make sure that every one is full. We're vibrant, busy, full all of the time and operating entirely for charitable purposes right across the array of music. I can't think of anywhere better to work, and for me personally it's that array of programming that makes it a 'me-shaped' venue! It's a real blessing – the hall is like a Swiss watch; it's a really technical combination of mechanisms going from the box office, to sound technicians to staging. In many ways running a Victorian building as a modern venue is basically an act of sheer lunacy – it's nuts to try it, really. The building is so idiosyncratic and therefore takes a long time to get your head around, how everything connects. So to step back in as Chief Exec and know how everything works rather than spending a year learning the ropes has been real blessing. I feel really lucky – even when I left the hall I always had a hope that I'd come back.

London is rich in historical music and events venues – what is it that makes the Royal Albert Hall so special and iconic?

There are things that make it special to everybody as a building and concept. Firstly it has this utterly unique architecture, but interestingly it never actually had an architect. It was designed by an engineer who went to Rome and drew inspiration from the Colosseum, and then came home and tried to build a Victorian version, and made this visually arresting classically inspired dome. Secondly there's a performance history that is astonishing. If you're a musician standing on the RAH stage, your musical heroes probably played there decades before you did. So there's this idea that you're standing in the footsteps of giants. In fact, Roger Daltrey of The Who says, 'when you're standing on the Royal Albert Hall stage, your heroes are cheering you on.' It has this depth of performance history but in a way that's inspiring, not intimidating. Because the seating is laid out around an amphitheatre, ●



there's also a feeling that the audience almost wraps around the artist, so there's an astonishing intimacy, almost like an enormous 5,000-person group hug when you're all in there together. It creates an emotional intensity that you can't quite describe.

It's also become a place where the nation gathers. Really notable and important events happen at the Royal Albert Hall: national moments together such as the Festival of Remembrance in November, the Proms – and, for example, whether you agree with singing *Rule Britannia* or not, it's a moment where we collectively try and figure out what it means to be British. We've hosted big commemorations – for example the tribute to George Harrison, Teenage Cancer Trust concerts, and in the 1910s we hosted more suffragette rallies than any other building in the UK. They called it their 'Temple of Liberty' and when they got their first concession in 1918 the celebration party was at the Royal Albert Hall. So we don't just have a performance history, we have been at the centre of so many meaningful moments for the country.

What's so tough for musicians is they are low-paid freelancers with no set career path who mainly operate on their own – it's very precarious

The stage also hosted Einstein; when he left Germany in the mid-1930s he came to London and gave a public talk, not on the theory of relativity or any of his other brilliant ideas; but on the dangers of Nazism, way before most of Britain had woken up to what was going on. At the time some newspapers were still saying that Hitler was a jolly good fellow, but Einstein chose the Royal Albert Hall as the place to warn the world.

There are things we're not proud of as well. I can't claim we don't have a chequered history. We were born of the Empire. Earlier in the 1930s we had Oswald Mosley, leader of the UK fascist party, on this stage. We can debate for a long time about whether we should have had Miss World on the stage of the Royal Albert Hall in the 60s and 70s, which led to big protests outside the building. We went through a period in the 70s where lots of artists were banned; but nevertheless, when people of note wanted to do significant things, over the last 150 years they did them here. There aren't any other venues that have that consistency of landmark moments throughout history.

You previously held a role as CEO of Help Musicians, a charity to help professional musicians in times of need. What challenges are musicians facing at this time?

Firstly, without being political, Brexit has been a nightmare in terms of the barriers to touring. What's so tough for musicians is they are low-paid freelancers with no set career path who mainly operate on their own – it's very precarious. If they get ill, if they're not performing well, they often haven't built up a financial buffer to help them through. Help Musicians was actually set up in 1921 by Edward Elgar to both help musicians build their careers – helping them flourish in the way ROSL does with the AMC – and to support musicians when things went wrong, illness for example, and to help them progress or patch things up when needed. The story for musicians for centuries is that they've been at the mercy of three things; of changing tastes, for example, the popularity of jazz was much greater in the 20s than it is now; secondly change in technology – the introduction of streaming, of radio and how that limited demand for live performance; and also the legislative environment, for example Brexit, tax systems, copyright. So, each freelance musician is a tiny boat on an ocean with these three strong currents pushing them around and it's very hard for them to feel in



control. And layer on to that the idea that it's not just a job – it's an identity. You're exposing yourself, creating art, being judged, standing in the spotlight. When the ability to make music is taken away, either in retirement or as we saw on a massive scale in the pandemic, it can cause a massive mental health crisis, along with practical challenges of earning enough money to pay rent. It's not that musicians are fragile people, they're a hardy lot and they're determined and tenacious and focused but they're extra vulnerable for these reasons. When you think of their world like that you can see why the charity is a really important thing. We tend to think of musicians in terms of the superstars and icons. But most don't have fame or a fanbase, they're session musicians or part of an orchestra or music teachers, so there isn't the huge audience to sustain them. It's a world away from the glitz, glamour and affluence that the 1% live with. And life on the road is isolating with a very odd collection of highs and lows. Lots of studies show how the body and mind reacts during a performance, and the comedown from those endorphins and that adrenaline can be brutal for the musician sat alone in their small dressing room backstage afterwards. Lots of people medicate that by maintaining the chemical high with alcohol and drugs and it's very easy to fall into.

