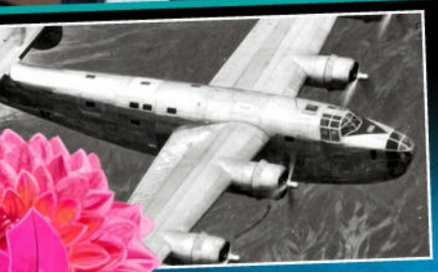
ALL ABOUT HISTORY

HISTORY OF HOLLYWOOD
From the studio moguls to the celebrity stars

FRIDA KAHLO

How this icon of art survived near-death to become a revolutionary figure

"WE LOVE THE PAST... WE LOVE THE WACKY PEOPLE"
Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook talk history



SUB HUNTERS
The WWII battle for the Atlantic

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The conman who fooled the courts of Europe

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Unravelling the truth of Rome's teenage tyrant Elagabalus

FUTURE
ISSUE 138

Battle for the Island Kingdom

England's Destiny 1000–1066

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Frida Kahlo expressed herself through her art emotionally and politically

Welcome

We all have our history obsessions. Whether it's a particular period or historical figure, some key event or remarkable invention, I certainly have a few that do laps around my head with some frequency. The subject of this issue's lead feature has been more of a collective preoccupation for the **All About History** team over recent years. Frida Kahlo is one of those icons of the past who is instantly recognisable, but not necessarily easily summarised. Both her face and her artistic style can be spotted with ease, but what do you know about her story? What motivated her artwork? How involved was she in the tumultuous politics of her time in Mexico?

When you begin to dig, and we have done for some time, you realise that the full story of Kahlo's tragically short life is full of incident and controversy, well worth our attention.

So, we give her exactly that this issue and I hope you find it as utterly engrossing as we all have. Meanwhile, we had a blast chatting with Tom Holland and Dominic Sandbrook of *The Rest Is History* podcast about their work and love of the past, we dig into one of Rome's most controversial emperors, break down the fascinating history of Hollywood and learn about the WWII battle for the Atlantic. I hope you enjoy the issue and Happy New Year to you all.

Jonathan Gordon
Editor

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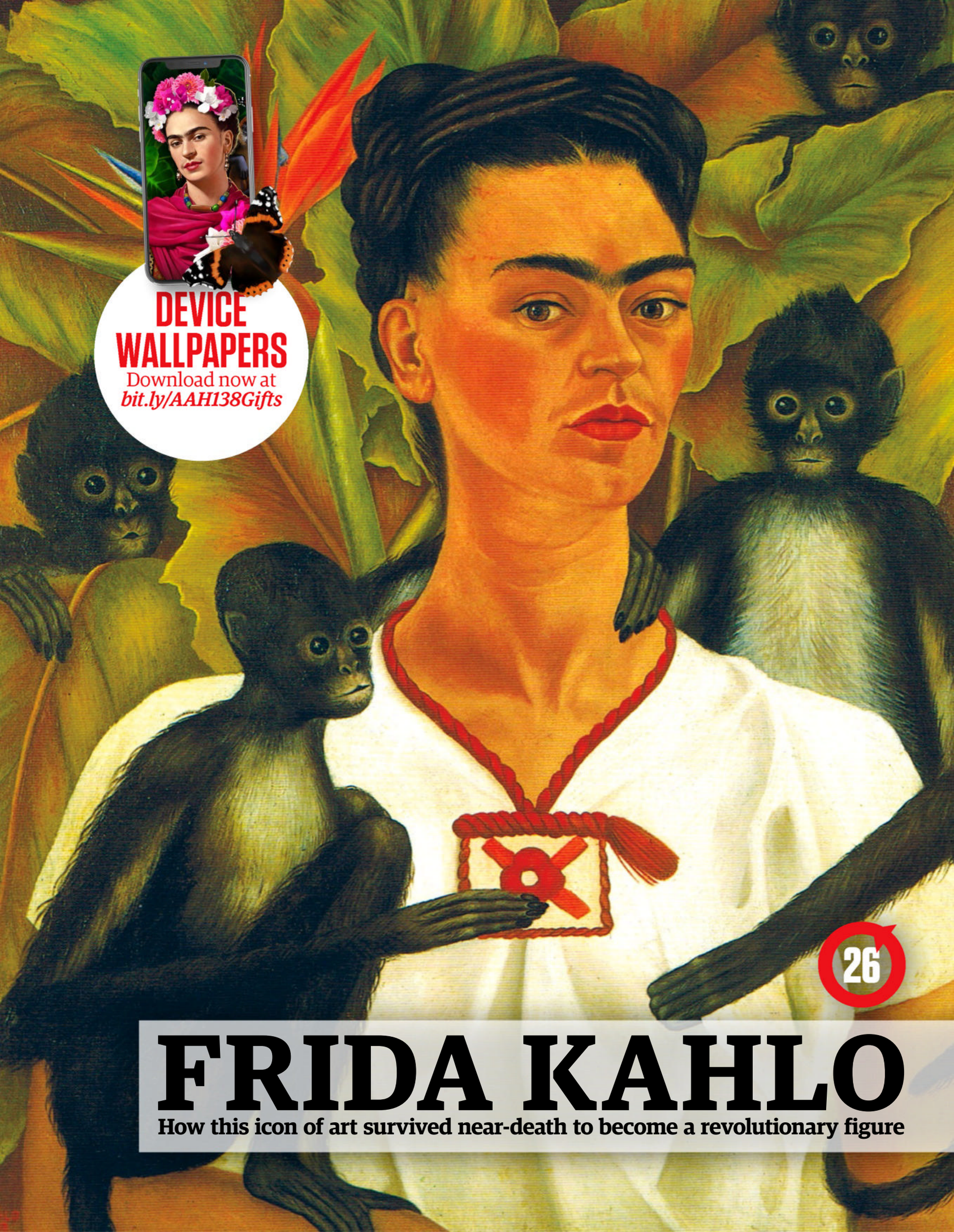

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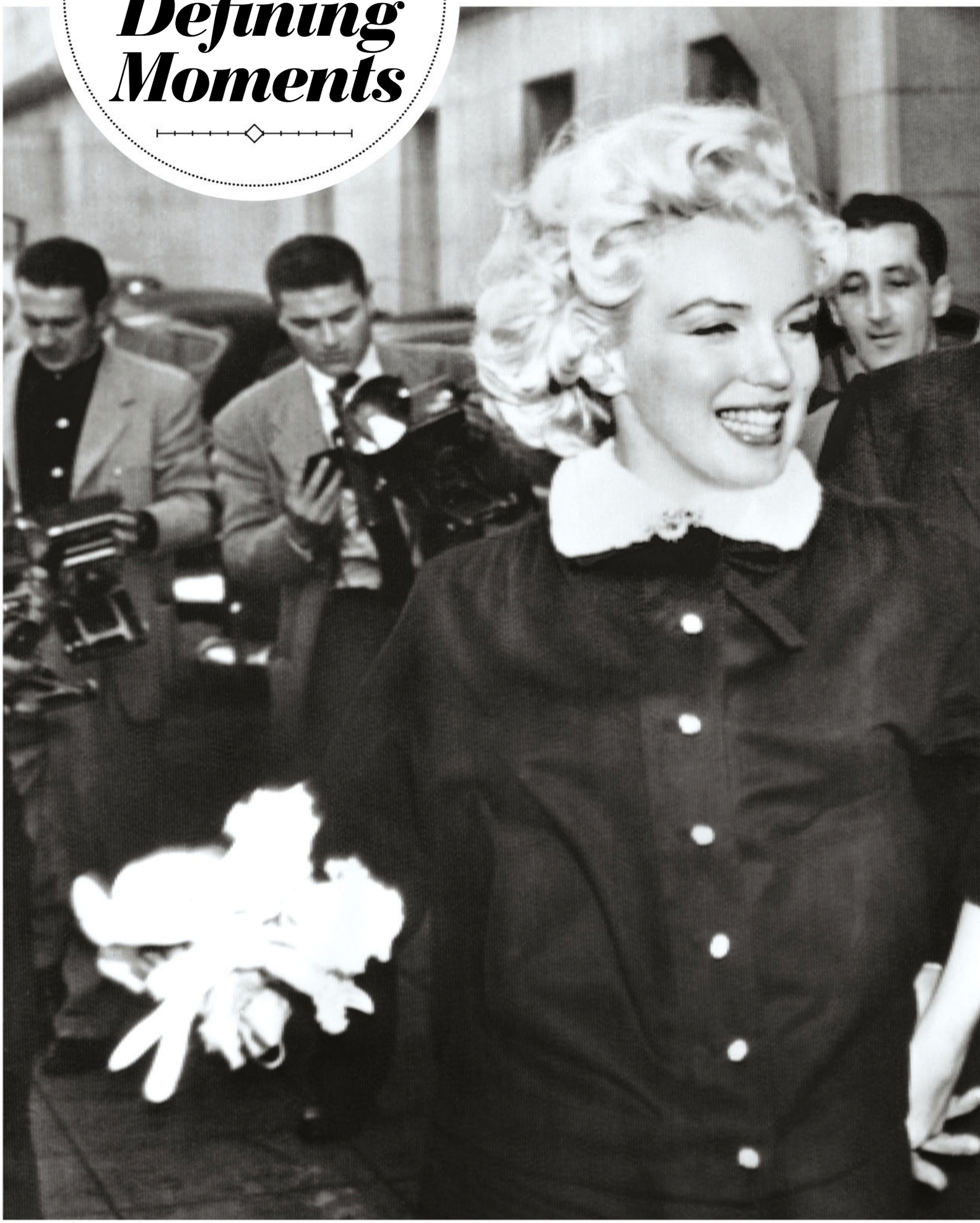
FRIDA KAHLO

How this icon of art survived near-death to become a revolutionary figure

Defining Moments



14 January 1954

MARILYN MONROE MARRIES JOE DIMAGGIO

In a ceremony at San Francisco City Hall, film star Marilyn Monroe married retired American baseball player Joe DiMaggio. The celebrity couple had been dating since 1952, and their high-profile relationship garnered plenty of media attention. Their marriage ended after only nine months, with Monroe citing "mental cruelty" as the reason for their divorce. However, the pair eventually reconciled and were still friends upon Monroe's tragic death in 1962.

© Alamy

16 January 2006

ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF SWORN IN AS LIBERIAN PRESIDENT

At an inauguration ceremony held in Monrovia, politician Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was sworn in as the next President of Liberia. The occasion marked the first time a woman had been elected as president, not just in Liberia, but in any African country. Sirleaf served two terms as Liberia's president, and after her second term ended in 2018 she established the Ellen Johnson Sirleaf Presidential Center for Women and Development.

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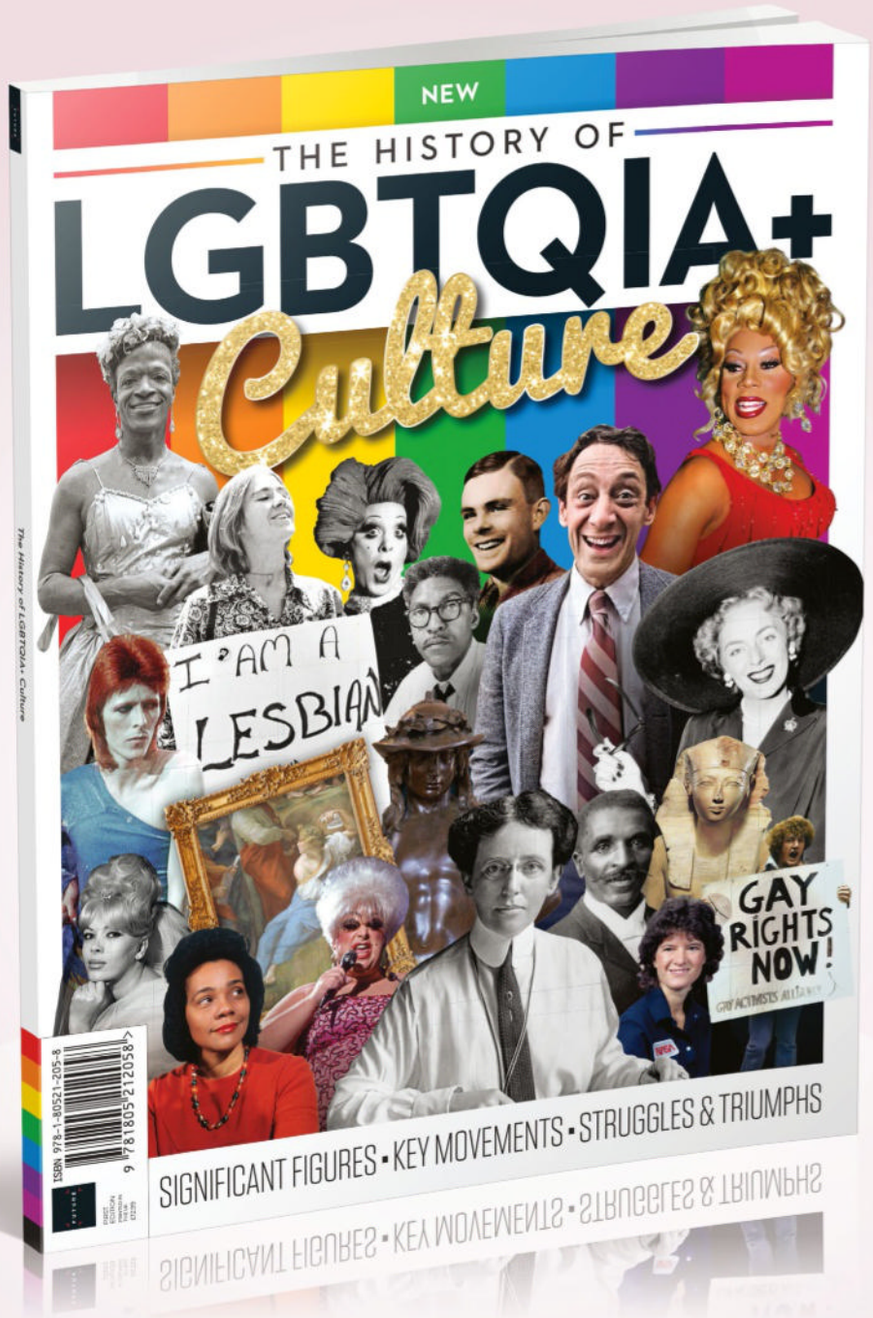

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FUTURE

ALL ABOUT HOLLYWOOD

We turn a spotlight on the history of America's home for all things film, stardom and entertainment

Main image: © Getty Images

Written by Emily Staniforth, Callum McKelvie, Jonathan Gordon, Rowena Cockett, Jackson van Uden

Key Events

The Golden Age of Hollywood lasted until the 1950s/1960s.

1915 THE BIRTH OF A NATION

The controversial silent film *The Birth Of A Nation*, directed by DW Griffith, marks the beginning of Hollywood's Golden Age thanks to its advanced production techniques. However, it also includes racist depictions of African Americans and makes the KKK into heroes.

1927 THE JAZZ SINGER

The Jazz Singer starring Al Jolson and Warner Oland becomes the first feature length film to have a synchronised vocal track as well as music. It sparks the popularity of movies with sound, and a couple of years later most Hollywood films are 'talkies'.

FILMMAKERS ATTRACTED TO CALIFORNIA c. 1908

The varied scenery and good climate of Southern California attracts people from the film industry who had previously been making movies in Chicago and New York.

WARNER BROS. ESTABLISHED 1923

One of the big five film studios, Warner Brothers Inc is founded by Harry, Jack, Albert and Samuel Warner. They produce the first talkie.

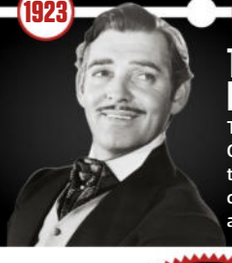
HAYS CODE 1934

The Hays Code is imposed by the film industry to regulate Hollywood movies. It features rules on violence and profanities and remains in place until 1968.

1915 — 1923 — 1927 — 1939

HOLLYWOOD THRIVES c. 1918

Due to the events of World War I in Europe, Hollywood productions begin to overtake the success of European film, dominating the landscape of international cinema.



THE KING OF HOLLYWOOD 1931

The charismatic Clark Gable, commonly known as the King of Hollywood, is credited with a main role in a film for the first time.

SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS 1937

Disney's first feature length film *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs* is released. Its advanced animation marks the beginning of a plethora of animated movies.

1923 HOLLYWOOD SIGN FIRST BUILT

The iconic Hollywood sign is first constructed as an advertisement for a new housing estate that had been built in the hills. Originally reading 'Hollywoodland', the sign eventually loses the 'land' and becomes an integral and infamous landmark of Hollywood, Los Angeles.

The Hollywood sign was rebuilt in 1978 thanks to donations from wealthy benefactors including Hugh Hefner and Alice Cooper.

1939 GONE WITH THE WIND

Based on the hugely popular novel by Margaret Mitchell, Victor Fleming's *Gone With The Wind* breaks box office records. Starring Clark Gable and Vivien Leigh, it is believed by some to be the highest grossing movie of all time. The film wins ten Academy Awards.

1972 THE GODFATHER

Combining the epic storytelling of old Hollywood with the grounded performances of New Hollywood, Francis Ford Coppola's *The Godfather* is released after a period of great anticipation. Widely regarded as one of the greatest films of all time, it stars Hollywood icons including Marlon Brando and Al Pacino.

The portrayal of Italian-Americans in *The Godfather* transformed how Italians were traditionally depicted in Hollywood films.

THE WIZARD OF OZ 1939

An iconic film in Hollywood's history and a moment in American popular culture, *The Wizard Of Oz* delights audiences with its use of colour and music.

THE SEVEN YEAR ITCH 1955

The Seven Year Itch is released, with its star Marilyn Monroe providing one of the most emblematic images of Hollywood glamour from the 1950s.

JAWS 1975

Widely considered the first blockbuster, Steven Spielberg's *Jaws*, a movie about a monstrous shark, is released. The film paves the way for expensive action movies.

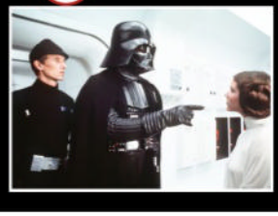
1952 1967 1972

CASABLANCA 1942

A film about love and sacrifice, *Casablanca* is still considered one of the best movies to have come out of old Hollywood. It stars Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman.

SIDNEY POITIER WINS OSCAR 1964

Sidney Poitier becomes the first Black winner of the Best Actor Academy Award for his role in *Lilies Of The Field* in 1963.



STAR WARS 1977

The first film of the *Star Wars* series is released, presenting a new form of escapism and adventure to audiences. It also marks the beginning of huge Hollywood franchises.

1952 SINGIN' IN THE RAIN

Epitomising the best of Hollywood musicals, *Singin' In The Rain* starring Gene Kelly and Debbie Reynolds is released. The musical is set in Hollywood itself, with the plot revolving around the transition from silent films to talkies in the 1920s.

1967 BONNIE AND CLYDE

Centred on the real American criminals Bonnie Parker and Clyde Barrow, the movie *Bonnie And Clyde* starring Warren Beatty and Faye Dunaway is released. The film marks the beginning of the New Hollywood phase, where movies become cheaper, but also take more creative risks.