The RAH has branched out into events such as film screenings accompanied by a live orchestra – how have you managed to remain contemporary and excite a new audience whilst still retaining broad appeal?

It's all about balance, and we very deliberately plan that variety across those 400 shows in the year. The hall is the home of breathtaking moments and lasting memories for everyone, not just the few. Certainly, recently there's been a real push to put on a more diverse offering of artists. Recently we've had our first ever drill rapper (Digga D), The Composers who are an afrobeat band, and much more. The Royal Albert Hall is a very special and storied place, but it's not an exclusive one. I think many people think of us as being formal; that you have to wear a tie, wipe your feet before you come in, but it's not that place at all, the doors are wide open. And we have to put on what people want to hear – what's exciting about an act like Digga D and drill rap is that it's the punk of the modern era and represents the voice of a disenfranchised youth. We want to be part of those movements and reflective of voices from across diverse communities and musical styles. During the 1960s we were wide open as a venue and welcomed all kinds of acts – Cream, The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, but sadly we banned a lot of acts in the 70s. We had a kind of Mary Whitehouse character in charge who banned artists because she hated their lyrics or thought bands were too heavy. It got quite bizarre. You'll see that artists who fell in love with us in the 1960s are still playing with us today, for example Eric Clapton, (who calls RAH his 'second living

room'), while a lot of bands who got big in the 70s didn't build that same level of affection for us, so now they've reached true legend status they don't come and play. I want to make all kinds of artists welcome now and ensure the future legacy and invest in affection for the future. Some of those artists that played last year will be true legends in 30 years time and we want them to come and play here when that happens.

Where do you see the future of the RAH programming and the future of UK arts in general?

In terms of the hall's programme, we want to continue to push out right across the genres in order to make every talented musician and music lover in the UK feel that RAH can be their home. And in order to make

both audiences and artists become more diverse, you have to pursue a wide variety of genres.

In terms of arts more widely in the UK, we're at a really difficult moment right now. There is a lot of tragedy coming from the grassroots music scene and it's very

difficult for small venues to survive. There's not enough funding in the arts sector to go round and there's lots of talk of grass roots withering, of genres dying and fundamental shifts in taste and technology that are difficult to keep pace with. So on one hand are some bleak and sobering stats. But on the other hand music is life; I can't live without music and I'm pretty sure most people can't, especially that raw experience of seeing music live. It's always going to flourish in some sense, so we need to keep pace with change. What the Royal Albert Hall will continue to do is support grassroots music.

We want to continue to push out right across the genres in order to make every talented musician and music lover in the UK feel that RAH can be their home



VISIT THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL

The Royal Albert Hall has a varied programme of exciting events and concerts to enjoy this summer, from ballet to orchestral film scores and much more. Situated in South Kensington, it's within easy distance of the Clubhouse, so why not enjoy a pre-concert meal in the 1910 Dining Room or even make a weekend of it by staying overnight.

For current accommodation offers visit rosl.org.uk/accommodation

'THERE IS A RECTANGLE UP THERE -
A WHITE RECTANGLE -
AND IT HAS TO BE FILLED.'

Alfred Hitchcock

WAKING DREAMS

In his new book, *Alfred Hitchcock Storyboards*, Hitchcock author and aficionado Tony Lee Moral provides a fascinating and illuminating insight into the directorial mind of the Master of Suspense. Here, he gives us an insight into one of cinema's most iconic names

No other director is more strongly associated with storyboarding than Hitchcock. His iconic storyboards for the chase up the bell tower in *Vertigo* (1958), the crop duster attack in *North by Northwest* (1959), the shower murder in *Psycho* (1960) and the crows flocking outside the schoolhouse in *The Birds* (1963), have created some of the most memorable moments in movie history and are indelibly etched in our minds.

Sir Alfred Hitchcock was born in 1899 in Leytonstone in the East End of London. In 1920, he was hired by the American company Famous Players-Lasky based in London, to design title and dialogue cards for silent films. Working in the art department, as both a writer and designer of movie titles, gave him invaluable experience in the power of design to attract an audience. He devoted himself to learning his craft, and in 1922 he became a set designer for the newly formed Gainsborough Pictures in London, having worked his way around the studio's many departments. For the next three years 1922 – 1925, Hitchcock worked as an art director on films such as *Woman to Woman* (1923) and *The Blackguard* (1925), assisting the British film director Graham Cutts. 'I was very content then when I was going to get a job as an assistant director,' remembers Hitchcock. 'Then they said 'do you know a good writer?'. And I said, 'I'll write it', and then my friend would be the art director on the picture. He said he couldn't come, he had another job. So what were we going to do for an art director? I said 'I'll do the art direction.' All this while still serving his apprenticeship.

1925 was an influential year for Hitchcock as he travelled to Berlin to work at the UFA studios on an Anglo-German co-production. UFA was one of the biggest production studios outside Hollywood and the home of German expressionistic cinema. It had a huge impact on the young Hitchcock, where he studied the masters such as Murnau and Lang, especially

the utilization of high and low-angle shots, the contrast between light and shade, which Hitchcock incorporated into his own visual style and became instrumental to his films such as *The 39 Steps* (1935).