GOLDEN AGE FILM SET

Hollywood
1930s – 1945

The Golden Age of Hollywood saw some of the most iconic films ever produced, from *Gone With The Wind* (1939) to *Citizen Kane* (1941). Between 1930 and 1945, Tinseltown was dominated by a method of production known as the 'Studio System', which saw even distribution and screening of films under the control of major studios such as 20th Century Fox and Warner Brothers. During this period directors, writers, set designers and even stars were all under contract to specific studios. Each studio owned vast areas of land used for production, from huge backlots to gigantic soundstages.

Sound stages, as their name suggests, developed more readily following the advent of 'talkies' in the 1920s and 1930s. They were designed primarily to allow audio to be recorded at the same time as the film. Early soundstages in the silent era could not be reliant on electrical lighting, as the technology was not yet powerful enough to light the space needed. As such they had glass roofs that allowed the film crews to utilise natural light while shooting. The first examples of sound stages as we know them today appeared in 1928 and were huge warehouse-like structures, allowing for the construction of vast sets.

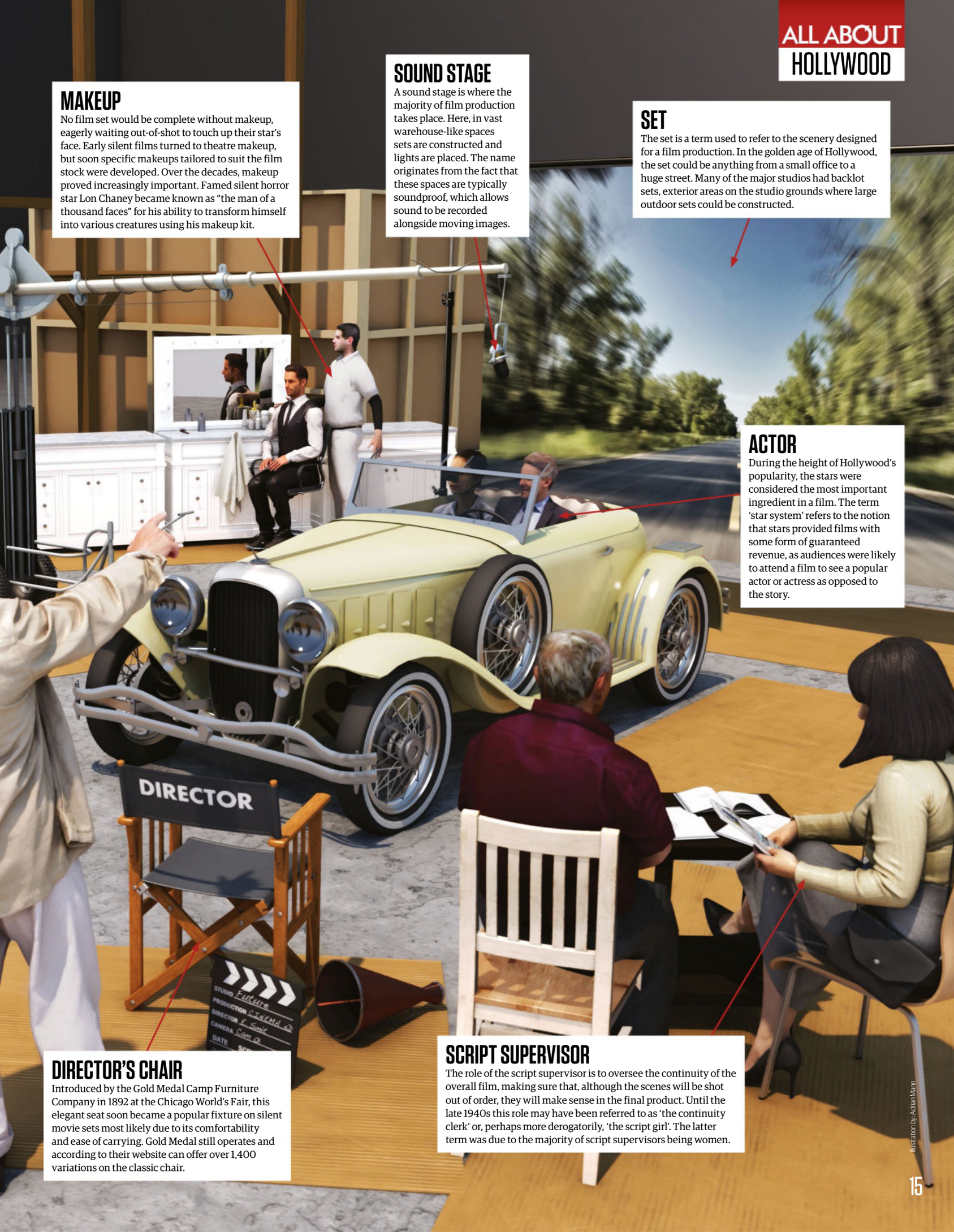
The making of a film is usually split into three distinct phases. 'Pre-production' describes the early stages including everything from scriptwriting to set design, 'Production' usually refers to principal photography, meaning when the majority of the film will be shot, and 'post production' sees the footage edited with music and other effects added. The 'film crew' is the term used to describe everyone working on the production side of filmmaking, from the director to lighting technicians.

LIGHTING TECHNICIAN
The chief lighting technician and electrician works under the Director of Photography. Their role is to make sure that the lighting plan agreed with the DOP and director is carried out. Sometimes referred to as 'The Gaffer', this term originates in the 16th century and is thought to be a contraction of 'godfather'. By the 19th century the term referred to supervisors in working environments, and it is believed this is where it made the transition to the film industry.

CINEMATOGRAPHER
Also known as the Director of Photography (or DOP for short), the role of the cinematographer is to work alongside the director to design the look of the film and is responsible for both the camera and lighting crews. The profession has a rich history, with the American Society of Cinematographers formed in Hollywood in 1919.

CAMERA
Today, films can be shot on anything from an iPhone (2015's *Tangerine*) to Zoom (*Host*, 2020). However, in early Hollywood digital cameras did not exist and film stock had to be used. What was more, cameras were large, bulky devices that could be difficult to move. Films shot in special forms (such as three-strip technicolour or 3D during the 1950s) required special cameras.

DIRECTOR
The director takes creative responsibility for the entire film, creating a mood and style that best suits the script. During the days of the old Hollywood studio system, directors most likely would have had a contract with a studio. Although there are examples of directors exercising personal freedom during this period, they often had to work with actors or writers who were chosen by the studio.



MAKEUP

No film set would be complete without makeup, eagerly waiting out-of-shot to touch up their star's face. Early silent films turned to theatre makeup, but soon specific makeups tailored to suit the film stock were developed. Over the decades, makeup proved increasingly important. Famed silent horror star Lon Chaney became known as "the man of a thousand faces" for his ability to transform himself into various creatures using his makeup kit.

SOUND STAGE

A sound stage is where the majority of film production takes place. Here, in vast warehouse-like spaces sets are constructed and lights are placed. The name originates from the fact that these spaces are typically soundproof, which allows sound to be recorded alongside moving images.

SET

The set is a term used to refer to the scenery designed for a film production. In the golden age of Hollywood, the set could be anything from a small office to a huge street. Many of the major studios had backlot sets, exterior areas on the studio grounds where large outdoor sets could be constructed.

ACTOR

During the height of Hollywood's popularity, the stars were considered the most important ingredient in a film. The term 'star system' refers to the notion that stars provided films with some form of guaranteed revenue, as audiences were likely to attend a film to see a popular actor or actress as opposed to the story.

DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Introduced by the Gold Medal Camp Furniture Company in 1892 at the Chicago World's Fair, this elegant seat soon became a popular fixture on silent movie sets most likely due to its comfortability and ease of carrying. Gold Medal still operates and according to their website can offer over 1,400 variations on the classic chair.

SCRIPT SUPERVISOR

The role of the script supervisor is to oversee the continuity of the overall film, making sure that, although the scenes will be shot out of order, they will make sense in the final product. Until the late 1940s this role may have been referred to as 'the continuity clerk' or, perhaps more derogatorily, 'the script girl'. The latter term was due to the majority of script supervisors being women.

Illustration by Adrian Mann

MAKEUP MAN

United States 1930s – 1940s

VANITY MIRROR

The Hollywood mirror, with its bulbs surrounding the frame, has become associated with the glamour and vanity of early Hollywood. However, the addition of this extra lighting made the makeup artists' job easier, as it fully illuminated the face and allowed them to see clearly.

MAKEUP TOOLS

The makeup artists' tools would often vary depending on the task at hand. For example, when creating the iconic monster makeups, Jack Pierce used everything from cotton and collodion to yak hair. However, for glamour makeups traditional brushes and tools would have been used.

SURGEON'S SMOCK

Universal makeup man Jack Pierce became notorious for wearing a surgeon's smock while completing makeup, though many appeared to wear some form of overall. Pierce became known for his work in creating the celebrated look of Boris Karloff in *Frankenstein* as well as other classic monsters such as The Wolf Man.

GREASEPAINT

Purportedly first used by German actor Carl Baudin to cover up his wig line, greasepaint was commercialised in 1873 by Ludwig Leichner. The substance soon became a go-to for theatrical productions. In 1910, Max Factor created the first variations of greasepaint specifically for use in films.

LIPSTICK KIT

Getting the right colour of ruby red lips was all important for golden-age starlets. A rare glimpse at a 1940s lipstick kit was provided by the 1944 film *Cover Girl*. In one sequence, Rita Hayworth is shown having makeup applied by Columbia's actual makeup man at the time, Clay Campbell.

SPECIAL COSMETICS

A pioneer in creating specialised cosmetics for the movies was makeup genius and cosmetic expert for the Russian court, Max Factor, whose brand is now world famous. In 1929 he received a special Oscar at the inaugural Academy Awards for his services creating cosmetics specifically for use in black and white films.

MALE-DOMINATED

The Hollywood makeup industry during the 1930s and 1940s was incredibly male dominated. Unfortunately, this was true not just of the film industry as a whole but the makeup industry too. One of the first female makeup artists was Dorothy "Dottie" Pondel who during the 1930s purportedly helped popularise Hollywood glamour makeup.

Illustration by Kevin McGivern

Historical Treasures

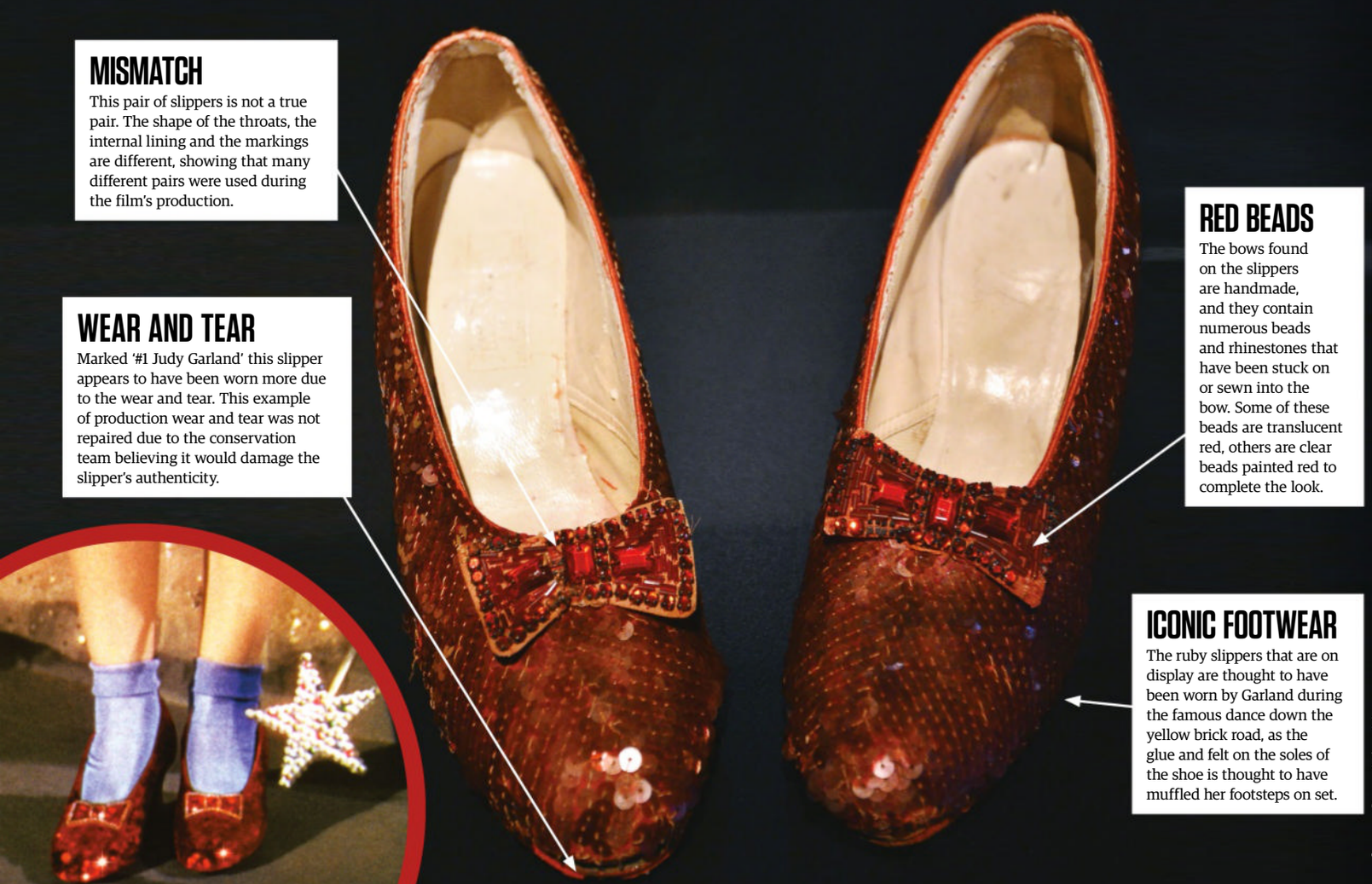
DOROTHY'S RUBY SLIPPERS

"There's No Place Like Home" The slippers that clicked Dorothy back to Kansas from Oz! United States of America, 1939

Designed by Gilbert Adrian, MGM's costume designer, for actress Judy Garland to wear in her role as Dorothy in the 1939 movie, *The Wizard Of Oz*, these ruby slippers are now some of the most treasured pieces of movie history. Originally silver in L Frank Baum's novel, the slippers were changed to a vibrant ruby red for the film as part of MGM's decision to take full advantage of the new Technicolor technology that had hit the film industry in the 1930s. The result of MGM's creative decision was that audiences were wowed and captivated by the film's bright and vibrant colours, particularly as Garland's feet sparkled as she danced down the bright yellow brick road.

To achieve the slippers' now iconic ruby red look, Adrian took a pair of white slippers, dyed them red, painted the soles red, attached a red netting around the outside, and then added around 2,400 red sequins and a bow to make them shine. Due to the importance of these slippers to the movie, and the various uses they had during filming, many pairs were made. The two slippers pictured are actually not a pair that belong together, these two US size 5 slippers are actually part of pairs #1 and #6 made for the film. The other slippers that belong to pairs #1 and #6 are part of the pair that was stolen in 2005 from the Judy Garland Museum, which was recovered in an FBI operation in 2018.

Fast approaching their 85th birthday, these slippers have deteriorated during their life, as they were worn heavily by Garland during production and then left in an MGM warehouse alongside other *Wizard Of Oz* props with little climate control or protection until the 1970s. Upon their discovery, they were handed to the Smithsonian for preservation and put on a display, where they suffered light damage. However, in 2017 the Smithsonian saw that these priceless pieces of movie history were perishing and secured $350,000 of crowdfunding to preserve them. Across 2017 and 2018 the slippers underwent 200 hours of conservation efforts that saw their red sparkle finally return.



MISMATCH

This pair of slippers is not a true pair. The shape of the throats, the internal lining and the markings are different, showing that many different pairs were used during the film's production.

WEAR AND TEAR

Marked '#1 Judy Garland' this slipper appears to have been worn more due to the wear and tear. This example of production wear and tear was not repaired due to the conservation team believing it would damage the slipper's authenticity.

RED BEADS

The bows found on the slippers are handmade, and they contain numerous beads and rhinestones that have been stuck on or sewn into the bow. Some of these beads are translucent red, others are clear beads painted red to complete the look.

ICONIC FOOTWEAR

The ruby slippers that are on display are thought to have been worn by Garland during the famous dance down the yellow brick road, as the glue and felt on the soles of the shoe is thought to have muffled her footsteps on set.

All images © Alamy, © Getty Images

HOLLYWOOD INFLUENCERS

Ten of the most impactful men and women in the evolution of Tinseltown

FRANCES MARION

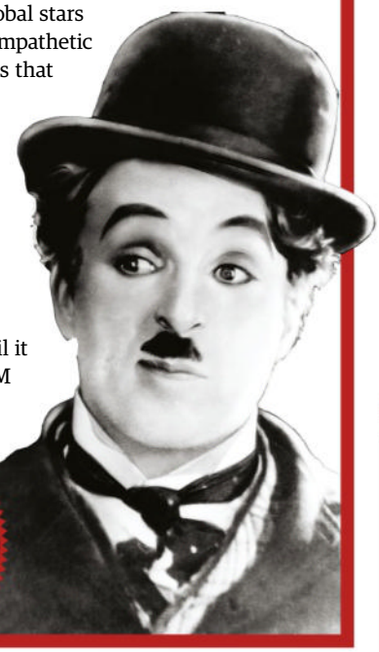
AMERICAN, 1888 – 1973

Having arrived in Hollywood in the silent era when a script could be little more than a handful of scenarios to play out, Marion helped to define the screenwriter role. She started as an actress, but quickly transitioned behind the camera, writing in both the silent and talkie eras for some of the biggest performers of the time. She was a star writer for MGM, credited with some of its great success, eventually making over 300 movies in her career.

Charlie Chaplin

British, 1889 – 1977

One of the most famous names and faces from the silent era of cinema, 'The Little Tramp' helped to transform the comic character archetype of cinema from a sidekick role to the star. In fact, Chaplin was one of the first truly global stars thanks to a string of sympathetic everyman performances that could be enjoyed by everyone. He also changed the business of Hollywood when he co-founded United Artists in 1919 to help produce and distribute his films. They backed independent artists to create their visions until it was bought out by MGM in the 1980s.



Chaplin's re-entry permit to America was revoked in 1952 over accusations he was a communist sympathiser.

Marilyn Monroe

American, 1926 – 1962

There were plenty of Hollywood 'stars' before Marilyn Monroe, but few who could be argued to have been bigger after her. Making her name in the 1950s, Monroe upended traditional images of femininity at the time, becoming a fashion and style icon as well as a box office smash. The way in which she played with and against her sexualised image, often for comic effect, was also trend-setting. The tragic end of her life put Hollywood's treatment of its stars in the spotlight too.

Singer Ella Fitzgerald credited Monroe for her big break, promising a club owner she would attend if Fitzgerald was booked.