The 39 Steps has all the ingredients of classic Hitchcock, involving the wrongfully accused man, the blonde heroine and debonair villains, and has been rightly lauded as one of the best films from his British period before he moved to Hollywood. The screenplay is storyboarded and celebrated for its sudden switches of location, with the effect of being like one short story after another. The film was an immediate hit when it was first released and gave Hitchcock an international reputation, cementing his ticket to America.



Being one of Hitchcock's most celebrated black and white films, lighting plays an integral role to the look of *The 39 Steps*. Hitchcock believed that cameramen, who normally rose up the ranks in the studio starting as assistants, should be sent to the art galleries and study the Dutch masters like Vermeer to gain an understanding of the logic of light. The use of light and shade is again inspired from Hitchcock's time in German cinema.

Even though many of Hitchcock's films were fantastical, he was very concerned with

achieving realism, which is why his films have often been compared to waking dreams or nightmares. In *Spellbound* (1945) Hitchcock was keen to show the vividness of dreams and hired celebrated surrealist Salvador Dali to design the famous dream sequence, as his paintings were uncanny but often rooted in the ordinary and the everyday. As Hitchcock said, 'When you have a nightmare, it's awfully vivid if you're dreaming that you're being led to the electric chair. Then you're as happy as can be when you wake up because you're relieved. It was so vivid. And that's really the basis of this attempt at realistic photography, to make it look as real as possible, because the effects themselves are actually quite bizarre.'

Hitchcock famously said he wasn't interested in photographs of people talking. He was more interested in the visual when storyboarding and telling the story purely in cinematic terms through a succession of images on the screen, which in turn created ideas and emotion. Hitchcock often boasted that he never needed to look through the camera viewfinder, as everything was in the pre-planning and storyboarding. He was most interested in composition and filling that rectangle.

Alfred Hitchcock Storyboards is published by Titan Books, £34.99



Tony recently gave a fascinating talk on his book here at Overseas House. Keep an eye on our online content calendar at rosl.org.uk/events and subscribe to our email newsletter to keep up to date on more exciting book and arts events throughout the year.





IN MEMORY OF MARGARET ADRIAN-VALLANCE

Members will be saddened to learn of the death of former Director of Education Projects, Margaret Adrian-Vallance earlier this year; Margaret was a well-loved member of the ROSL team who will be remembered for her dedication to the League and the education projects to which she devoted her career here. Before joining ROSL in 1993, she was Assistant Secretary General (PR) for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award International Association and the Founder Editor of 'Award World'. She held an MA and Postgraduate Diploma in Education from Trinity College, Dublin, and in 2011 she was made an MBE for services to the education of disadvantaged children in Namibia.

Margaret's brother D'Arcy Adrian-Vallance and past ROSL Director-Generals Robert Newell CVO and General Roddy Porter have kindly contributed the following memories of Margaret, who will be sadly missed by all at ROSL.

Poppy, as she's always been called in the family, was a wonderful big sister, caring and protective. She had a terrific sense of fun: I still remember her successfully disguising herself as Father Christmas one year – which I was completely taken in by! And as teenagers in Devon, day-long adventures, *Swallows and Amazons*-style in our little rowing boat. And when she went away to university at Trinity College, Dublin, I remember lapping up her tales of student life

and the adult world; a 'moveable feast' of fun and friendships that stayed with her for life. She left Ireland with an MA in History and Political Science, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Education. Margaret joined the Royal Over-Seas League as Director of PR in 1993, based at its main clubhouse in St James's London. Soon after her arrival, she delivered a proposal to bolster the League's charitable and educational efforts. The response was enthusiastic and supportive, but the League was not in a position to provide funding for projects or extra travel.

Margaret was such a good person who was always concerned for those less fortunate than herself, and of course the Royal Over-Seas League's humanitarian work to educate children in Namibia and Botswana was her initiative

fewer than 4,000 pairs were collected and shipped. The following year, she initiated an ambitious joint project with the Government of Namibia to provide education for children of remote and marginalised indigenous people, who suffered discrimination and were considered by many at the time as 'unteachable'. She managed to raise substantial funding and help from corporate donors, foundations, airlines, and the increasingly enthusiastic generosity of League members. In the next two decades, her dedicated monitoring and development of the scheme ensured its long-term success. By the early 2000s, some graduates of the scheme had qualified as teachers, passing on

All projects had to be self-funding. So, as a pilot project, she harnessed the goodwill of League members to donate spectacles they no longer needed so that they could be shipped out to an organisation in Sri Lanka that sorted and matched them to people who could not afford their own. No



education to the next generation of indigenous children. For her visionary work in Africa she became an MBE in 2011. You can imagine how proud of her we all were at her investiture.

D'Arcy Adrian-Vallance
(Margaret's brother)

Margaret was such a good person who was always concerned for those less fortunate than herself, and of course the Royal Over-Seas League's humanitarian work to educate children in Namibia and Botswana was her initiative. Under her direction this endeavour went from strength to strength and did much to enhance the reputation of the League. I will never forget the day I



Margaret managing one of her education projects in Namibia, for which she would become an MBE in 2011

interviewed her in 1993 for her job at ROSL. I was so impressed and knew immediately that she was the right person, and her achievements over the next eighteen years as my colleague proved me right. We had a most enjoyable and effective working relationship. After my retirement in 2011 we kept in touch and became good friends instead of just good colleagues. She was a lovely person with so many outstanding qualities not least her intellect, integrity, initiative and her enormous charm. She will be much missed by all of those fortunate enough to have known her.

Robert F Newell CVO
Director-General, The Royal Over-Seas League (1991 – 2011)

When I took over from Bob Newell as Director-General of the Royal Over-Seas League in 2011, one of the first members of staff I met and chatted with was Margaret.

As with all the staff, she wanted to know how I wished to shape what she did – ROSL's Humanitarian work. At that stage, I had no idea and so it was that, over the ensuing months, Margaret patiently briefed me, told me of the wider humanitarian work and introduced the personalities involved in it all. I was greatly impressed by what she had to say and wanted to jump in and help. The humanitarian work we pursued over the next few years was always one of the highlights of being part of ROSL. What shone through was Margaret's passion for

what she was doing – or more accurately, for the people whose lot she was seeking to improve – her humanity and her joie de vivre. Margaret was held in high regard throughout the organisation and much loved by staff and members alike; she was, simply, a ROSL treasure.

I am deeply grateful for Margaret's friendship, her tireless commitment, deep fount of knowledge about people and places and times and her great sense of humour. I will remember her wide smile and infectious laugh and that twinkle in her eye that spoke of life in all its fullness.
Major General Roddy Porter MBE
Director-General, The Royal Over-Seas League (2011-2017)

NEWS & EVENTS

The latest from our Clubhouse; branches; art, music and announcements

FROM THE ARCHIVES

My most thrilling adventure

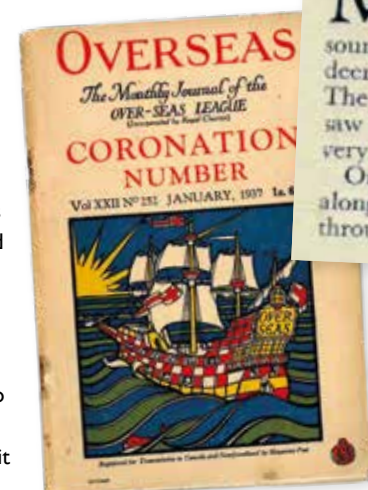
We've dug into the archives to find more fascinating stories from past editions of *Overseas* – here in a 1937 edition, member Freda Dalley gives her account of a car breakdown in the middle of the dense Indian jungle.

My husband is in the Indian Forest Service. Our camp was in Kanara 'high forest', and great timber trees and bamboos covered the hillsides. Big game was plentiful; the rasping sounds of panther, a tiger's full-throated roar, and the alarm notes of deer and monkeys as the big cats prowled, were common sounds. The undergrowth was often dense and the light dim, so one seldom saw the creatures. One developed, however, a habit of listening to very small sounds.

On the afternoon of Christmas Day, we two went by car a few miles along the only motor-road, and then walked down a cart-track through thick jungle. We came to a lovely river flowing among boulders, with clean stretches of gravel, and many flowering plants along its margin. Birds and dragon flies darted about. Here I rested, while he went on to inspect an area recently damaged by fire.

I sat a few yards from the stream, a thick clump of tamarisk at my back. Presently the biggest mongoose I have ever seen came walking along the shore. Opposite me she turned, and came to within two yards.

She raised her back, bristling every hair till she looked twice her size. Then, as I did not move, she opened her mouth wide and said, slowly, and in absolutely unprintable language, exactly what she thought of me. She turned with a snarl of suspicion and walked on downstream till lost to sight. Ten minutes later, a leaf crunched in the bush at my back. Gently turning my head, I saw her vanish, apparently

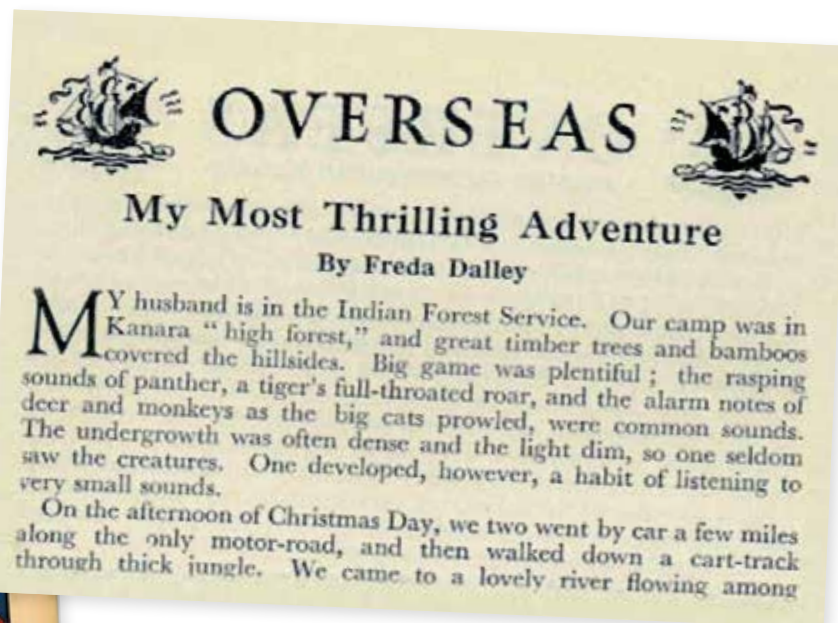


Suddenly came a faint sound that was different... a sound like heavy, careless footfall or two... one thing only – elephants