SIDNEY POITIER

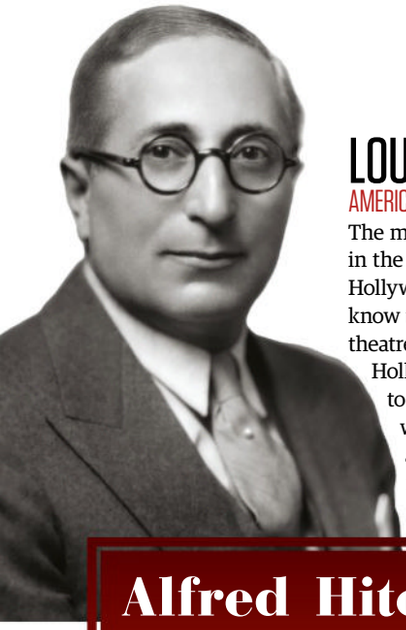
AMERICAN, 1927 – 2022

In 2022 *Variety* described Poitier as the actor who "redefined America". It's a bold statement, but one backed up by a string of films through the late 1950s and into the 60s and 70s that challenged conceptions of race and equality at the height of the Civil Rights movement. Poitier's performances of quiet dignity and gravitas played against stereotypes to create iconic heroes on screen, culminating in an Academy Award win in 1964.

MARY PICKFORD

CANADIAN, 1892 – 1979

Pickford started out as a superstar of the silent era, but that was only the beginning of her impact on cinema. She was a co-founder of United Artists in 1919 alongside Chaplin, giving more power to the creative talents behind Hollywood's success. And then she helped to found the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1927, the body that today is best known for its Oscars ceremony (she also won best actress in its second year).



LOUIS B MAYER

AMERICAN, 1884 – 1957

The most powerful of the studio moguls in the Golden Age, Mayer helped to shape Hollywood as it became the cultural force we know today. He started out owning movie theatres before opening his own studios in Hollywood, then merging with another to form MGM (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer), which he led. He spearheaded the glitz and glamour of films targeted at the masses, promising MGM had "more stars than there are in heaven."

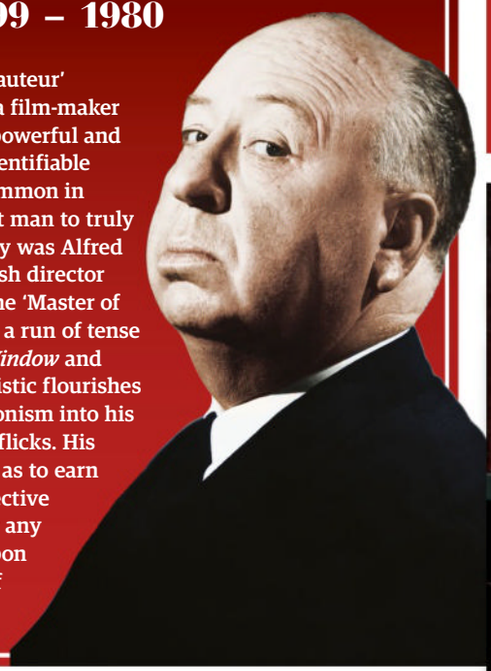
Dorothy Arzner

American, 1897 – 1979

Not a household name today (although few early directors are) Arzner was the only woman directing feature films in Hollywood in the 1930s, credited with 17 films. This unique place in Hollywood history would be remarkable enough, but Arzner was also an innovator. She's credited with being the inventor of the first boom mic, a now ubiquitous way of recording dialogue when filming. She also helped to launch the careers of some of the industry's biggest stars, like Lucille Ball and Katharine Hepburn. She was pivotal to the evolution of Hollywood from the silent to sound eras and an inspiration to many who followed her.

Alfred Hitchcock

British, 1899 – 1980



The concept of the 'auteur' director in cinema, a film-maker whose vision is all-powerful and often comes with identifiable elements, is now common in Hollywood. The first man to truly cement such a legacy was Alfred Hitchcock. The British director became known as the 'Master of Suspense' thanks to a run of tense thrillers like *Rear Window* and *Vertigo*, melding artistic flourishes of German expressionism into his popular Hollywood flicks. His impact was so great as to earn the eponymous adjective of 'Hitchcockian' for any film that touches upon the core elements of his style.

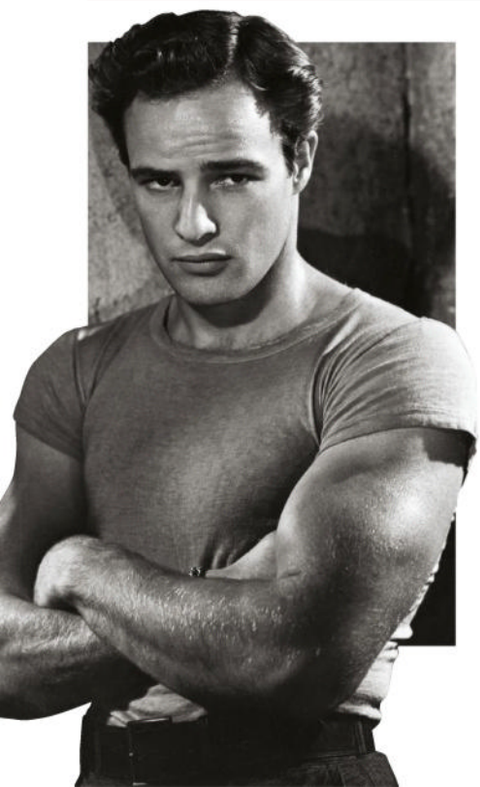
Walt Disney

American, 1901 – 1966

The name Disney today is synonymous with family entertainment and some of the most popular and money-making movies in history, but the man who started it all began as a cartoonist. Achieving some success with a short animation based on *Alice In Wonderland*, Walt started an animation studio in Hollywood with his brother Roy in 1923. From there was born Mickey Mouse and a pantheon of other animal characters as well as the first full-length animated feature film, *Snow White And The Seven Dwarfs* (1937). And that's before we even get into the theme parks.

Despite rumours to the contrary, Walt Disney was not cryogenically frozen after succumbing to cancer in 1966. His remains were cremated.

All images: © Getty Images



MARLON BRANDO

AMERICAN, 1924 – 2004

When it comes to the evolution of acting in Hollywood, one name stands above all others: Marlon Brando. He was one of a number of actors in his generation to study under Stella Adler to become a 'method' actor. Moving to Hollywood having established himself in New York theatres, his grounded performances in films like *A Streetcar Named Desire* were a revelation. The contrast of Brando's gritty, emotional performances against the affected Golden Age style marked a new era of cinema.

Q&A

THE FILM THAT NEARLY TOPPLED HOLLYWOOD

Patrick Humphries explains how *Cleopatra*'s scandal-hit production marked the decline of the old studio system

Does *Cleopatra* act as a pivot between old and new Hollywood?
I think it does. I mean, it's a terrible film, but the backstory is fantastic, which is what really appealed to me. I think Paramount did a drama series about the making of *The Godfather*, and I think they could do one about the making of *Cleopatra* because just the scale of it, even now, it's unbelievable.

Did it really do so much damage that it brought the Hollywood epics of the age to an end?
It's not the one film that sank the studios, but it's certainly one of the first nails in the coffin. Cinema was fighting a rearguard action in the 1950s with television. Why pay to go out when you can stay at home and see movies? So, the way Hollywood fought back is by producing big, spectacular epics in colour, stereo sound. They would be roadshow presentations to try and make it as much of an event as possible. So, there would be two performances a day and you'd get a souvenir programme like going to the theatre. These were big, big productions, which you couldn't possibly expect to see on television. And the biggest of them all was *Cleopatra*.

Patrick Humphries is a civil servant turned journalist, writing for *NME*, *Melody Maker*, *Evening Standard*, *Guardian*, *The Times* and many more. His previous books include *A Little Bit Funny: The Elton John Story*, *Rolling Stones 69* and *With The Beatles*.

BELOW
With an ever-escalating budget, *Cleopatra* led 20th Century Fox to the verge of bankruptcy

What was the landscape *Cleopatra* was developed against?
Hollywood had a good run in the 1950s. They found the *Bible* delivered good box office numbers. There was a series of very successful films during the '50s, *The Robe* (1953), *Demetrius And The Gladiators* (1954), *Quo Vadis* (1951), etc. They were big-budget films that really filled the screen. The biggest of them all, of course, was *Ben-Hur* (1959), which came in at $15 million, which was an awful lot at the time. Now 20th Century Fox, like all of the studios, was struggling. For some inexplicable reason they thought they could do a version of *Cleopatra* based on an earlier version that the studio had done. They needed something big and Elizabeth Taylor was a huge star at the time, and they got in touch with her. Originally it was going to be a $2 million, 60-day shoot with contract player Joan Collins as Cleopatra to be filmed in Hollywood, around Los Angeles, in the deserts around California to replicate Ancient Egypt. That never happened. So, they wanted a big star; Taylor had just won an Oscar, so they told her we want you to play Cleopatra. Apparently she's in the shower and she told her then husband, "tell them I will do it for a million dollars" expecting them to say "no way". Nobody's ever been paid a million dollars for any one film. And they agreed. So, that's when it all started going horribly wrong.

How impactful was the Taylor/Burton relationship to the film's reception?
The original cast was Stephen Boyd, who was coming in hot off of *Ben-Hur*, and Peter Finch to play Caesar. They had other commitments, so they had to

Headshot photo courtesy of: Patrick Humphries

shut it down. The crunch came when the studio had to decide, do they bite the bullet and wipe off what by then would have been about six or seven million dollars, or shut it down and relocate to Rome, because what else could possibly go wrong? Well, they made the decision to go to Rome and that's when the trouble really started because, of course, Richard Burton came on set. He was married to his long-suffering Welsh wife, Sybil, who put up with all manner of indiscretions and betrayals.

TOP
The affair between Taylor and Burton made headlines, but didn't draw enough viewers to cinemas to make back the money spent on the film

ABOVE
Cleopatra's famous entrance into Rome in the film involved 20,000 extras in full costume

And Elizabeth Taylor was married to her fourth husband, Eddie Fisher. When they got together on set in Rome the chemistry was palpable, and that's when the affair started.

Then, of course, the scandal broke and it really was front-page news. It knocked the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Berlin Wall off the front page. As I say in the book, there's one journalist who went to the White House to see President Kennedy, as the Cuban Missile Crisis was building up a head of steam, and he was taken to one side by Jacqueline Kennedy who said, "Do you think Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor will stay together?" The world was spellbound by them.

The film's budget ultimately ballooned to about $44 million, so how did things end?

In fairness to Mankiewicz, he wrote the script screenplay and his vision was always two films. It was going to be Cleopatra and Caesar as one film and then Cleopatra and Mark Antony as the second film. They would then need to show them consecutive nights or release them the next year, or whatever. But the studio was just hemorrhaging money and they needed to get something, anything out to cash in on the Burton/Taylor scandal.

And when it finally opened, the reviews were pretty damning. There's one positive review which was later recanted. It did eventually go into profit, but as one of the 20th Century Fox directors said, "yes, it did go into profit, but it took the studio with it".

How close was *Cleopatra* to being truly disastrous for the future of Hollywood?

Very close indeed. Take $44 million compared to the cost of other films at the time; *A Hard Day's Night*, for example, cost £190,000, and yes, it was in black and white, but the scale of the *Cleopatra* disaster is apparent.

At the end of the book, with regards to *Cleopatra*, I quote Churchill on El Alamein that "it's not the beginning of the end, but it is the end of the beginning". I think of it as the line in the sand. Before that, Hollywood was pretty much unsurpassable and after that, I think it took a very, very bad knocking.

GOLDEN AGE TOURS AND SITES

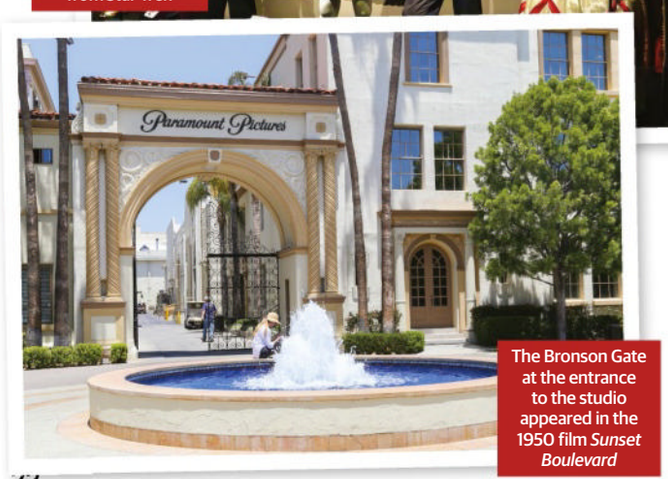
Discover the studios, stars and props that built one of Hollywood's most successful eras

1 PARAMOUNT PICTURES STUDIO TOUR
MELROSE AVENUE, HOLLYWOOD

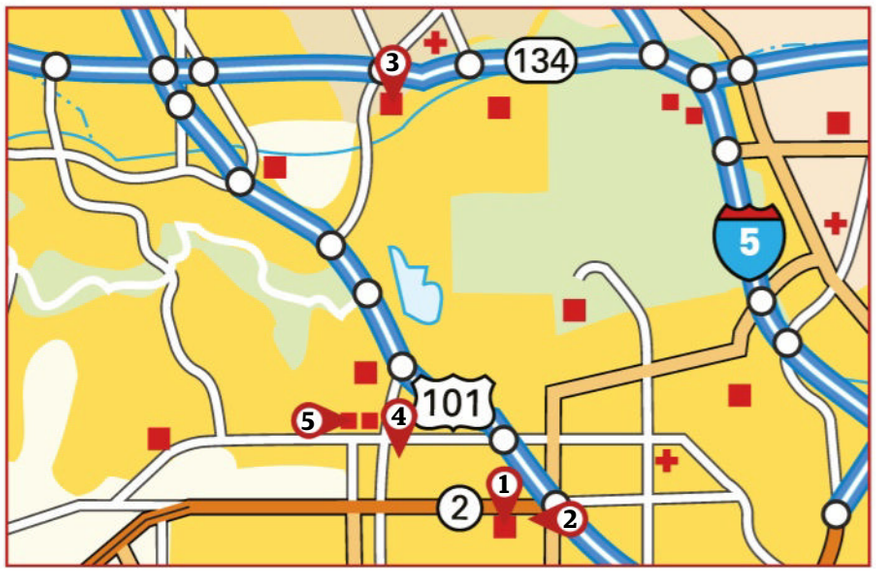
Having been founded in 1912, Paramount Pictures Studio is the longest operating major studio in Hollywood. It was here that classics such as *King Kong*, *Sunset Boulevard* and *Breakfast At Tiffany's* were filmed, as well as later successes like *The Godfather* and *Star Trek*. Films and TV series are still being produced on-site, allowing you to get close to the classics while also learning about how the modern production process works. In the foyer you'll find an array of costumes created by Edith Head, one of Hollywood's most famous designers who won eight Academy Awards for her work. When she became chief designer at Paramount in 1938, she was the first woman ever to lead a design department at a major studio, designing costumes for stars like Grace Kelly and Audrey Hepburn. You can also visit the Prop Warehouse and see famous backlots like the New York Street backlot and the iconic Bronson Gate that appeared in *Sunset Boulevard*.

Open 9:00am to 5:30pm. Entry $65.

Costumes designed by Edith Head appear alongside uniforms from *Star Trek*



The Bronson Gate at the entrance to the studio appeared in the 1950 film *Sunset Boulevard*



2 HOLLYWOOD FOREVER CEMETERY
SANTA MONICA BOULEVARD, LOS ANGELES

Behind Paramount Pictures Studio lies a tranquil expanse of green overlooked by the famous white Hollywood sign on the hillside above. This is Hollywood Forever Cemetery, where many of the greats have found their final resting place and where many tourists flock each year to pay their respects to their favourite stars. The cemetery was founded in 1899 and is beautifully laid out, with light and airy mausoleums like the Judy Garland Pavilion and a large lake surrounded by monuments and statues.

The site is vast, but you can pick up a map from the flower shop by the entrance to help you navigate your way around. Near the centre of the park lies Mel Blanc, the famed *Looney Tunes* voice actor, while Peter Lorre, Mickey Rooney and Rudolph Valentino rest in the Cathedral Mausoleum on the east side. The marble tomb of Douglas Fairbanks lies just outside this, along with a bronze statue of the dog who played Toto in *The Wizard Of Oz*.

Open 8:30am to 5pm. Free entry.

Hattie McDaniel from *Gone With The Wind* was eventually memorialised with a pink cenotaph beside the lake in 1999

A monument to the Cairn Terrier named Terry who played Toto in *The Wizard Of Oz*

Learn about 100 years of Warner Bros. history in their welcome centre

A cart will take you on a tour around backlots spread across 110 acres

3 WARNER BROS. STUDIO: CLASSICS TOUR
WARNER BOULEVARD, BURBANK

Warner Brothers Pictures was founded 100 years ago in 1923 by four brothers named Harry, Albert, Samuel and Jack. The Hollywood studio that you can visit today was managed by Sam and Jack and was responsible for many classics like *The Maltese Falcon*, *Casablanca*, *Rebel Without A Cause* and *My Fair Lady*, along with westerns like *Blazing Saddles* and TV series *Cheyenne*. Fans of the Golden Age of Hollywood can see many of the places where filming took place by taking their three-hour Classics Tour. The welcome centre introduces you to the 100-year history of Warner Bros. Studio before you board a cart to explore the studio's extensive backlots with the help of a studio guide. You'll see the Midwest Street backlot, which has been featured in nearly 400 movies and shows and is where films such as *The Music Man*, *East Of Eden* and *Rebel Without A Cause* were filmed, and you can also see the last remaining exterior set from *Casablanca* on the French Street backlot. Some may wish to pay a trip to the fountain featured in the opening credits of the TV show *Friends* and may also be interested to know that the same fountain appeared in earlier comedies by *The Three Stooges*. Stage 48 includes a self-guided exhibition where you can see costumes and memorabilia from *Casablanca* and *My Fair Lady*, along with sets from modern TV shows like *Friends* and *The Big Bang Theory*.

Open 8:30am to 3:30pm. Entry $70.

The Art Deco style Max Factor building now contains the Hollywood Museum

4 THE HOLLYWOOD MUSEUM
N. HIGHLAND AVE, HOLLYWOOD

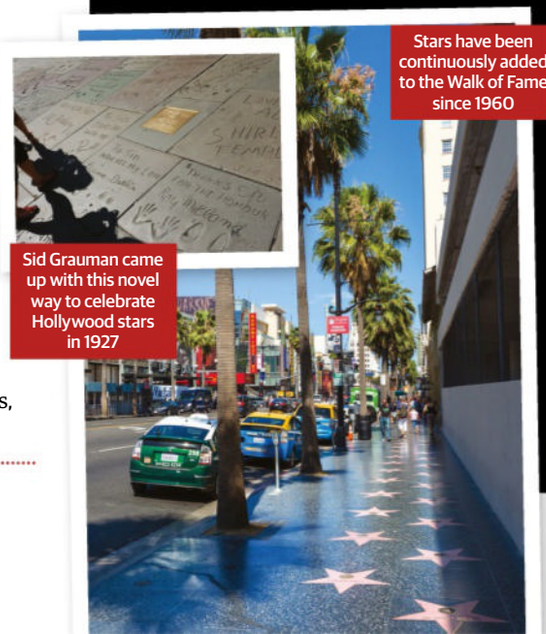
Housed in the historic Max Factor Building, where Hollywood's "make-up king" transformed the looks of stars like Joan Crawford, Bette Davis, Katharine Hepburn and Lucille Ball, is the Hollywood Museum. Purchased by Max Factor in 1928 and opened in 1935, this building became a revered make-up salon and attracted a host of aspiring film stars looking to create a glamorous on-screen look. The building has been renovated in its original Art Deco style and you can visit several of Max Factor's restored make-up rooms today, which include some of their original displays and details about the techniques used. It also now contains the largest collection of Hollywood memorabilia in the world, featuring over 10,000 authentic objects displayed across more than 35,000 square feet of exhibition space. There are hundreds of costumes on display, including Marilyn Monroe's million-dollar dress, costumes worn by Shirley Temple, and Dorothy Gale's ruby slippers. You can also see cars like Cary Grant's Rolls-Royce, along with a range of props, photographs, scripts, and the earliest Technicolor film ever shot.