into the ground, a yard behind me. It was dark when we turned homewards. There was no moon, and the dense forest came to within a few feet of the road. Six miles from camp the car gasped and stopped. She was eight years old, tied up with at least 20 bits of string, and her lights were the sort that only work when the engine runs. Nothing we could do would start her. My husband suggested our walking home. I simply couldn't; I'd had a four mile walk that afternoon, and I always stumble badly in the dark. I begged him to go to a village and find

a cart to tow us home. After he had gone I waited sleepily. There was only blackness to look at. A sambar stag belled a challenge. A panther made sawing noises far off. Nightjars and owls called occasionally. Insects chirped and buzzed. I was getting cold, and rather hungry.

Suddenly came a faint sound that was different... I sat up, my hands cupped round my ears, listening: a sound like heavy, careless footfall or two, far off. That was one thing only – elephants. Six weeks before, one of our Rangers had been killed; startled at seeing



an elephant standing beside the road, he fell off his cycle. The elephant had crushed both him and his machine. A cultivator near our camp was sitting in a machan guarding his crops, when an elephant tore it down, and broke some of his ribs. Another had pulled up the milestones on a new road – elephants hate strange objects in their path. What was I to do? To shout might merely annoy and not frighten them. The jungle offered no refuge. To climb a tall tree was impossible in the dark. The sounds came nearer, and I was sure they were on the road, or along its edge.

I thought of Mother Mongoose; if the enemy is too big to tackle, bluff! Those elephants must be got off the road before they saw the car – I would pretend to be a whole noisy crowd! An oil tin – I beat it with a bag of rattling tools. Two empty petrol tins – I kicked a continuous tattoo on them. The horn I squeezed again and again. And I sang *Good King Wenceslas* in a mighty voice. When I paused to listen, complete silence reigned except for the insects. I clapped and stamped loudly, and gave two encores – though I could hardly sing for laughing, the row was so awful.

My husband, returning later with a bullock cart and a lantern, saw the fresh tracks of three elephants coming towards the car. But they left the road. As we passed them they squealed and stamped in the jungle alongside.

Making his mark

Meet ROSL's new Visual Arts Curator Louis Chapple

I'm really interested in and inspired by the crossover and connections between music and visual arts, which is great given ROSL's focus on both of these disciplines; I actually studied Music at Goldsmiths university, focusing on jazz, piano and saxophone before transitioning to History of Art, so the harmony between the visual and aural is very much part of my background.

What really appealed to me about the role at ROSL was the concept and ethos of international friendship and understanding. I've always wanted to work with global artists and it's my aim to really develop the rich potential of ROSL to connect with the different stories and artistic interpretations of creators worldwide. Secondly, I was really intrigued and excited by the idea of curating in a storied and historic building such as this. What's great about the ROSL building with all of its period

features and architectural interest is the potential to create a direct dialogue between this historic space and contemporary art, and the issues and conversations which modern artists are depicting. I love the idea of these two apparently conflicting premises which can ultimately find harmony in the ROSL building.

My first impressions of ROSL is that this is a very lively, vibrant space in which to be working. I've joined right in the thick of the AMC Finals season and so have been involved with lots of the hustle and bustle that involves, and have helped at some of the auditions and concerts with the young musicians. It's been great to speak to some of our members, and I have discovered that there's a real community of dedicated music and arts lovers here; I'm excited to discover what the response will be like to the new

visual arts programme here and in turn see how I can further delight and engage members with our future programming.

2024 is shaping up to be very exciting from a visual arts perspective, with much of it still in the planning stages. But what I can reveal is a really interesting collaboration with the Royal Society of Sculptors that will be showing this summer. The

My first impressions of ROSL is that this is a very lively, vibrant space in which to be working

premise of the exhibition was that we invited international artists to submit sculptural works, but they must be able to be delivered by post or digitally. This has proved quite a challenge already given the far-flung locations of many to the artists and interestingly opens that conversation about how ROSL can champion overseas friendship; we're literally having to overcome the practical challenges of transporting the artworks, which

is requiring a lot of understanding and collaboration between borders.

We've also announced our open call to artists to submit applications for our International Residency – another big draw for me to join ROSL, as I've always wanted to work on an international residency. This will involve myself and Damon at the Art House going through potentially hundreds of applications to choose two international artists that will undertake the residency in Wakefield in 2024. There are many considerations when choosing the winners that go beyond the quality of the work (although that is, of course, paramount) – who might benefit the most from the residency, who hasn't displayed work internationally before; but it's very exciting to be able to give artists this wonderful opportunity and I'm very excited to meet and work with our winners.