Open Wednesday to Sunday, 10am-5pm. Entry $15.

5 HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD
HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD, LA

Head for a walk along Hollywood Boulevard and you can discover two world-famous Hollywood sites in one go: the stars that make up the Walk of Fame and the forecourt of Grauman's Chinese Theatre. Based on an idea initially devised by EM Stuart in 1953, the Walk of Fame has become an iconic symbol of Hollywood, with stars in the colours of coral and gold lining the pavement, each dedicated to a key figure from the entertainment industry. Beginning with silent film actors like Olive Borden, Ronald Colman and Louise Fazenda, the stars are still being added to with around 24 ceremonies taking place each year and more than 2,700 stars installed so far. In an earlier tradition, the forecourt of Grauman's Chinese Theatre at 6925 Hollywood Boulevard is scattered with signatures and imprints set down in cement by various different stars. The idea came to theatre owner Sid Grauman when silent film star Norma Talmadge visited in 1927 and accidentally stepped in the new theatre's drying cement. Since then, many of Hollywood's greatest stars have been memorialised here and the ceremonies have been used as an opportunity to promote upcoming films. Most slabs include handprints and footprints with an accompanying name signed in the cement, but some stars have left more unusual imprints, such as Betty Grable's leg, John Barrymore's face, George Burns' cigar, and Marilyn Monroe's earring.

Open 24 hours. Free entry.



Stars have been continuously added to the Walk of Fame since 1960

Sid Grauman came up with this novel way to celebrate Hollywood stars in 1927

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FRIDA KAHLO

How this icon of art survived near-death to become a revolutionary figure

Written by Arisa Loomba

Frida Kahlo was one of the most important artists of the 20th century, and her popularity continues to grow. She is the subject of blockbuster exhibitions across the world, her work sells at record-breaking prices, and in almost every museum shop you are likely to find an item of merchandise with her striking face on it. Her raw, intimate and fearless artworks and her life story, marked by disability and a dramatic love life, keep resonating with new audiences. A rebel of her time, she transgressed normative rules about gender, sexuality and artistic genius. Today she is a role model for the feminist movement, LGBTQ+ community, the Chicano Movement, among others.

MAKING OF AN ARTIST

Kahlo was born Magdalena Carmen Frieda Kahlo y Calderon in 1907 to a Hungarian-German Jewish photographer Guillermo (originally Wilhelm before immigrating to Mexico), and mestiza (Spanish and Purépecha) Matilde Calderón de Kahlo. She grew up in the family home Casa Azul (The Blue House) in Coyoacán in Mexico City.

Although her father was a respectable photographer and was part of the intellectual bohemian milieu in Mexico City, it was not on the cards that the young Frida was likely to become an artistic icon, creating over 200 artworks. At the age of six, Frida contracted polio, which damaged her right leg leaving it shorter and thinner than her left. As she continued to grow, the damage created an imbalance in her pelvis and a curvature of her spine. At the age of 15, Frida Kahlo was one of 35 girls out of 2,000 students who were accepted to the very prestigious Escuela Nacional Preparatoria with the plan to study medicine.

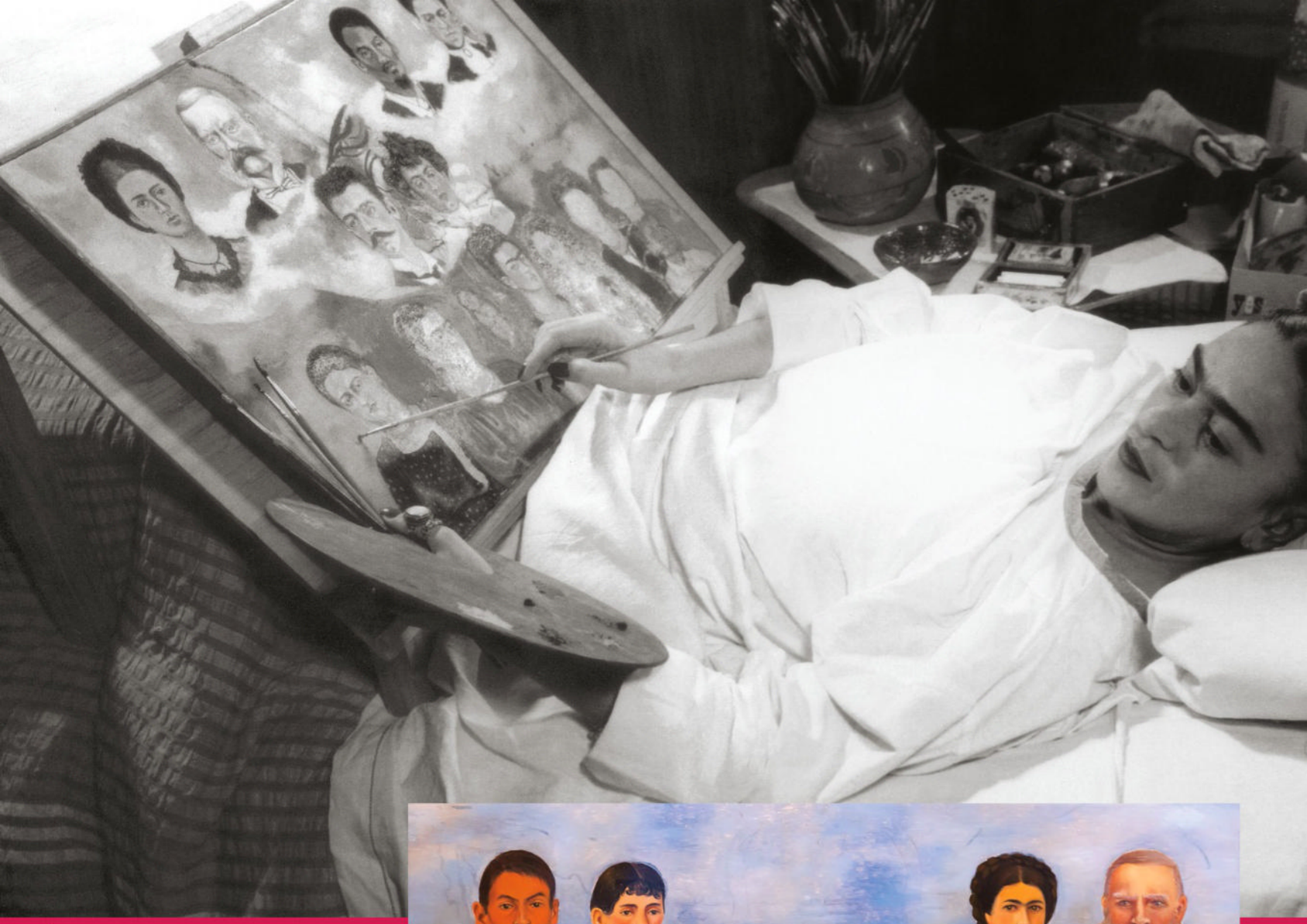
Only three years later, she was part of a near-fatal bus accident on her way home from school – a tramcar drove into the bus, where she was a

Illustration by Joe Cummings

passenger. An iron handrail pierced her left hip and exited through her pelvic outlet. Her clavicle, ribs, spine, elbow and leg were severely fractured and her ankles and shoulders were dislocated. She was not expected to survive, but she did.

However, her dream of becoming a doctor was crushed. While recovering from her many injuries in bed, Frida started to paint. She recalls telling her mother, "I'm still alive and besides I have something to live for, and that something is painting." Unable to move, her mother fixed an easel and a mirror to the canopy of her bed and she painted with her right arm while white straps around her chin and head pulled her towards the bed frame. This make-do setup was the unusual beginning of her career as an artist.

During the 1930s Kahlo continued to paint more and more. In 1938 she had the first one-woman show at the prestigious Julien Levy Gallery on New York's elegant 57th Street. The exhibition showcased 25 paintings. Alongside her artistic career, she underwent at least 30 orthopaedic and other operations, with most of them being unsuccessful and for periods encased in metal or plaster corsets over the course



TOP Photograph of Frida Kahlo as she paints at her easel in bed

ABOVE *My Grandparents, My Parents, and I (Family Tree),* 1936

TOP-RIGHT Frida Kahlo (right) and sisters photographed by their father Guillermo Kahlo in 1916

ABOVE-RIGHT Frida's parents, Guillermo Kahlo and Matilde Calderón

FRIDA'S CASA AZUL

The blue home of Kahlo and Rivera is now a museum

The Frida Kahlo Museum, also known as Casa Azul, is a museum dedicated to the life and work of Kahlo. It was here where Kahlo grew up, lived occasionally with her husband and later died, and has since been made a public museum welcoming about 25,000 visitors monthly, making it one of the most popular museums in Mexico. Originally built in 1904, the strikingly cobalt blue corner house is built around a central garden courtyard and located in the area of Colonia del Carmen, which became popular among intellectuals and bohemians in the 1920s. Walking through the different rooms of the museum is a rich journey through Kahlo's life. The Artist's Bedroom is a particularly intimate room: here you find Kahlo's bed with the mirror that Kahlo's mother installed when Kahlo was bedridden after her bus accident, the very beginning of her artistic career. Each room adds to the layer of who Kahlo was, her inspirations, her clothes and experiences. Don't miss the family kitchen, where you can find Kahlo's recipe for mole sauce on the wall.

"WHILE RECOVERING FROM HER MANY INJURIES IN BED, FRIDA STARTED TO PAINT"

of her life. Despite her suffering, she continued to work as an artist and kept an energetic and admirable determination for the rest of her life.

Her relationship to her body and everything it had gone through was the subject of multiple self-portraits. One of the most poignant is *The Broken Column* (1944, oil on Masonite). Completed shortly after a spinal surgery 20 years after the bus crash, she paints herself as pierced through with nails all over her naked body. She depicts her spine as a broken column only held together by bandages across her body. She stares right back at the viewer as she cries big white rain drops of tears, unafraid to show the harrowing chronic pain that she had to endure all her life.

DIEGO RIVERA

"I have suffered two serious accidents in my life. One in which a streetcar ran over me... The other accident is Diego." Such was Kahlo's own assessment of her tumultuous relationship with her husband and fellow artist Diego Rivera.

Kahlo first became well-known in the art world through her marriage to the famous Mexican painter and muralist Rivera, who was 20 years her senior. John Launer calls Kahlo and Rivero among the earliest media celebrities: their love story and marriage was intriguing for their contemporaries and has still remained a topic of interest.

Meeting through the Mexican Communist Party, the couple married a year later in 1929 and divorced in 1940, then married again that same year. In Kahlo's first letter to Rivera in her diary, she writes "'I'd like to paint you, but there are no colors, because there are so many, in my confusion, the tangible form of my great love." Two years after their wedding, the patron and friend of Rivera, Albert M Bender commissioned Kahlo to paint the couple's wedding. It became the oil on canvas *Frieda And Diego Rivera* (1931),

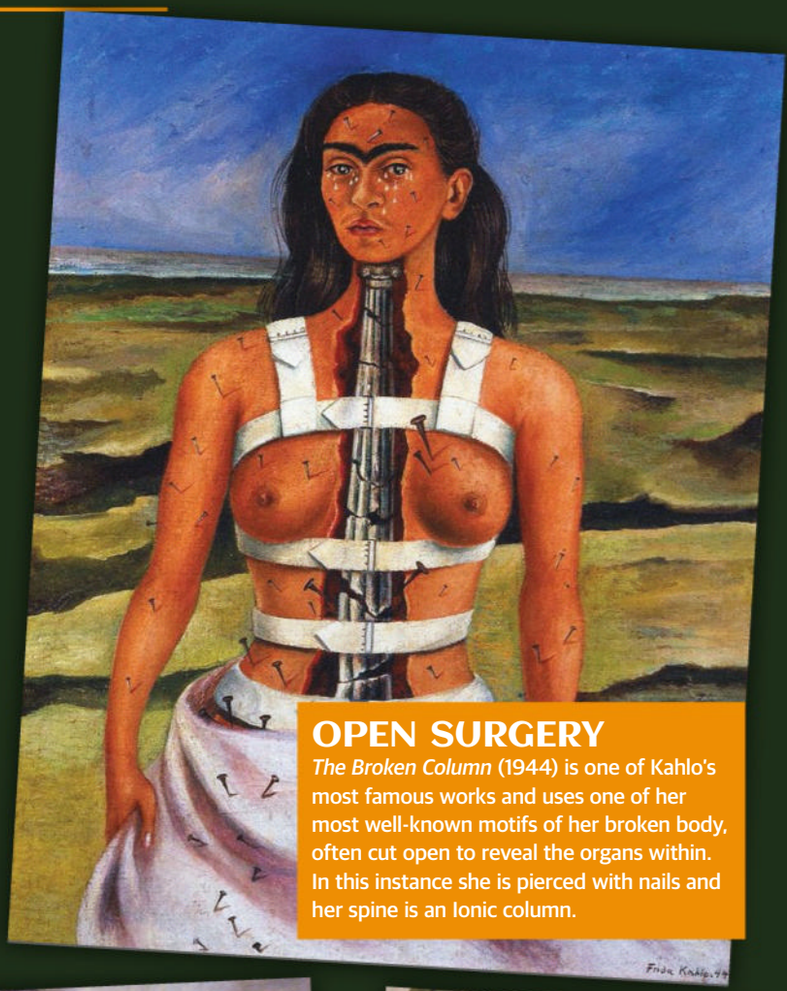
LEFT An early self-portrait from 1926, depicting Kahlo wearing a velvet dress

SYMBOLISM OF KAHLO

Her paintings were always packed with meaning and history

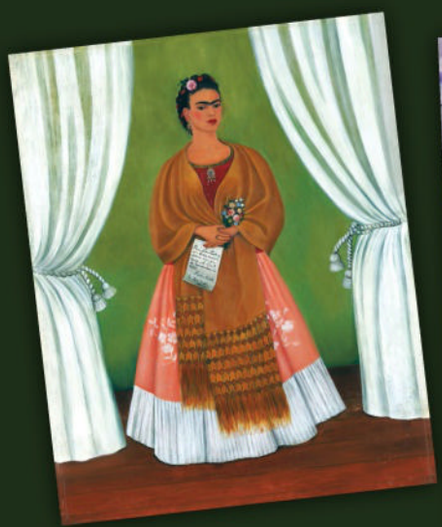
HEALTH

Marxism Will Give Health To The Ill (1954) is one of Kahlo's more directly political works. The symbols of her ill health, her crutches and leather corset were common in her self-portraits, here being cast away.



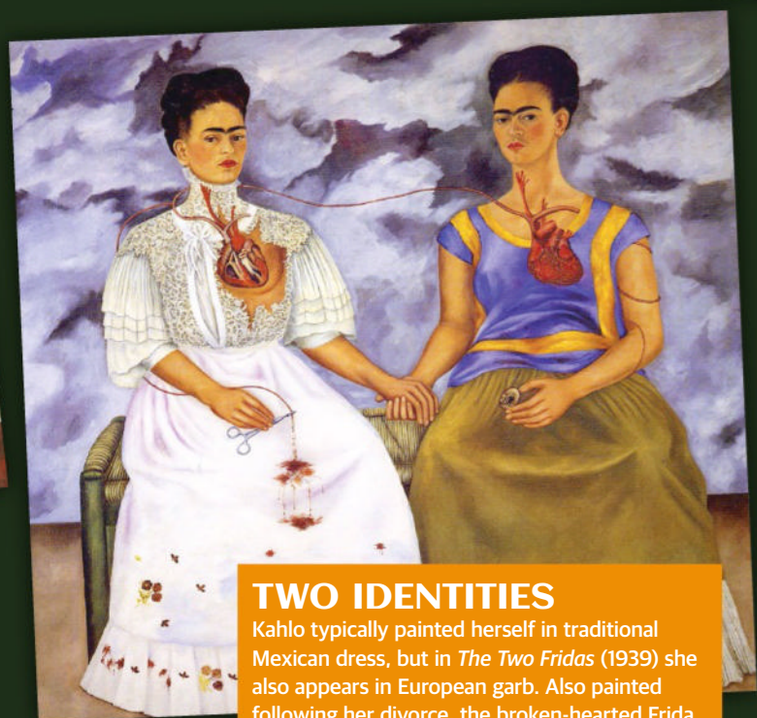
OPEN SURGERY

The Broken Column (1944) is one of Kahlo's most famous works and uses one of her most well-known motifs of her broken body, often cut open to reveal the organs within. In this instance she is pierced with nails and her spine is an Ionic column.



RELIGIOUS IMAGERY

This painting, *Self-Portrait Dedicated To Leon Trotsky* (1937), depicts Kahlo on a stage. This is a reference to a popular form of devotional images in Mexico at the time called retablos, which Kahlo collected.

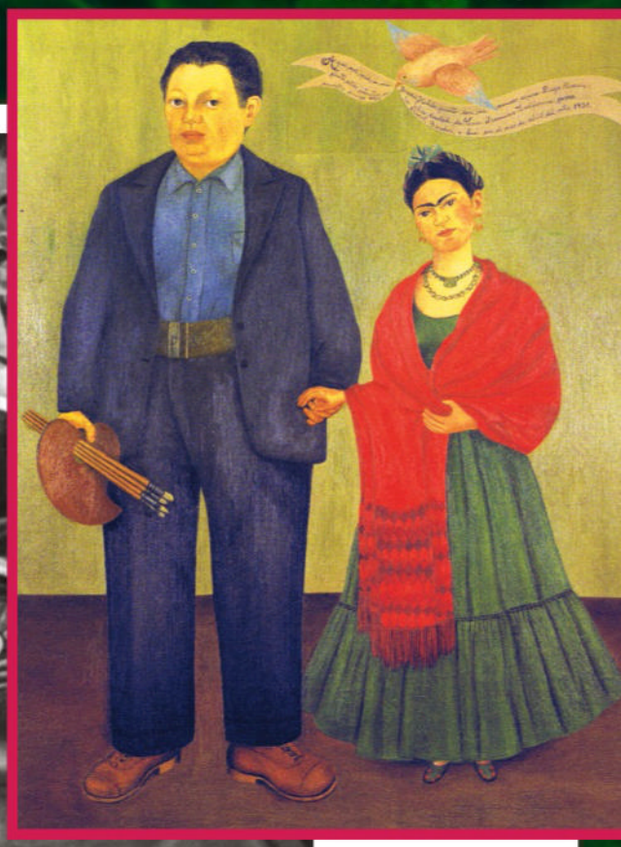


TWO IDENTITIES

Kahlo typically painted herself in traditional Mexican dress, but in *The Two Fridas* (1939) she also appears in European garb. Also painted following her divorce, the broken-hearted Frida is from the old world and the Mexican Frida, while bearing her heart, remains whole.