CELEBRATE SUMMER

ROSL's beautiful garden overlooking leafy Green Park is a real rarity in central London; why not make the most of this oasis of calm in the heart of Picadilly, enjoying a drink, lunch or dinner specially curated and created by our talented in-house Food and Beverage Team. Whether you're looking for a selection of elegant small plates, a delicious pizza or a glass of wine specially chosen by our drinks experts, there's plenty to enjoy at ROSL



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

News & views

ROSL NEWS

ROSL launches new masterclasses for young musicians

In the spirit of ROSL's mission to support young musicians, we're delighted to have launched, in partnership with charity Future Talent, a series of workshops designed to nurture the next generation

The first of three special masterclass days for talented young musicians was held in the Princess Alexandra Hall at the start of April. The days offer the opportunity for talented young musicians 14 - 18 years old to perform in masterclasses with experienced ROSL prizewinners and ensure that ROSL remains at the forefront of supporting the pipeline of talent in the UK. We have been able to run these days thanks to funding from the Radcliffe Trust and ROSL Arts patrons. Our first day in April focused on woodwind, with six young musicians from all over the UK coming together for the event which was led by ROSL Artistic Director Geoff Parkin and saxophonist Huw Wiggan, who won the ROSL Gold Medal in 2014, the ROSL mixed ensembles prize in 2015, and is



now a professor at the Royal Academy of Music.

Following an amazing recital from Huw, accompanied by pianist Tim End, the six musicians each took turns for their 30-minute class with Huw. The day concluded with a roundtable discussion on all aspects of careers in music, including applying and auditioning for conservatoires.

Our next masterclass day in May focused on the strings family, lead by ROSL 2016 Gold Medal winner, violinist Emily Sun. For more information on supporting our arts programme visit www.rosl.org.uk/artspatrons

Lady Luce Tribute

We are sad to report the death of Lady Rose Luce, wife of former ROSL president Lord Richard Luce who served 2002-2020.

Lady Luce supported her husband's many postings in service of Queen and country around the world over the past 60 years, and led an unusually varied and interesting life. Her early family life and jobs in parliament and America, later including a leading role in the English-Speaking Union and much charitable work in the UK and Gibraltar, were

buttressed by her love of music and singing in choirs. As the wife of Richard Luce, she supported his long and varied career as an MP, Minister, Vice-Chancellor, Governor and Lord Chamberlain to The Queen's Household. She published her memoir *Rose's Ramblings* in 2020, describing in the most vivid, entertaining and human way her life supporting

Richard in all his many and challenging tasks.

Richard wrote in his memoirs *Ring the Changes*: 'I cannot describe adequately in words what her support, love and companionship throughout our marriage have meant to me. I could not have managed my work in Africa, the struggle to get into Parliament, politics, being a



Minister, a Vice-Chancellor, a Governor or Lord Chamberlain without her.'

Public Affairs: José Barroso and Nick Ferrari give fascinating talks at ROSL

We were delighted to be joined by two very special guests this spring as part of our ongoing Public Affairs series; former Prime Minister of Portugal, Professor José Barroso and well-known broadcaster and journalist Nick Ferrari



Prof. Jose Barroso – former President of the European Commission (2004-2014) and Prime Minister of Portugal (2002-2004) – was our guest at April's Public Affairs series. Prof. Barroso spoke candidly about Britain's place in the EU post Brexit, with hope for a reset of the relationship between the UK and the European Union; the Green transition and the global pushback against some of the more ambitious targets set within the EU; the focus on defence globally; Artificial Intelligence, EU relationships and the growing tension between China and Taiwan.

We were also joined by the very charismatic Nick Ferrari, award winning host of his own LBC radio show, now the UK's number one commercial talk brand, with 1.3 million listeners

tuning in each week. In conversation with Nick was Director-General, Dr Annette Prandzioch, and Esther McVey, former Minister of the State and current Conservative MP, and ROSL member.

Areas of discussion included Brexit, the Royal Family, international relations, and the media industry today

Areas of discussion included thoughts ahead of the week's national vote, the latest from Parliament, Brexit, the Royal Family, international relations, and the media industry today. Nick was humorous and entertaining throughout, and a packed audience enjoyed Nick's anecdotes and impressions; an engaging, thought-provoking evening for ROSL members.

Keep an eye on our events calendar at rosl.org/events for more Public Affairs events throughout the year



MEMBER EVENTS

Get involved with a programme of events and activities at Over-Seas House

A visit to London

Madeleine King, president of the ROSL Calgary Chapter, shares the Calgary Group's trip to the London Clubhouse.

This spring, a group of us representing ROSL's chapter in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, came to the London clubhouse where we had a thoroughly enjoyable time.

Our chapter has been hosting two events per year for the past number of years. Our invitations are circulated to all members of one of the local clubs having reciprocal arrangements with ROSL, opening up our meetings to anyone interested. Our aim is to enjoy each other's company while hosting speakers focused on shared interests in international travel, Commonwealth connections, the arts and the historic London clubhouse.

This was the first time we have embarked on a shared trip to London. We gathered at ROSL on the Saturday for drinks and dinner and Sunday offered the chance for a guided tour of nearby Spencer House, 'London's most magnificent 18th-century aristocratic palace while a planned visit to Kew Gardens suffered a weather-related delay. On the Monday we were lucky enough to secure tickets for the wonderful Commonwealth Day Service at Westminster Abbey in the presence of the Royal Family, followed by a special dinner in ROSL's 1910 dining room.