MONKEYS

Painted after her divorce from Rivera in 1940, *Self-Portrait With Thorn Necklace And Hummingbird* includes a monkey, very common in her art. She and Rivera kept monkeys as pets, thought to be surrogates for the children they were unable to have.



ABOVE *Frieda And Diego Rivera* (1931), a wedding portrait commissioned by Albert Bender

LEFT Kahlo stands next to her famous 1939 oil painting *The Two Fridas*

ABOVE Frida Kahlo's prosthetic leg, a red leather boot with embroidery and self-tied bells on it

which depicts the two holding hands in the centre of the painting. She paints Rivera as *the* artist with his free hand carrying his palette and paint brushes while she leans into him. The bird seen flying above them is carrying a banner that reads "Here you see us, me Frieda Kahlo, with my dearest husband Diego Rivera. I painted these pictures in the delightful city of San Francisco California for our companion Mr. Albert Bender, and it was in the month of April of the year 1931," positioning herself as the maker and wife of Rivera, with the two not being mutually exclusive.

The wedding bliss between the two artists did not continue. During their marriage, both Kahlo and Rivera had several extramarital affairs; he had an affair with her sister Cristina and the American actress Paulette Goddard, and she took Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky as her lover. In the self-portrait, *Diego And I* (1949), Kahlo renders the deep sadness she felt when Rivera almost asked for a divorce: her dark hair flows around her neck, suggestive of strangulation, and she cries big tears. Above her eyebrows sits a portrait of Rivera, always on her mind, ever-present, even when he puts her through agony. In 2021, this painting was sold for $34.9m at Sotheby's New York, making it the highest priced art piece by a Latin American artist ever sold at auction. It was bought by Eduardo F Costantini, who planned to exhibit it at the Latin American Art Museum of Buenos Aires (known as MALBA).

"DURING THEIR MARRIAGE, BOTH KAHLO AND RIVERA HAD SEVERAL EXTRAMARITAL AFFAIRS"

Frida Kahlo had several miscarriages during their marriage, one which she represents in the painting *Henry Ford Hospital* (1932), created during Kahlo and Rivera's three-year long stay in the United States. In a gut-wrenching painting, she depicts herself lying alone and naked in a floating hospital bed and delivers a dead male foetus, with the still Detroit city skyline featured behind her in an otherwise claustrophobic pictorial space. Kahlo's honest depiction of pregnancy loss is a powerful one: it not only shows the bodily process, it also illustrates the grief and loneliness. The couple inspired each other's art despite their troubles when they were together.

KAHLO'S COMMUNISM

From as early as her school days, Kahlo was active in political movements that overtly supported a global communist revolution, beginning what would be a lifelong commitment to radical revolution. She changed her birthday, informing her friends that she was in fact born in 1910, coinciding with the year the Mexican Revolution took off. At school, she joined the 'Los Cachuchas', a radical group who read and debated revolutionary Marxist works and Russian and Mexican literature. Kahlo viewed herself as a 'daughter of the Mexican revolution'.

By the age of 16, she had joined the youth group of the Mexican Communist Party, and believed strongly

"KAHLO AND RIVERA WELCOMED TROTSKY AND HIS WIFE TO THE CASA AZUL, NOW EQUIPPED WITH GUARDS, ALARMS AND BARRICADES"

in socialism and Marxist-Leninism. She remained an active member of the Communist Party, giving speeches, leading rallies, and attending meetings. She campaigned against the Cold War and US foreign policy in Latin America and beyond, for nuclear disarmament and a multitude of other global causes throughout her life; even with ailing health in her final days. She was last seen, 11 days before her death, attending a rally in solidarity with Guatemala, which experienced a CIA-led invasion to overthrow its president, who had supported the Guatemalan people's right to land taken over by US corporations.

She saw much of the purpose of her art as being able to carry her political message. During her last years, Frida wrote in her diary, "I must struggle with all my strength to contribute the few positive things my health allows to the Revolution, the only real reason to live."

From 1930 to 1933, Frida had lived in the United States, which she dubbed "Gringolandia". With Rivera, she lived in San Francisco, Detroit and New York City, while the country suffered through the Great Depression. Here, she wrote back home to Mexico, "High society here turns me off and I feel a bit of rage against all these rich guys here, since I have seen thousands of people in the most terrible misery, without anything to eat and with no place to sleep, that is what most impressed me here, it is terrifying to see the rich having parties day and night while thousands of people are dying of hunger."

BELOW Photograph of Frida Kahlo and her husband Diego Rivera from 1932

BOTTOM *Henry Ford Hospital*, 1932, a depiction of the pain of pregnancy loss

Kahlo entered into a romantic liaison with the Russian revolutionary Leon Trotsky in 1937. She was 29, and he 57. Kahlo and Rivera saw Trotsky as a hero of the 1917 October Uprising in Russia. But with the split of the Communist Party into Stalinists and Trotskyites, Trotsky was exiled in 1929 (Rivera was also expelled and Kahlo quit the Communist Party in solidarity), and eventually sought refuge in Mexico with the help of pressure on the Mexican government by Kahlo.

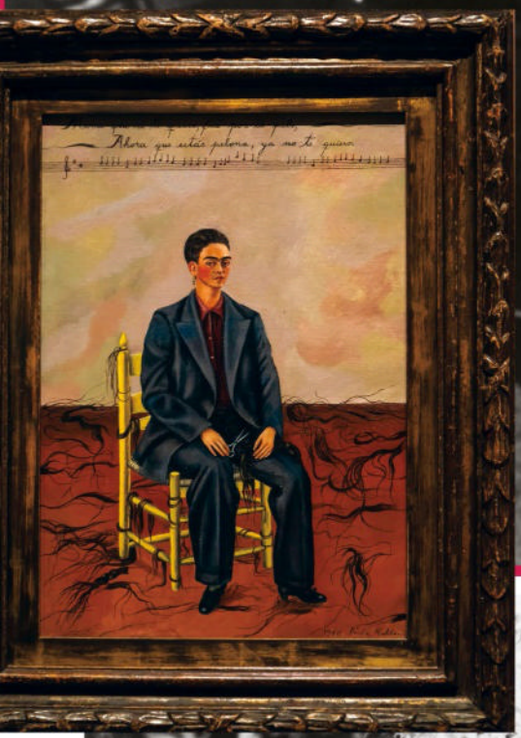
Kahlo and Rivera welcomed Trotsky and his wife to the Casa Azul, now equipped with guards, alarms and barricades. It was here that Kahlo and Trotsky's affair took place for some months. It did not last, but they remained friends in life and politics, and a sensual self-portrait she dedicated to him in 1937 remains a lasting memento of that period. In 1940, now staying in Mexico City, Trotsky was murdered in his bed with an ice-pick. Kahlo was briefly arrested and suspected to be an accomplice in his murder, although the culprit was later identified as Ramón Mercader, a Spanish communist accused of being an agent of Stalin's NKVD.

At Frida Kahlo's funeral, the Communist Party's flag was draped over her coffin, attesting to its personal importance to her. However, she would not live to see the rise of figures such as Che Guevara and Raul and Fidel Castro, and the dawn of the socialist revolution in Mexico that was soon to come.

A MEXICAN ICON

2004 was a memorable year for scholars and fans of Kahlo as an intimate collection of her belongings was revealed. For 50 years, it had been locked away in Kahlo's bathroom in Casa Azul following the wishes of her husband and his friend and patron Dolores Olmedo. The director of the Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera Anahuacalli Museums, Hilda Trujillo, said of the moment that they started to open the doors to this personal archive, "it was very slow, because we didn't know what was there, but we knew what we were doing was important and we didn't want to waste a minute."

The museum started sorting and cataloguing objects and did not reveal the existence of the collection to the public for another three years. The collection was seen for the first time outside of Mexico in 2018, when the V&A in London was loaned more than 200 of the objects for the exhibition Frida Kahlo: Making Her Self Up (June-November 2018). On display was, among many other things, Frida's prosthetic leg with a leather boot, a plaster



ABOVE Kahlo and Rivera were both supporters of Russian communist revolutionary Leon Trotsky

INSET *Self-Portrait With Cropped Hair*, 1940, painted not long after Frida and Diego's divorce

LEFT Kahlo's posthumous reputation has continued to grow, resulting in what has been dubbed 'Fridamania'

corset, jewellery pieces and makeup (she was fond of Revlon's red lipstick 'Everything's Rosy'), all juxtaposed next to photographs of Kahlo and paintings by her. The exhibition also showcased the artist's collection of indigenous dress, which she wore often, both in real life and in paintings. It included the rebozos (fringed shawls), embroidered huipiles (square-cut tops), enaguas (skirts) and holanes (flounces).

Her commitment to celebrating all things Mexican and Mexico did not end at her wardrobe. Rivera and Kahlo re-planted their garden so that it would only grow plants native to Mexico, such as succulents. And then there was, of course, her art. Aztec symbolism abounded in Kahlo's work.

The goddess figure of the Coatlicue, a serpent-skirted goddess adorned with a necklace of skulls upon a severed neck, was a favourite motif. Skeletons and hearts are also common in her work. Janice Helland argues that these are important symbols both in ancient Aztec art, but also in Kahlo's ▶

FRIDAMANIA

Ironically, capitalism loves the communist icon Frida Kahlo

After her death, Kahlo would only gain in popularity. Today you can buy cups, bags and tea towels sporting her well-known but anti-establishment visage. These are now widely marketed images, printed as they are on T-shirts and posters; they have become the subject of memes, and a modern classic inspiration for fancy-dress parties. You will find her face as emojis and Snapchat filters, and even adorning the packaging of sanitary towels or a credit card. Her suffering, and depictions of sorrow, pain and grief make her an easy heroine, an obvious candidate for the rare status of "great female artist". Triumphing against continual hardship, Kahlo has become a global symbol of resilience against a host of grievances with the modern world. She is seen as a feminist hero, a queer icon, a longing mother-to-be, a skilled and clever subverter of gender norms and roles. She speaks for the elite and the under-privileged alike. As a Mexican who championed indigenous imagery and a deep connection to a struggling nation, she can be seen as a voice for the voiceless.

Some Fridamaniacs argue ardently that Kahlo would have wanted her name, face and message to be seen and known by the world. Others believe that the capitalist exploitation of her work into cheaply reproduced commodities and convenient souvenirs represents a watering down, or even a total misunderstanding of Kahlo's tireless commitment to her politics, particularly her active involvement in the communist movement: a politics that might not be supported by all who flaunt Frida on a tote bag, should they fully delve into it. Many have claimed that her use of indigenous Mexican imagery is seductive, exotic and enticing, but not for the right reasons. By painting herself over and over again, in what some call an act of narcissism or self-obsession, Kahlo herself cemented her striking face but, ironically, few truly care to understand her ideology, her nuances or her contradictions.

evocation of 'Mexicanidad' in her work. Mexicanidad was a form of romantic nationalism that, in the aftermath of the Mexican Revolution, focused upon traditional art and artefacts uniting all indigenous nations of Mexico, in a rejection of old forms of 'being Mexican', and in search of new ones in such a racially diverse and ethnically mixed nation. It revered Aztec traditions above other pre-Columbian cultures such as the Mayan, Toltec and others, creating a simple and uniform image of an independent Mexican nation connected to the indigenous empires of its past.

But the Aztecs were not the only indigenous group that inspired Kahlo. She was also enchanted by the traditional Tehuana dress of the Zapotec women, from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. She had no family or ancestral links to this region or

"TO KAHLO, HER DRESS WAS A POWERFUL WAY TO AFFIRM HER MIXED-RACE HERITAGE AND MEXICAN PRIDE"

people, but claimed to find their dress the most beautiful of all native dress forms. Helland believes that part of the appeal was because of the Zapotec's matriarchal society, and so for Kahlo, Zapotec women represented an attractive ideal of freedom, leadership and economic independence that she perhaps sought to embody.

To Kahlo, her dress was a powerful way to affirm her mixed-race heritage and Mexican pride, something that she is often celebrated for. However, Joanna García Cherán wrote in a 2021 article *An Indigenous Perspective On Frida Kahlo* that the 'nationalism' that Kahlo promoted both in her art and personal style perpetuate the "construction of a mythologized Indianness at the expense of indigenous people." She responds to how Frida Kahlo was part of the *Indigenismo* movement, which unfolded in Mexico and the Andean region in the early 20th century and celebrated indigenous art and cultural traditions, but without the contribution from indigenous groups.

Cherán explains that *Indigenismo* became a cultural ideology that was articulated by the Mexican white and mestizo (Spanish and indigenous mixed race) elite, pushing to create

ABOVE *The Wounded Deer,* 1946, a vision of Kahlo's injuries and ailing health

LEFT Visitors looking at the displayed works in the Frida Kahlo Retrospective in the Martin-Gropius-Bau in 2010

BELOW Exhibition display of Frida Kahlo's clothes at Museo Frida Kahlo

RIGHT Frida Kahlo's casket is draped in a communist flag at her funeral

a "new prototypical Mexican Indian and homogenizing the many distinct indigenous cultures." Within this sat the Mexicanidad movement that Kahlo espoused, and of which Rivera was a leading proponent as well. It was a nationalistic, inward-looking idea, but that was in line with an emerging trend in the wider region.

In this sense, the movement sought to both create a colour-blind nation in which all people are equally mestizo despite the specificities of one's genetic, cultural and ethnic makeup, while also, according to historian Mary Kay Vaughan, creating "the browning of the nation" away from whiteness and Spanishness. Cherán writes, "Unsurprisingly, indigenous people were denied an active role in the conception and execution of this new ideology. It is through these historical conditions and cultural frameworks that Kahlo's legacy needs reckoning."

Kahlo's privilege and distance from the realities of living life as an indigenous person means, according to Cherán, that we should rethink her "active participation in the construction of 'Indianness'," through her clothing and her display of pre-Hispanic artefacts, which all contributed to further Kahlo's status as an artist. Cherán asks for there to be more inclusive conversations about Kahlo that allow for indigenous voices to have their say on her legacy.

AN EARLY END

Frida Kahlo died in 1954, shortly after attending a socialist rally against the US's actions in Guatemala. She arrived in a wheelchair suffering from pneumonia and an addiction to painkillers and alcohol that ravaged her body, not to mention prohibiting her ability to paint. It remains unknown whether her untimely death, at just 47, was due to the pneumonia, or if she took her own life, possibly with the help of Rivera. In March 2023, the BBC documentary *Becoming Frida Kahlo* featured an interview with Rivera's grandson, Juan Rafael Coronel Rivera, in which he claimed that Rivera probably assisted in ending Kahlo's life in an act of love because she was in such excruciating pain in her final days.

Though still young, she had defied the odds of her terrible teenage injuries by living, and resisting, until middle age. While she was much-discussed in feminist art circles and saw her pieces auctioned for reasonable sums, her work and name diminished in the mainstream art world for 30 years, until a biography was published in 1983 by Hayden Herrera. From here, she quickly gained popularity once more, adorning buses in New York City by 1991.

Her unplucked moustache and unibrow now a symbol of thwarting beauty standards for women, her paintings on metal sheets rather than canvas in the style of Mexican street artists, and her novel juxtaposing in her art of contemporary Mexican imagery with historical designs native to Central America, it is possible to see Kahlo representing something in everyone. Today, her legacy endures as an inspirational source of resilience and rebellion against the mental, physical and societal shackles that confined her, and those of the people she stood up for.

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The Khanat

Learn how this Turkic state, the last remnants of the Mongol empire, survived for nearly 350 years and its impact today

Written by Jem Duducu

Sometimes, when you look at a map showing populations, there are groups that don't seem to belong. The Crimean Tatars are an example of this. If the average person knows anything about them, they might link them correctly to Attila the Hun/Genghis Khan and incorrectly to Steak Tartare. This group is a proud remnant from an amazing period in world history, but it is also the victim of slanderous, sometimes murderous, fabrication. So, how did the nomadic Tatars end up in Crimea?

The Eurasian Steppe is a gigantic part of the world's land mass. Starting on the Pacific coast of China, it stretches across all of Asia and on into Europe, embracing the Crimean Peninsula along the way and ending, some 8,000km later, at the Danube River in modern-day Hungary. It is an important grassland biome, punctuated by mountain ranges and deserts, but in essence, if you were to travel west from the Pacific to Hungary, there are no impassible cliff faces or canyons; it's a clear route all the way. This ease of access and the plentiful supply of animal feed meant that the steppe acted as a natural path for migration as far back as the Palaeolithic Period, when early groups found ways to harness the land that led to a nomadic lifestyle where yurts, yaks and horses were the order of the day.

The horsemen of the Eurasian Steppe were virtually born in the saddle, but it was the invention of the stirrup that

e of Crimea

EXPERT BIO

JEM DUDUCU

Jem Duducu is a historian and the author of *The Sultans: The Rise And Fall Of The Ottoman Rulers And Their World* among several books. He is also the host of the podcast *Condensed Histories: The History Hidden Inside Popular Culture!*

enabled the rider not only to stay on more easily, but also allowed him to free his hands from the reins so that he could wield a weapon or even use a bow. Using a horse as a weapon's platform made them, at the time, the best cavalry in the world. This one, seemingly simple innovation made the old war chariot completely obsolete because a mounted archer was more effective in every measurable way. It should therefore come as no surprise that the stirrup was rapidly adopted by all horse cultures across the central and eastern Eurasian Steppe centuries before Europe knew of its existence.

Quite simply, horses were vital to steppe culture not only for travel, but also as beasts of burden, as a source of food (both meat and milk) and as weapons of war. Steppe horses were relatively small compared to most European breeds, and they had longer manes, which were useful in the bitterly cold winters but meant they were slower over distance than their European counterparts. Because a horse's spirit was thought to reside in its mane, a thick, long, flowing mane was seen as the sign of a healthy animal. While horses were highly regarded, with folk stories and even epic oral poems about them, they were not treated the same as horses in Europe. All the grooming and fussing and brushing of coats that happens in the West did not happen on the steppe, where horses were allowed to roam free and graze at will, and where they were a sign of wealth, with a family's status measured in the number of horses they owned. And again, unlike European horses, steppe horses did not have names. To differentiate the hundreds or even thousands of horses, families would refer to them by their colour and markings.

> "The original Tatars were a group in the far eastern part of the steppe that clashed with the Mongol chieftains"

The peoples of the steppe had many names throughout their thousand years of migration and conquest: they were the Huns, Kipchaks, Avars, Magyars, Cumans, Seljuk Turks, Tatars and Mongols (there are more). The original Tatars were a group in the far eastern part of the steppe that clashed with the Mongol chieftains. They had a common culture, shamanistic religion, way of life and way to wage war. Their nomadic life marked them out and was substantially different to the lives of sedentary populations. The family home was a yurt, a sturdy felt tent that could be broken down and packed away within hours, which enabled the family to make its way across the steppe as it followed the grazing herds. Livestock consisted of horses and cattle but sometimes included sheep and goats as well. The steppe was so vast, with an infinite amount of grass to feed the livestock, that it was far simpler to follow the herd than to erect fences and build barns to store hay.

Tribes consisted of extended families because it was essential throughout this era to be part of a group. Since a lone individual stood no chance of survival on the steppe, one of the most feared punishments was exile. While family ties were strong, this led to a lack of trust between disparate groups. Violence and theft of livestock could happen at any time, and blood feuds could last generations. But familial connections enabled marriages with people from other tribes, something that was encouraged. This gave the groups opportunities to meet with others, share news and arrange

ABOVE-LEFT The Mongols laying siege to Vladimir, about 200km east of Moscow, in 1238

ABOVE-MIDDLE The destruction of Vladimir as depicted in the Church of Saint John Chrysostom, Yaroslavl

ABOVE-RIGHT About 40,000 Crimean Tatars arrived at the Battle of Vienna in 1683

Steak Tartare

How did the Tatars eat their meat?

Raw steak mixed with raw egg is a hugely popular dish in France, but it is not a Tatar delicacy. An idea that the Tatars didn't have time to cook, so they cut strips of raw beef and placed them under the saddle to soften it, is entirely made up. It was first mentioned by Joinville, a medieval chronicler who went on the Seventh Crusade. He never met a Tatar and it's thought that he invented the story to show how barbaric the Eurasian Steppe nomads were.

further marriages. The meetings could unify the groups or accidentally cause offence, leading to conflict.

Now, back to the first paragraph. The reason why the nomadic Tatars were in Crimea is the same reason their cousins were in Hungary or Uzbekistan: their nation coalesced after the waves of conquest by their brothers, mainly the Mongols and Emir Timur (known as Tamerlane in the West), and by the mid-1400s there was a defined region of power. Crimea had been part of the Golden Horde, one of the vast administrative areas the Mongol Empire was subdivided into and as such were subject to the Yassa, the Mongol codes of law and conduct. By the 15th century, like many of the other Eurasian Steppe nomads, they were no longer nomadic. Their first capital was Chufut-Kale, a fortress in the south of the peninsula. What they gave up in terms of mobility, they gained in security.

Crimea is approximately 27,000 square kilometres, with a bottle-neck entry. It was the perfect spot to have plenty of room to manoeuvre for the fearsome cavalry but with limited points for potential attack. It was also the perfect base of operations to harass and plunder what is now southern Ukraine.

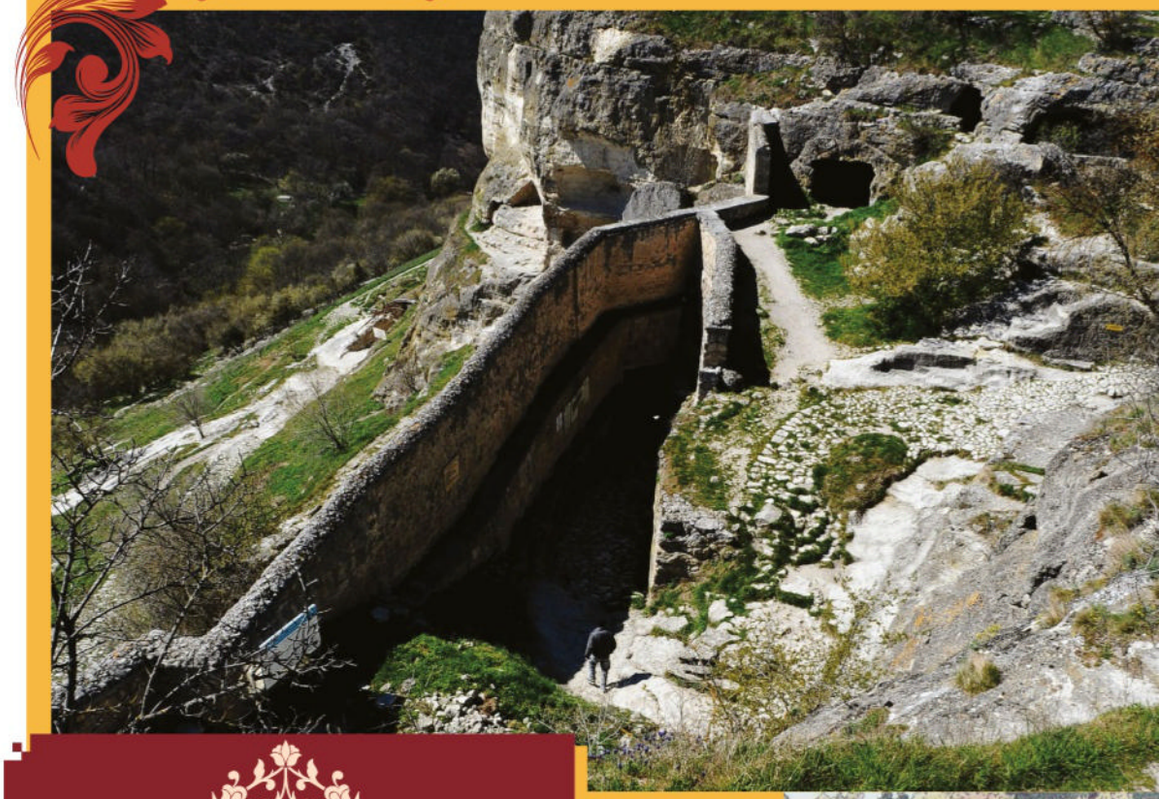
The Tatars, again like their Mongol and Turkic brothers, by now had become Muslims. The surrounding territories were Orthodox Christian, so their ethnicity, religion and way of life marked them out as 'other' from neighbouring powers such as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the Prince of Muscovy. Haji-Girei ("haji" means that he had been on the pilgrimage to Mecca, showing his Islamic connection), the first Tatar khan, spent 20 years up to 1441 fighting for Crimea's independence from the Mongol's Golden Horde. It is telling that he had to come out of exile from the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to begin this campaign, but he succeeded and founded the Crimean Khanate, a Tatar territory that would last for over 300 years.

There was a shaky start. On the death of Haji-Girei, civil war broke out among his sons. This coincided with the further expansion of the Ottoman Empire by the highly successful Mehmet II (conqueror of Constantinople in 1453). In the 1460s, he had sent an army to the northern shores of the Black Sea to conquer the remaining Genoese outposts. This gave him the

opportunity to intervene in the fighting in Crimea, under the pretext but not entirely untrue fact that they were brothers by religion and blood. The war was settled when the sixth son of Haji-Girei, Meñli I Giray, was installed as khan. It was this intervention only a generation into the Crimean Khanate that made the Crimean Tatars a vassal state of the Ottomans.

This connection was not an iron-fisted overlordship but a loose coalition that benefitted both parties. The Crimean khans couldn't hope to project their power into the heartland of Europe, but as auxiliary forces and irregular scouting forces for the rising Ottoman power, they gained access to more plunder and, more importantly, to slaves (a major part of the Crimean Khanate's economy was slavery) than they ever could if they had been on their own. By the mid-1600s, the Ottomans, now at their peak, could claim all the lands around the Black Sea, making it 'an Ottoman Lake'. In the heart of that was the Crimean Peninsula, but the resident Tatars didn't always come when asked and they didn't always listen to Ottoman orders in the field. During the siege of Vienna in 1683, the Crimean Tatars, led by Murad Girei, were able to carry out reconnaissance in force and ravage lands west of Vienna. But as the siege wore on, they scouted less, allowing John III Sobieski to surprise the entire Ottoman army with the arrival of a relief force. It was Sobieski's famous charge of his winged hussars that shattered the Ottoman forces and marked the high tide of Ottoman conquest in central Europe.

However, it was not the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth that would mark the end of Crimean independence but a new empire to the north, Russia. When the Ottomans demanded the capitulation of the Zaporozhian Cossacks whose territory was just to the north of the Crimean Peninsula, the Cossacks responded with breathtakingly offensive language in a widely reported letter. There are many copies of this in various books and on the internet, with some great performances of it on YouTube, but it is a fake. There is no original letter, the date is forever floating around the 1600s, and it is addressed to different sultans. There is no record of it in Ottoman records, and the relevant diplomatic exchanges would have had to go both ways. The point is it's a fake from the 1700s, presumably concocted in Russia to show its growing confidence as it conquered more territory and began eating away at Ottoman territory (and that process did indeed begin in the 1600s). As the Ottomans were forced to fight



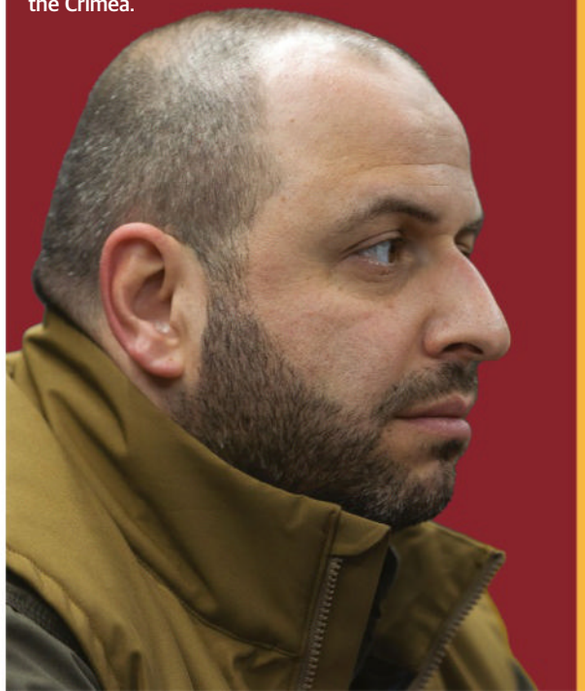
ABOVE Chufut-Kale is a Tatar fortress and national monument in Crimea

BELOW Crimean Tatars brought together East-Asian, Turkish and Eastern European traditions into one place

A Modern Tatar Statesman

The role of Tatars in today's wars

At the time of writing, the Ukraine War still rages. While the major invasion happened in 2022, it should be remembered that the Crimea was illegally annexed by Putin and the Wagner Group in 2014. For eight years before the war, Crimea had been torn from Ukraine. The key goal is the reclamation of Crimea for Kyiv but retention of the same land for Moscow. In September of 2023, Ukraine's President Zelensky increased the temperature by replacing his then Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov with Rustem Umerov, an ethnic Crimean Tatar, a sign of intent by Ukraine to recapture the Crimea.



LEFT A school from around 1856 attended by Tatar children

BELOW The deportation of Crimean Tatars in 1944 by Stalin was recognised as genocide by Ukrainian parliament in 2015

BOTTOM Depiction of a Tatar wedding ceremony from the mid-19th century

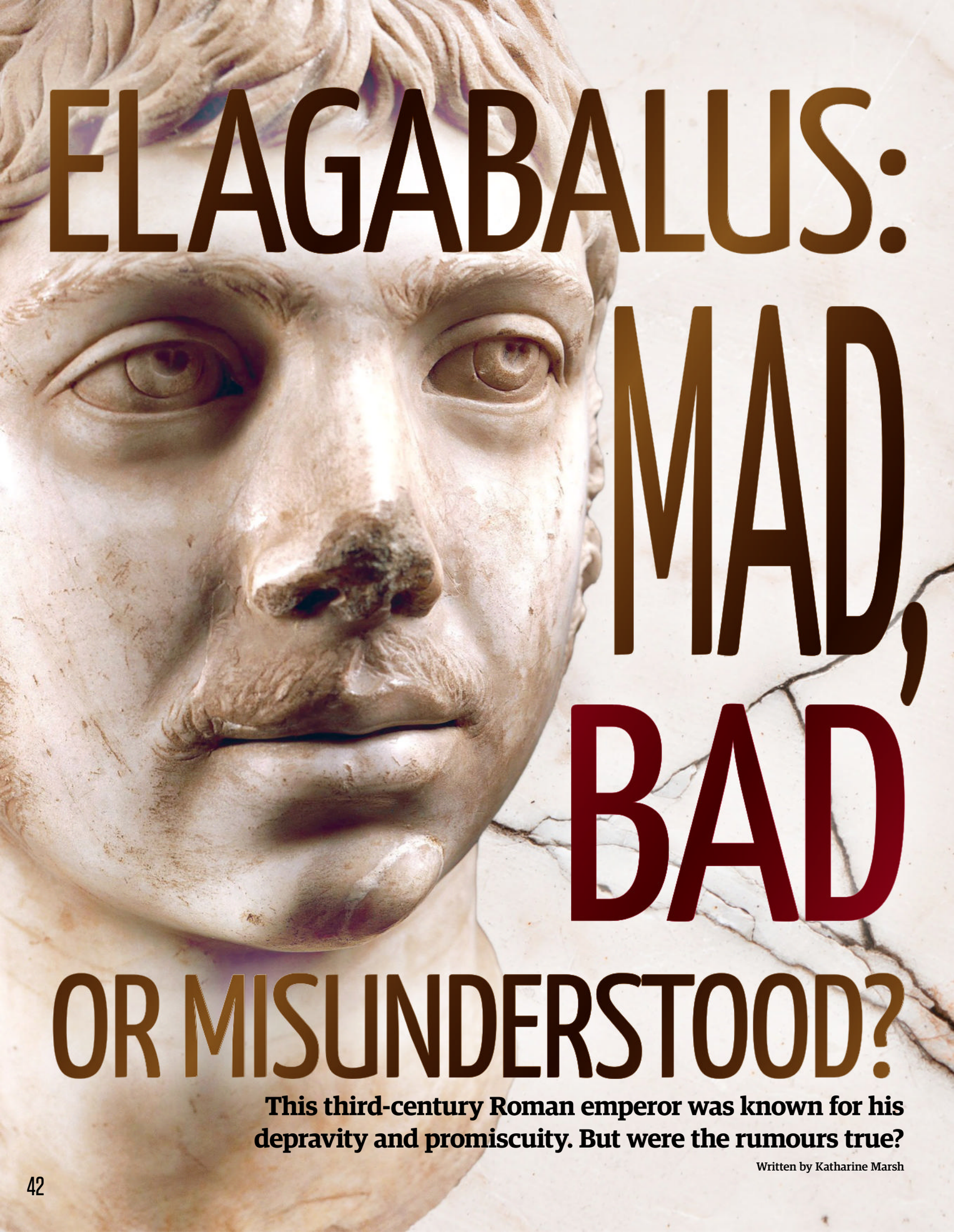
> "The Crimean khans couldn't hope to project their power into the heartland of Europe"

expansionist regimes on three fronts, there was no chance they could come to the aid of the khanate.

When the Ottoman Empire was forced to sign the humiliating Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699 with the Holy Roman Empire and Russia, one of the treaty's articles stipulated that the Crimean Tatars could no longer carry out their raiding. It was the beginning of the end. Catherine the Great's Russo-Turkish War ended in the 1770s when the khanate was formally removed as an Ottoman protectorate and became allied to Russia. This led to a mass migration away from Crimea, and those groups now live in Bulgaria, Romania and Türkiye. In 1783 there was another civil war among the sons of a dead khan, and this one allowed Catherine the Great to send in the army, annex Crimea and absorb it into the Russian Empire.

While some ethnic Tatars remained in Crimea, the population was a shadow of its former self. Things got worse with the collapse of the Russian Empire and the start of the Russian Civil War and the early Soviet Union. In the Russian famine of 1921, about 100,000 of this now small population starved to death, while tens of thousands fled Russia. Between 1931-33, thanks to Soviet collectivisation and further man-made famine, about 150,000 Tatars died or were exiled from Crimea, about half the remaining population. All of this was followed by the German invasion of the Soviet Union in World War II, but because the Tatars were neither Slavs nor Jews, they did not face the same level of persecution by the Nazi regime. However, when the Red Army recaptured Crimea in 1944, Stalin spread the lie that the Tatars had been active Nazi collaborators and ethnically cleansed the entire peninsula, forcibly deporting nearly a quarter of a million of the remaining Tatars to central Asia. Thousands died on the journey.

In 1954 Khrushchev declared Crimea part of the Ukrainian administrative area of the Soviet Union and created a problem that is still spilling blood today. The good news is that after the fall of the Soviet Union, about a quarter of a million Tatars have returned to Crimea.



ELAGABALUS: MAD, BAD OR MISUNDERSTOOD?

This third-century Roman emperor was known for his depravity and promiscuity. But were the rumours true?

Written by Katharine Marsh

ABOVE Lawrence Alma-Tadema's interpretation of the infamous dinner party where the guests were smothered by roses

RIGHT Julia Aquilia Severa, the Vestal Virgin forced to end her vow of celibacy by marrying the emperor

Elagabalus was never supposed to rule. As a minor member of the Severan dynasty, there were others who were more likely to sit on the throne; he was just a first cousin once removed of Emperor Caracalla. In fact, if Caracalla hadn't been assassinated, Elagabalus would have been just another footnote in history. Instead, we are left with one of Ancient Rome's most infamous leaders.

Born Varius Avitus Bassianus in 203 or 204 CE in Syria, the future emperor's name came from his position as high priest to the sun god Elagabal. It was Caracalla's assassination that led him to becoming emperor at the age of 14 in 218. Elagabalus' grandmother started the rumour that he was Caracalla's illegitimate son and the Senate believed it. Machinations like this were part and parcel of imperial Roman life. What wasn't is what allegedly followed.

After putting down two rebellions in the east, one of Elagabalus' first acts was reportedly to send a painting of himself ahead of his entourage to Rome with specific instructions for where it was to be displayed: over a statue of the goddess Victoria in the Senate House. It would be the first thing senators saw when they walked in, and it was to cement the new emperor's position of power.

Throughout his reign, rumours swirled about his behaviour. He would apparently award senatorial and military positions to men he had slept with, and while some of the appointments made sense, putting a barber in charge of the city's grain supply was an odd move. So was making a male dancer prefect of the guards. Some whispered that Elagabalus gave the more influential positions to those with larger genitals.

"WHILE SOME OF THE APPOINTMENTS MADE SENSE, PUTTING A BARBER IN CHARGE OF THE CITY'S GRAIN SUPPLY WAS AN ODD MOVE"

Social occasions weren't exactly a walk in the park with the emperor, though. One vignette taken from the *Historia Augusta* talks of a dinner party where roses, violets and other flowers fell from a false ceiling. While it might sound delightful (if a bit much), there were so many petals that "some were actually smothered to death, being unable to crawl out to the top." The *Historia Augusta* also goes on to mention Elagabalus fornicating during banquets, and the butchering of 600 ostriches at the

dinner table just for their brains to be eaten. But how much of this was actually true? There's no physical evidence to suggest that the painting hung in the Senate House ever existed, and only one ancient historian, Herodian, mentioned it. Scholars have never managed to agree on how trustworthy Herodian's writings are as a source, even though he did live through Elagabalus' reign. The stories from the *Historia Augusta* are thought to be fabrications, too – not least because the text has been known to be inherently untrustworthy since the 6th century CE.

So did Elagabalus actually do anything to deserve his rowdy reputation? We can certainly infer that he didn't have much interest in ruling – the nitty-gritty was left to his grandmother Julia Maesa and mother Julia Soaemias, who had been declared his empresses. They were the first women to be officially permitted in the Senate; but this was a time when women were barred from taking part in political decision-making. To many Romans, this could have been a step too far for a boy-king obsessed with an Eastern god and mired in scandal.

What was certainly a step too far was his god-worship – well, the worship of one god in particular: Elagabal, his namesake (although it is worth mentioning that the emperor didn't become known as Elagabalus until after his death). When he rode to Rome to take the throne after being declared emperor, he brought with him the Black Stone, the most holy object of the cult of Elagabal. It had always remained at the temple in Emesa, Syria, but now it was coming to the capital and it sent a very clear message: the emperor would continue as a priest of this Eastern god.