Pictured at the London clubhouse in March are members of ROSL's Calgary Branch



Members of the London Group enjoying their tour of Wren's churches

Tuesday evening we all attended ROSL's Annual Music Competition finals for strings and keyboard ensembles in the concert hall within the Club. Our shared programme ended the following morning, with some members immediately flying home while others continued their stay in England visiting friends and families.

All of us very much enjoyed the exceptional location of the club, allowing us to walk through St. James's Park to Westminster Abbey, attend the Changing of the

Staff at the club were welcoming and efficient [and] the bar provided us with a great meeting place

Guard outside Buckingham Palace, walk along Piccadilly to excellent exhibitions at the Royal Academy and to Trafalgar Square and the National Gallery. The choices were endless!

Staff at the club were (as always) welcoming, informative and efficient. The bar provided us with a great meeting place as well as food and drinks throughout the days. All our members expressed their satisfaction with the accommodation.

We're now left wondering: 'Will this become an annual event for the Calgary chapter?'

London Group Events

**London Group Visit:
The Charterhouse
6 June, 11.30am**

Join us on a guided tour of the esteemed Charterhouse, renowned for its historical significance.

This exclusive tour offers the opportunity to gain access to this captivating historical treasure concealed in the heart of London. Explore the Tudor Mansion, its courtyards and the remains of a medieval abbey. One of the 'Brothers' will provide us with an in-depth tour, offering a detailed exploration of the site's extensive history and the lifestyle of the Brothers spanning the centuries.

Our meeting point is at 11.15am at Charterhouse, located in Charterhouse Square, London, EC1M 6AN, near Barbican Underground Station. London Group members please book early so that we can confirm this visit with Charterhouse.

Member Events

Book Group

The 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 **5pm** but we meet beforehand for a drink and a chat and afterwards for dinner (optional) at **6.30pm**.



Dates of meetings with books:
22 May 2024 *A Moveable Feast* by Ernest Hemingway, 5pm;
6 June *Cousin Bette* by Honore de Balzac, 11.15am (all other meetings will start at 5pm).

Bridge Club

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

Backgammon Club

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

Theatre & Opera Group

We go regularly to the theatre, opera, ballet and modern dance. We also go to Glyndebourne every year. This year we have booked for Giulio Cesare, Handel, on 28 June and Tristan und Isolde, Wagner, on 21 August.

To join any of the Member-led activities, please contact membership@rosl.org.uk

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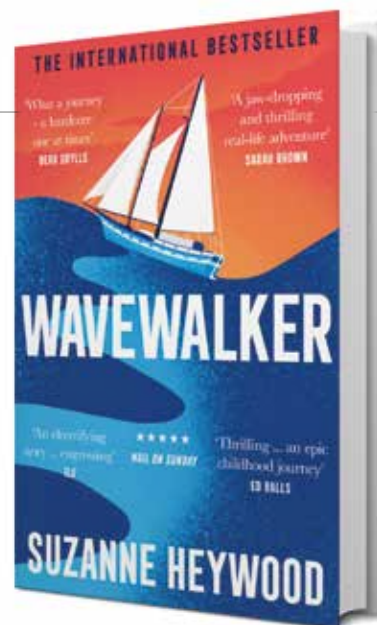
Book Talk: *Wavewalker* by Suzanne Heywood

5 June, 6.30pm, Over-Seas House

Celebrating the release of the paperback edition of *Wavewalker*, Suzanne Heywood will discuss her extraordinary upbringing.

Sue set sail from England, aged 7 on the schooner *Wavewalker*, with her parents and younger brother on a dream ocean voyage in the wake of Captain Cook to reach the palm trees, beaches and limitless seafood of the South Pacific, which turned into a ten-year fight through storms, shipwrecks, reefs and limited

schooling to break away and get back home. This is Sue's story of that trip. Within a year of setting sail she was injured in a devastating shipwreck in the Indian Ocean – which later became the subject of her father's article 'I'm not afraid to die if we're all together' and, once recovered, educated herself by post. Most challenging of all she had to find a way to grow up while being contained with her family in a small space floating around the ocean.



Domaine Henri Bourgeois: French Dinner & Recital

14 June, 6.30pm, Over-Seas House

Enjoy an odyssey into the exquisite wine and food of France with our very special wine dinner, featuring the distinctive and aromatic wines of Domaine Henri Bourgeois.

Start your evening with a classical French recital performed by flautist Marie Sato and pianist Siyu Sun, before enjoying a delicious four-course menu complemented by carefully matched wines, reflecting the expertise of ten generations of winemakers that have been dedicated to perfecting the artistry of sauvignon blanc and pinot noir.