"BEING KILLED BY YOUR OWN BODYGUARDS DOESN'T REALLY PAINT THE PICTURE OF AN EMPEROR WHO WAS BELOVED"

There was outrage. The head of the pantheon was Jupiter, and Minerva and Juno helped him make the trinity. They were good Roman gods, but for the emperor, Elagabal was more important. Public outcry didn't stop him from building a temple on the Palatine Hill, though. The so-called Elagaballium held the holy stone, and Elagabalus sacrificed sheep and goats each day at dawn. Attendance for high-ranking Romans, including senators, was mandatory. The claims that small boys were sacrificed is very doubtful, but can provide some proof for how Elagabalus wasn't well liked.

Elagabalus didn't stop there – why would he? Elagabal needed more glory in Rome, and that came in the form of a huge temple of the sun outside the city where the Black Stone was taken at midsummer each year by way of triumphal procession. The emperor himself took part, holding the reins of the six white horses pulling the stone. It was all crazy by Roman standards. Why was their emperor in Rome still taking a leading role in this Eastern cult? This wasn't how things were done.

Then there was his more private life, if you could call it that. It wasn't unheard of for emperors to be interested in young men (just look at Trajan and Tiberius, for starters), but the Romans weren't quite ready for Elagabalus. A slave he favoured acted as his 'husband' and was named Caesar. We also know that he seemed to enjoy acting as a prostitute, offering himself to people in the palace or Rome's brothels. Some have suggested that he would arrange to be caught in the act by his 'husband', who would then be expected to beat him as punishment.

In all, Elagabalus had three wives, although he married one of them twice. The first was Julia Cornelia Paula, but she was divorced when a new plan was hatched. Elagabalus was to marry a Vestal Virgin. Famous for their celibacy, Vestal Virgins faced the death penalty if they broke their vows of chastity, but Elagabalus overruled this for Julia Aquilia Severa. The Roman people were not happy.

It got worse when it was revealed that this marriage would be between the god Elagabal and the goddess Vesta; the population was incensed. How dare he 'marry' their beloved Vesta? To avoid revolt, Elagabalus backtracked so that his namesake deity instead married the moon goddess Urania.

Elagabalus and Julia were divorced a year later, and his attention turned to Annia Faustina, a descendant of philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius. But that wasn't to be – apparently, his divorce from Julia wasn't real and they were married again.

There are also strong assertions that the emperor was gender fluid or even transgender. This is where trusting historical sources gets tricky again, though. It's important to consider these insinuations in the context they were originally presented in. At a base level, women were not seen as equal to men; they were lesser, unable to hold real power. Men, on the other hand, were stereotypically portrayed as virtuous, strong, brave, rational. Accounts don't tend to look at Elagabalus this way.

Women were often seen as gluttonous, lacking self-control with food and wine. So was Elagabalus. Women were believed to enjoy sex more. So was Elagabalus. Women had a desire for

BELOW Elagabalus forced others to take part in his worship of the sun god

BOTTOM Julia Soaemias, mother of Elagabalus, was also assassinated by the Praetorian Guard

I HEARD A RUMOUR...

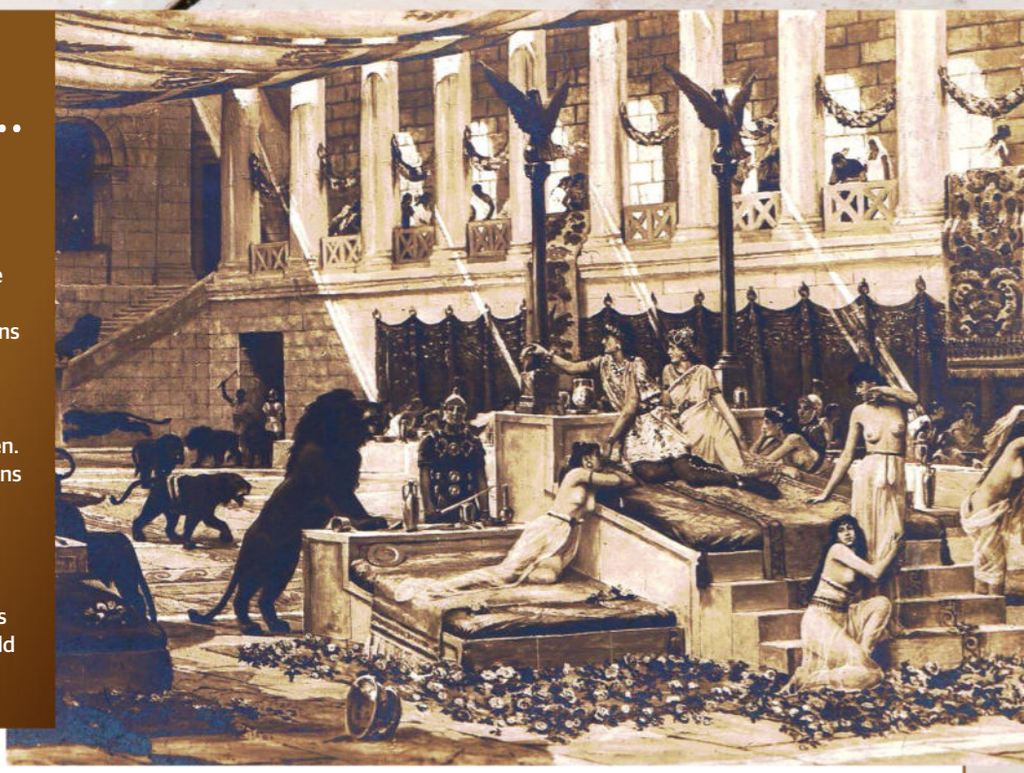
Some more untruths from the *Historia Augusta*

While we know that the vast majority of it is untrue, the *Historia Augusta* can make very entertaining reading. Here are some of the highlights when it comes to Elagabalus.

When proclaimed consul, it was customary to throw coins and sweets into the crowds. Elagabalus apparently opted for large livestock like cattle, camels, donkeys and deer instead. Why? Because it was the "imperial thing to do".

On one occasion, his chariot was pulled by naked women. Claims have also been made that it was pulled by dogs, lions and tigers. It was even said that he once used elephants, which destroyed tombs on the Vatican Hill.

The *Historia* suggests Elagabalus liked to serve dinner guests food made of wax, stone, wood or ivory while he was given real food. He would also give his friends copious amounts of alcohol before locking them in a room with wild lions or bears.



luxury. So did Elagabalus. You're probably starting to see a link here. Descriptions of the emperor leant more into the feminine descriptors. His homosexuality could have been a trigger for this; being sexually penetrated was inherently feminine, and allegedly dressing as a woman definitely wouldn't have helped. He was reportedly fond of wearing a female diadem.

So was Elagabalus really transgender or gender fluid? Honestly, we probably won't ever have a definitive answer to this. Cassius Dio writes that the emperor acted as a female prostitute, and some have inferred from this that he was learning how women acted so that he could replicate this with his male partners. He is also rumoured to have promised doctors enormous amounts of money if they could carry out successful gender-affirming surgery. Whether you believe this or not will depend almost entirely on how much you trust the accounts of Cassius Dio. The problem here is that he was serving in Severus Alexander's government, so condemning the royal's predecessor was in his best interests. Regardless, if it was true, this wasn't the 'done thing' in third-century Rome; the idea of trans rights didn't exist. It would most likely have added another strike in the 'mad' column.

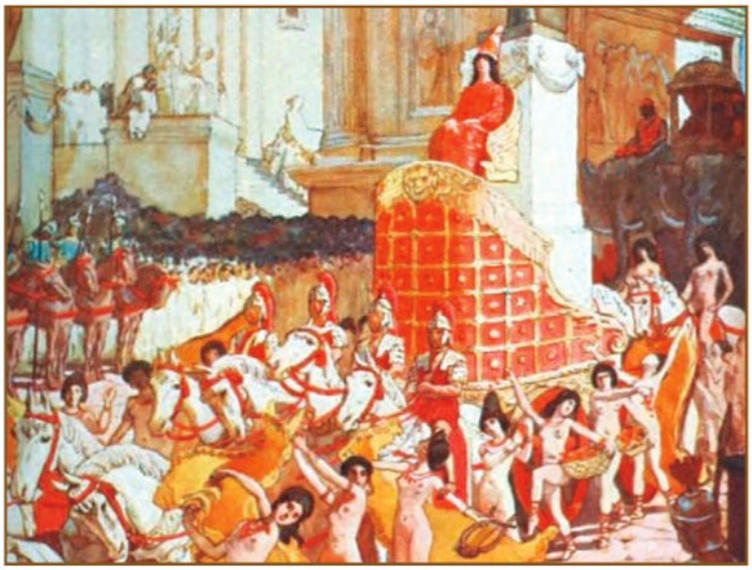
So there are definitely arguments to be made for Elagabalus being bad. He didn't get heavily involved in politics, instead leaving it to women in a heavily patriarchal society. There are some arguments for him being mad, too – especially by Roman standards. They weren't exactly keen on his Eastern cult and how far he took his worship, nor his promiscuity. Was he just misunderstood? Maybe in some areas of his life.

Being killed by your own bodyguards doesn't really paint the picture of an emperor who was beloved. To add salt to the wound, Elagabalus only lasted four years on the throne before being murdered in 222 CE. The army, the backbone of Rome's power, were deeply unhappy with their emperor's lifestyle and those who had put him on the throne. They were all hunted down and killed by the Praetorian Guard. Elagabalus' head was thrown into the Tiber. It's probably safe to assume the Romans were leaning towards mad or bad. The modern jury is still out.

ABOVE An early 20th-century postcard depicts one of Elagabalus' lion-filled dinner parties

BELOW-LEFT Elagabalus was just 18 years old when he was assassinated by his Praetorian Guard

BELOW-RIGHT The procession taking the Black Stone to the new temple dedicated to the god Elagabal



All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

SUB HUNTERS

If the Allies were going to win the fight to control the Atlantic, they would have to find a way to defeat their most dangerous enemy at sea: U-boats

Written by Nick Soldinger

The Anglo-Canadian convoy SC 42 left Nova Scotia bound for England on 30 August 1941. It consisted of more than 60 slow-moving merchant ships protected by four warships from the Royal Canadian Navy. Ahead of it lay 4,500 kilometres of wild ocean, temperatures cold enough to freeze the sea spray to the ships' handrails, and waves the size of tower blocks.

The crossing, which would take the ships a minimum of two and half weeks to complete, held a far deadlier threat than anything the environment could throw at them, however. Shortly after leaving port, the lumbering fleet got word from British intelligence that a vast wolf pack of German U-boats was prowling off the coast of Greenland. Ordinarily, such information would have allowed the convoy to reroute and avoid the waiting menace – but not this time.

A storm had whipped up that was so ferocious that the convoy, with dwindling fuel, was forced to keep steaming along the doomed course fate had selected for it – directly into the U-boats' killing ground.

By now Britain had been at war with Nazi Germany for two years. Isolated from the rest of Europe for much of that time and blockaded by the German navy, it had relied on its ally Canada to keep it alive – literally. When Hitler's plan to invade Britain in 1940 faltered in the wake of the Battle of Britain, he switched tactics – if the island was a fortress, then he'd besiege it. Blitzed from the air and starved of supplies from the sea, the country was by this time nearing exhaustion. It was desperate for the supplies SC 42 was bringing. Much of it, however, tragically never finished the journey.

The man Hitler had chosen to choke off Britain's food supply was Admiral Karl Dönitz. A veteran U-boat commander from World War I, he was a brilliant tactician, ruthless in battle and respected by his men. It was his controlling nature over the U-boat fleet, however, that would cost him what would come to be known as the Battle of the Atlantic.

In the autumn of 1941, it was a weakness that had yet to manifest itself in the outcome of this war under the waves; Dönitz was apparently winning the struggle. His U-boats were sinking nearly 150,000 tons of Allied shipping a month, and Convoy SC 42 was about to significantly add to that tally when, ten days into the crossing, it blundered into the jaws of the lurking wolf pack.

In the early hours of 9 September, the U-boats attacked their first merchant ship. Surfacing under cover of darkness to both keep pace with the convoy and avoid detection by the underwater sonar devices on the warships, the British freighter Empire Springbuck was the first to be picked off – all 39 of its crew were lost. When night fell the following evening, the U-boats struck again. Next to go was SS Muneric, with the loss of all 63 crewmen.

Hours later, another ship, the SS Baron Pentland, was damaged and abandoned by its crew. Within three hours, three more ships were destroyed. This continued for eight long days and nights. By the time SC 42 escaped the clutches of Dönitz's cut-throats, 16 ships had been sunk with the loss of more than 200 lives and thousands of tons of vital supplies. Back at his HQ in Brittany, where Dönitz had orchestrated the killings using charts and encrypted radio signals, these horrendous losses were toasted with fine local wines.

Little was the Nazi admiral to know, however, that this was in fact the last time that his hunters would enjoy such overwhelming success.

THE WAR UNDER THE WAVES

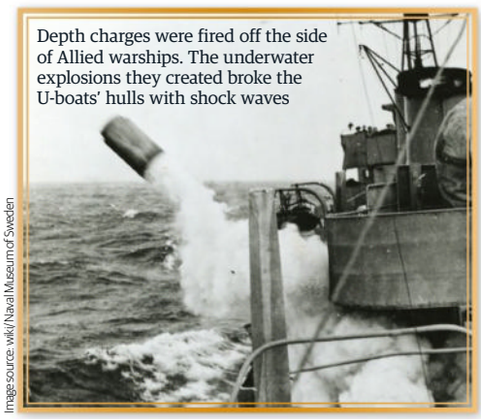
INCREASINGLY SOPHISTICATED TECHNOLOGY PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN DETERMINING WHO EMERGED VICTORIOUS FROM THE DEADLY DUEL ON THE HIGH SEAS

Perhaps more than any battle in history, the one for control of the Atlantic shipping lanes during World War II demonstrated the importance of technology in warfare. Since humans first began engaging in organised conflict thousands of years ago, the victors have almost exclusively been those with the technological edge. When World War II began, it was the German navy, which had been preparing for war for years and who in Admiral Dönitz had a master strategist, that looked best prepared for victory. However, Britain, along with its ally Canada and later the US, developed an astonishingly rapid and sophisticated response to the U-boat threat that ultimately proved irresistible.

Dönitz insisted on a top-down command structure, ensuring he micro-managed every single engagement with Allied shipping from his war room, which from the summer of 1940 was in Lorient, western France. This obsessive planning ultimately made his submarine crews vulnerable to intelligence leaks. With the cracking of Germany's supposedly unbreakable Enigma code in 1941, which Dönitz used to communicate with his U-boat commanders and move his wolf packs around his maritime maps, the fate of Germany's U-boat fleet was sealed. Then, with an array of groundbreaking detection devices and bespoke weaponry, it was eventually destroyed.

Image source: wiki/Imperial War Museums

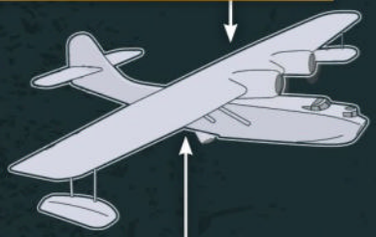
ABOVE Ramming U-boats was another tactic used by Allied naval commanders – often resulting in considerable damage to their own ships



Depth charges were fired off the side of Allied warships. The underwater explosions they created broke the U-boats' hulls with shock waves

Image source: wiki/Naval Museum of Sweden

CATALINA FLYING BOAT



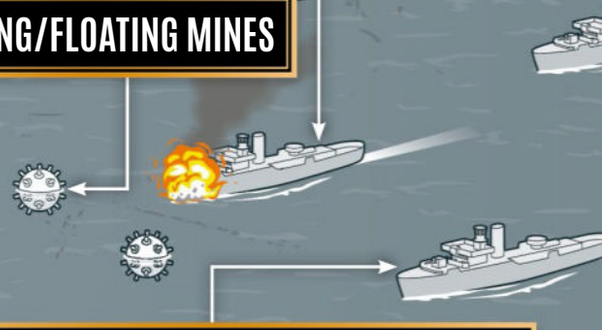
CORVETTE

Dubbed the "cheap and nasties" by Churchill because they were cheap to produce and supposedly nasty for the U-boats, these smaller warships were based on whaling ships, whose engines were thought to be ideal for chasing subs, which they could then attack with their four-inch guns and depth charges. Mass produced and rushed into service with the then tiny Royal Canadian Navy, they struggled badly in the rough seas and violent weather of the North Atlantic.

LEIGH LIGHT

Dubbed 'the dustbin' because of its shape, this 22-million candlepower, 61cm retractable searchlight was slung underneath the fuselage of sub-hunting Allied aircraft. When an unsuspecting U-boat was suddenly pounced upon from above while travelling on the surface, the light was switched on and the sub illuminated. This not only made it easier for the attacking aircraft to hit it, but it also blinded the U-boat's crew in the first few vital moments of the attack as they struggled to respond.

DRIFTING/FLOATING MINES



HEDGEHOG

This forward-firing mortar spat groups of 24 missiles up to 250m from the deck of a corvette or a destroyer as it chased down a submerging U-boat. Its shells would only explode if they actually made contact with the evading U-boat, which meant the sonar wasn't disturbed if the shell missed. More deadly than depth charges, which relied on hydrostatic shock waves to score a kill, the hedgehogs' missiles would punch a hole directly into the U-boat's hull.

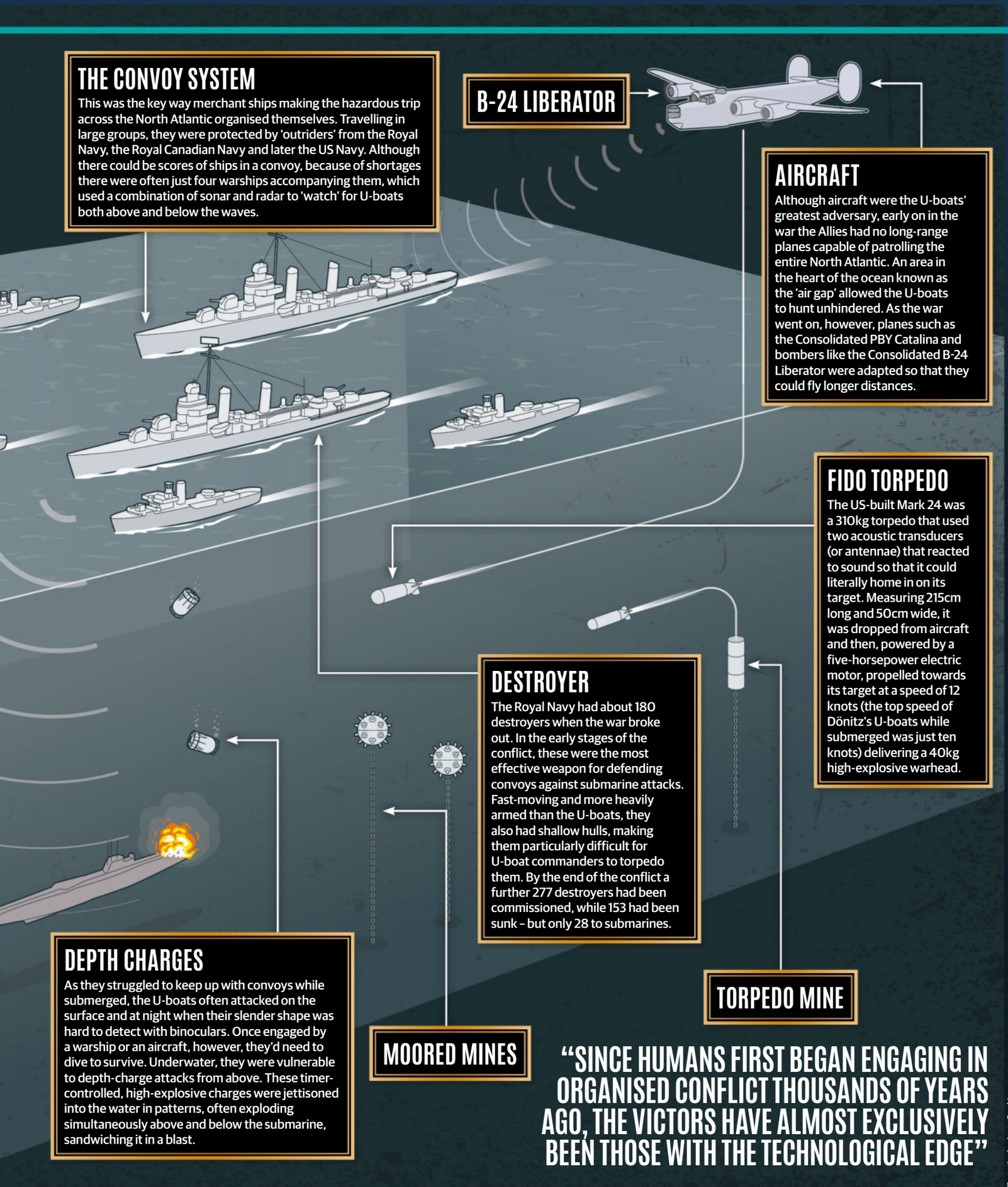
RISING MINE

SONAR

The British had developed sonar before the war, using directional sound waves to 'see' underwater. These bounced off the U-boats and were heard back as an echo. The quicker the return of the echo, the closer the submarine. Listened in to by a radio operator, they had a range of about 275m – ideal if a submarine was close, less so if it was at the limit of its torpedo range, which, at the outbreak of war, was about 3km.