New Zealand
Pettman Scholars
Concert, June 23

ARTS AND EVENTS CALENDAR

Book Talk: *Wavewalker*
by Suzanne Heywood
5 June, 6.30pm

London Group Visit:
The CharterHouse
6 June, 11.30am

Domaine Henri Bourgeois:
French Dinner & Recital
14 June, 6.30pm

Gold Medal Final
19 June, 19.30

**New Zealand Pettman
Scholars Concert**
23 July, 18.30pm

Jazz in the Garden
Saturday nights throughout June

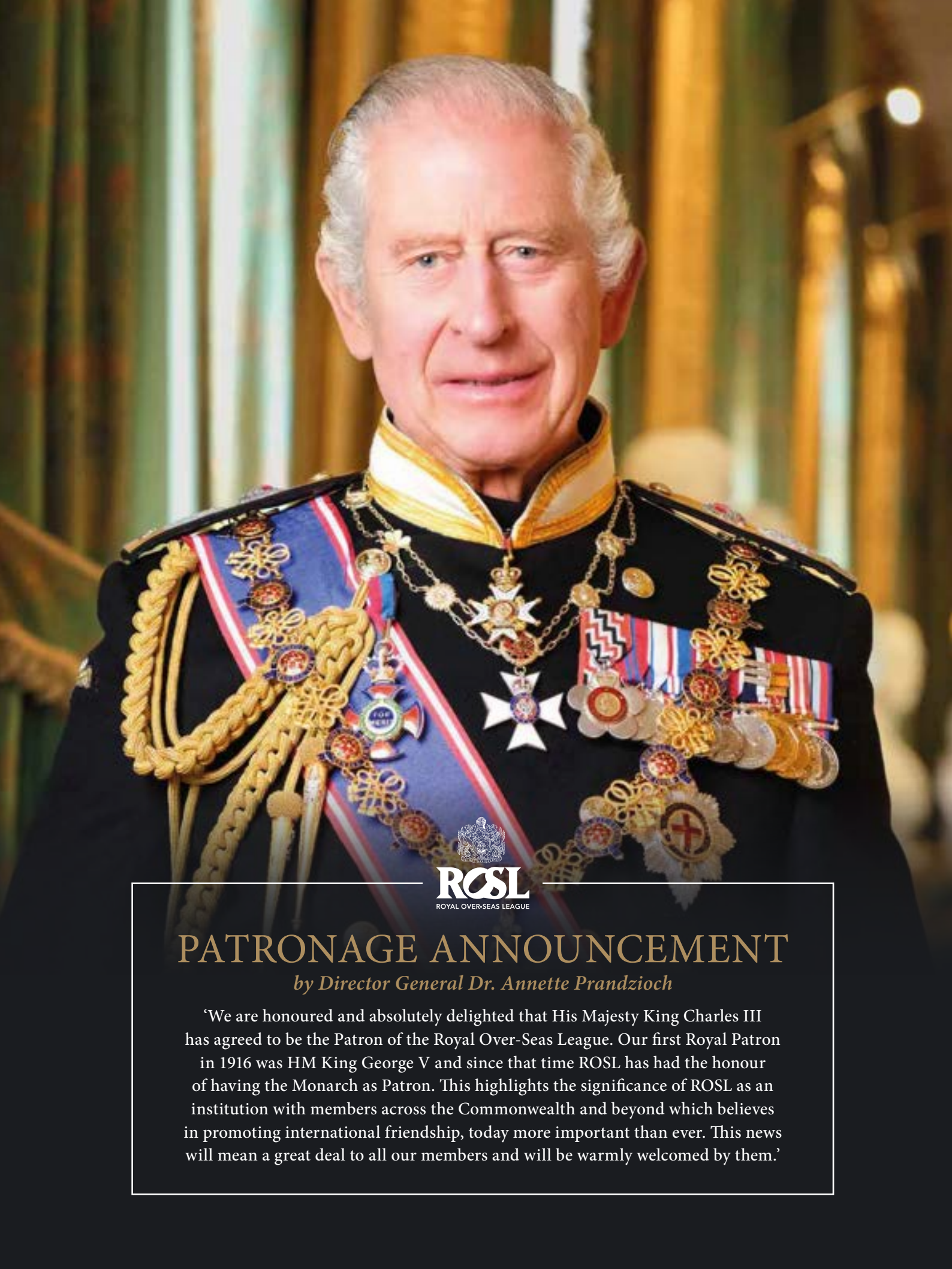
AMC Gold Medal Final

19 June, 19.30, Wigmore Hall

The jewel in ROSL's cultural crown, the Annual Music Competition has launched the careers of scores of talented musicians worldwide since its launch over 72 years ago. Once again taking place on the prestigious stage of iconic Wigmore Hall, our four winners of the ROSL Music Competition solo section finals compete for the prestigious ROSL Gold Medal and £15,000 first prize. Former renowned winners include Jacqueline du Pré cello, Melvyn Tan harpsichord, Barry Douglas piano, Susan Chilcott soprano and Jonathan Lemalu bass.

The evening also includes performances from the winners of the two ROSL Ensemble Prizes.

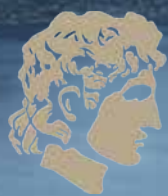




PATRONAGE ANNOUNCEMENT

by Director General Dr. Annette Prandzioch

‘We are honoured and absolutely delighted that His Majesty King Charles III has agreed to be the Patron of the Royal Over-Seas League. Our first Royal Patron in 1916 was HM King George V and since that time ROSL has had the honour of having the Monarch as Patron. This highlights the significance of ROSL as an institution with members across the Commonwealth and beyond which believes in promoting international friendship, today more important than ever. This news will mean a great deal to all our members and will be warmly welcomed by them.’



PETER SOMMER TRAVELS

"Peter Sommer Travels continue to excel. The tour was a fantastic couple of weeks of history, archaeology and mythology combined with beautiful scenery, wonderful food and fantastic wine."

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