INTELLIGENCE

The work done by Alan Turing and his team of code breakers at Bletchley Park was key to the Allied victory, not just in the Battle of the Atlantic but the entire war. Their cracking of the Enigma code in 1941 enabled the Royal Navy's Western Approaches Command to effectively see every play Dönitz was making as he was making it, and simply steer the convoys away from or around his lurking wolf packs.



THE CONVOY SYSTEM

This was the key way merchant ships making the hazardous trip across the North Atlantic organised themselves. Travelling in large groups, they were protected by 'outriders' from the Royal Navy, the Royal Canadian Navy and later the US Navy. Although there could be scores of ships in a convoy, because of shortages there were often just four warships accompanying them, which used a combination of sonar and radar to 'watch' for U-boats both above and below the waves.

B-24 LIBERATOR

AIRCRAFT

Although aircraft were the U-boats' greatest adversary, early on in the war the Allies had no long-range planes capable of patrolling the entire North Atlantic. An area in the heart of the ocean known as the 'air gap' allowed the U-boats to hunt unhindered. As the war went on, however, planes such as the Consolidated PBY Catalina and bombers like the Consolidated B-24 Liberator were adapted so that they could fly longer distances.

FIDO TORPEDO

The US-built Mark 24 was a 310kg torpedo that used two acoustic transducers (or antennae) that reacted to sound so that it could literally home in on its target. Measuring 215cm long and 50cm wide, it was dropped from aircraft and then, powered by a five-horsepower electric motor, propelled towards its target at a speed of 12 knots (the top speed of Dönitz's U-boats while submerged was just ten knots) delivering a 40kg high-explosive warhead.

DESTROYER

The Royal Navy had about 180 destroyers when the war broke out. In the early stages of the conflict, these were the most effective weapon for defending convoys against submarine attacks. Fast-moving and more heavily armed than the U-boats, they also had shallow hulls, making them particularly difficult for U-boat commanders to torpedo them. By the end of the conflict a further 277 destroyers had been commissioned, while 153 had been sunk – but only 28 to submarines.

DEPTH CHARGES

As they struggled to keep up with convoys while submerged, the U-boats often attacked on the surface and at night when their slender shape was hard to detect with binoculars. Once engaged by a warship or an aircraft, however, they'd need to dive to survive. Underwater, they were vulnerable to depth-charge attacks from above. These timer-controlled, high-explosive charges were jettisoned into the water in patterns, often exploding simultaneously above and below the submarine, sandwiching it in a blast.

MOORED MINES

TORPEDO MINE

"SINCE HUMANS FIRST BEGAN ENGAGING IN ORGANISED CONFLICT THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO, THE VICTORS HAVE ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY BEEN THOSE WITH THE TECHNOLOGICAL EDGE"

Illustration by: Acute Graphics

BIRDS OF PREY

HOW AIRCRAFT BECAME THE KEY WEAPON FOR THE ALLIES IN CONTAINING AND DESTROYING THE MENACE OF DÖNITZ'S WOLF PACKS

The British rightly realised that air power was the key to defeating the U-boat scourge. Within weeks of war breaking out, HMS Courageous, one of the Royal Navy's seven aircraft carriers, was despatched to the Atlantic to hunt for subs. It had 48 Fairey Swordfish torpedo planes onboard and an escort of four destroyers. Courageous was patrolling the seas off south-west Ireland when, on 17 September 1939, it was sunk by U-29 with the loss of more than 500 crew. It was a devastating blow for the Royal Navy, which responded by restricting its remaining six carriers to areas free of U-boat patrols.

This presented a real problem, because Allied aircraft at that stage of the war simply didn't have the range to cover what was effectively a huge battlefield. The air gap that opened up in the heart of the Atlantic could now become the wolf packs' chief hunting ground.

To counter this, the Allies established air bases on Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands and set about trying to source aircraft that could close the gap further. Britain had considerable pre-war experience of the flying boat and their versatility proved useful during the early stages of the battle, but the ideal long-range maritime patrol aircraft needed to be based on a bomber design.

Unfortunately, such aircraft were hard to find, as the strategic aerial bombing of occupied Europe was, for much of the war, the only means Britain and the Allies had of hitting back at the Germans, and the necessary aircraft could not be diverted. The answer came in the Consolidated B-24 Liberator.

Unlike modern submarines, the German U-boats were not designed to spend weeks under the water. Rather, they were viewed as torpedo boats that had the capability of diving as a defensive strategy, and once submerged they were reliant on battery power to propel themselves. These batteries needed regular recharging – something that could only be done by the boat's diesel motors acting as a dynamo when the vessel was on the surface.

In the early stages of the war, the U-boats could prowl around on the surface in the air gap pretty much untroubled. By 1942, however, once the Liberator had been fitted with both radar and Leigh Lights and adapted to fly for longer, it was used, in conjunction with Dönitz's intercepted and decrypted communiqués, to shut the air gap for good.

SHORT SUNDERLAND

OPERATOR: RAF Coastal Command, Royal Canadian Air Force
IN SERVICE: 1938–59 **RANGE:** 2,848km

With a crew of 11, equipped with Air-to-Surface Vessel radar (ASV), and armed with eight depth charges and as many as 16 .303 browning machine guns, the Short Sunderland was used to provide top cover for merchant convoys, patrol harbour approaches and hunt down Dönitz's wolf packs. This they did with huge success – although estimates on number of u-boats sunk varies. They were also used to pick up survivors of torpedoed ships despite not being designed to land on rough open sea. This heroic yet dangerous practice was eventually outlawed by RAF Coastal Command in 1942.

A Short Sunderland prepares for take off

CONSOLIDATED PBY CATALINA

OPERATOR: RAF Coastal Command, Royal Canadian Air Force, US Navy
IN SERVICE: 1936–57 **RANGE:** 4,000km

Armed with five machine guns – including two waist gunners in the plane's distinctive 'blister' pods on its sides – and capable of carrying as much as 1,800 kilograms on its wings' bomb racks, this beast of a machine was crewed by ten men. Like the Sunderland, it was also equipped with ASV and undertook sub-hunting duties as well as convoy-protection missions. This ubiquitous plane managed to destroy 40 U-boats during the Battle of the Atlantic, with two Catalina pilots – Flying Officer John Cruickshank of the RAF and Flight Lieutenant David Hornell of the RCAF – winning Victoria Crosses in the process.

Catalina Z2147 was credited with nine successful U-boat attacks during its service

2x Image source wiki/Imperial War Museums

CONSOLIDATED B-24 LIBERATOR

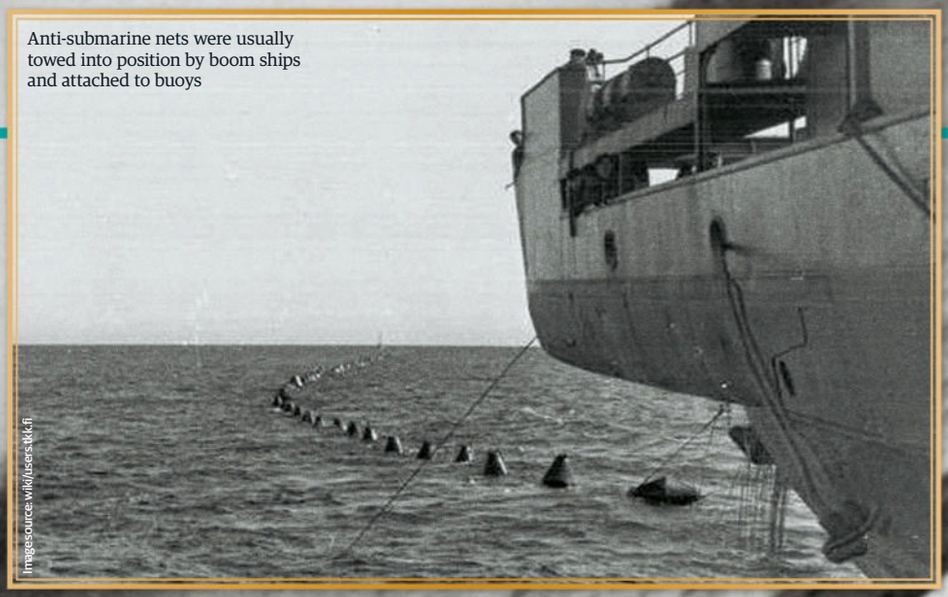
OPERATOR: RAF Coastal Command, Royal Canadian Air Force, United States Army Air Force, US Navy
IN SERVICE: 1939–54 **RANGE:** 4,586km

Produced in greater numbers than any other US bomber during World War II, the Consolidated B-24 Liberator was the key aerial weapon in the war against Dönitz's wolf packs. Crewed by ten men, once fitted with long-range fuel tanks from 1942 onwards it could stay airborne for up to 18 hours at a time. Armed with ten 12.7mm machine guns and equipped with ASV and the Leigh Light, it would attack with a formidable arsenal of weapons including torpedoes, bullets, bombs, rockets and depth charges. In all, B-24 Liberators managed to sink more than 70 U-boats during the Battle of the Atlantic.

ABOVE Almost 19,000 Liberators were produced during its life span

© Alamy

German submarine U-134 is attacked from the air



Anti-submarine nets were usually towed into position by boom ships and attached to buoys

Image source: wiki/users.tkk.fi

DEFENDING BRITAIN'S COAST

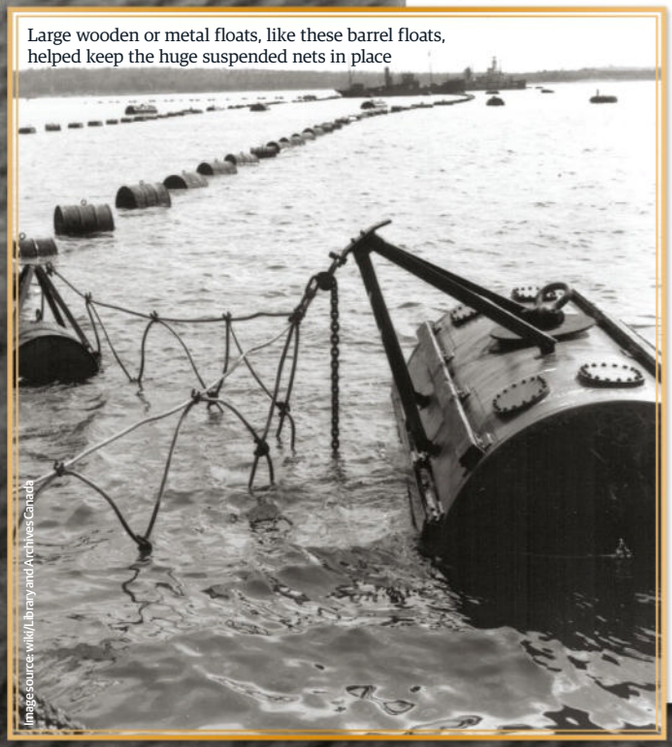
THE SYSTEM IMPLEMENTED TO KEEP U-BOATS OUT OF BRITISH PORTS WAS BOTH INGENIOUS AND COMPLEX

Britain's ports played a pivotal role in protecting the Atlantic convoys. After all, these were where the ships that confronted the U-boats sailed to and from, so it was little wonder that this might make them highly valuable targets for U-boat attacks themselves.

The British had actually been aware of this possibility long before hostilities broke out. Indeed, some of the technology the British would use – such as steel anti-submarine netting known as indicator nets draped across harbour entrances – had proved their worth in World War I when a number of German U-boats became ensnared in them and were subsequently sunk with depth charges. In fact, preparations were being made for a revival of the defence around Britain's more important ports as early as 1938.

Work readying the Clyde Estuary for war, for example, was started in the wake of the notorious Munich Conference, which British PM Chamberlain had returned from promising that war with Hitler had been averted. It hadn't, of course, and when hostilities broke out less than a year later, a huge steel indicator net had already been manufactured that was swiftly hauled into position by eight boom ships to seal off the Clyde from U-boats.

Elsewhere around Britain's coastline, and indeed across its empire, these indicator nets – which could be as long as 100 metres and as deep as the sea bed they were suspended over – and an increasingly complex series of defences would play their part in keeping the U-boats out. The nets, which had a series of rocket flares attached to them that would go off if a submarine tried to breach the defences, were also sometimes attached to converted fishing boats armed with machine guns and depth charges. Other methods of defence around British harbours could include extensive minefields, sonar listening posts, radar stations, land-based gun emplacements, patrol ships, outpost observation ships, and of course regular sorties by aircraft from the RAF's Coastal Command. In combination, they proved a highly effective deterrent to Admiral Dönitz's U-boats.



Large wooden or metal floats, like these barrel floats, helped keep the huge suspended nets in place

Image source: wiki/Library and Archives Canada

COUNT of the OCCULT

The name Cagliostro was synonymous with magic and mysteries, but was he a true believer or a devious con-artist?

Written by Callum McKelvie

In the annals of alchemy and occultism, only a handful of practitioners remain legendary today. Names such as Fulcanelli, St Germain and, one of the most notorious of them all, Count Alessandro Cagliostro (pronounced 'Cali-Ostro'). Infamous even centuries after his passing, he was once described in Baroness D'Oberkirch's memoirs as being "possessed of a demonic power" and having a charisma that "enthralled the mind, paralysed the will." Throughout the latter half of the 18th century, this 'nobleman' travelled throughout Europe earning a reputation as both a blasphemer and a conman. Much of Cagliostro's life is shrouded in mystery, the facts submerged under a wealth of fiction created by either the Count himself or by others. But what is the truth of Cagliostro's legend? Was he a true believer in the occult practices he preached? Or was he a devious swindler, petty crook and confidence trickster?

Lowly Beginnings

Born Giuseppe Balsamo in Sicily on 2 June 1743, Cagliostro's early years were ones of poverty and petty crimes. Spending time at a Benedictine monastery, he proved himself adept at chemistry, though the thought of spending his life as monk failed to appeal ▶

BELOW This painting depicts Cagliostro fully engaged in sorcery and in the process of creating a 'homunculus'

> "At age 21 he convinced a goldsmith known as Marano that he knew the location of a hidden magical treasure"

to him. Still only a teenager, he left the monastery for Palermo and quickly began making a living by scamming the city's naive citizens.

At age 21 he carried out his most daring scheme yet, convincing a goldsmith known as Marano that he knew the location of a hidden magical treasure, defended by spirits. Persuading Marano to depart with a substantial amount of his own gold, he provided him with the location of the hidden loot and the pair agreed to meet there. Upon his arrival however all Marano received was a beating by the thugs Balsamo had led in waiting. Perhaps afraid of Marano's revenge, Balsamo fled Palermo to travel the continent.

For a few years he used the skills he had learnt to work as a physician in Malta, though other sources state that he instead toiled in the laboratory of a 'deluded' alchemist known as 'Pinto.' Finally, the young con-man found himself in Rome in 1768 where he was introduced to the 17-year-old Lorenza Seraphina and soon married her. The couple's plans of cohabiting with Seraphina's parents were quickly thwarted by Balsamo's incorrigible manners and salacious ideas, which were at odds with the simple lives of his mother and father in law. Although financially

ABOVE Giuseppe Balsamo, who became infamous under the moniker Count Cagliostro

ABOVE Lorenza Seraphina Feliciani, the wife of the notorious count

it would have been preferable to stay put, Balsamo and Seraphina left the household in a move that enraged her parents.

Seeking new ways to raise funds, Balsamo was introduced to Agliata, a master forger. Balsamo begged the man to teach him the secrets of forging documents, which Agliata agreed to – but for a price, that of Balsamo's young wife. Balsamo implored her that to sleep with other men would be no sin, as she had no love for them. As Constantin Photiadès explains in his 1932 biography of the Count, Balsamo convinced her that: "Where there was none of the delirium and intoxication of the senses, no passionate connivance of the soul, there was neither perjury nor mortal sin". Perhaps reluctantly, Seraphina gave in to his commands.

Cagliostro in London

It was in 1776 in London that Balsamo took the name that would forever be associated with him. According to Henry Ridgely Evans's flamboyant 1903 telling of the Count's adventures, he arrived and announced himself as the "Conte di Cagliostro" – the name reputedly borrowed from an aunt of his. Evans claims he had two potions with him, an "Egyptian Wine" said to prolong the user's life and a "Materia Prima" that he claimed held the power all alchemists had been searching for and could turn metal into gold. At one point he even became something of a minor sensation when he correctly predicted the numbers of an upcoming lottery.

However, the most important part of his adventures in London was his discovery of Freemasonry. Legend states that this was thanks to the mysterious Count de Saint Germain, who many believed had discovered the secret to eternal life. Cagliostro was fascinated by the craft and was soon initiated at the Mason's Espérance Lodge in Soho. As with his other escapades, his time in London ended when he fell on the wrong side of the law and purportedly enraged a group of swindlers, forcing Cagliostro and his wife to flee once more.

The Egyptian Rite

Having been initiated into freemasonry, he set about creating his own branch of the craft, known as 'the Egyptian Rite' (later known as the Rite of Misraim). Through his Rite, Cagliostro quickly developed a reputation as a master of the occult, founding the first lodge in Lyons in 1784.

In the years prior to the lodge's founding he had proven himself able to woo powerful and rich families with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Balsamo begav sig till greken Althotas, och han fann denne klädd i en fantastisk dräkt och omgiven av burkar, glas, instrument m. m. Althotas var guldmakare.

Teckning av F. Matania. Se artikeln »Den gyllne äventyrarens», sid. 17.

The Master of Cagliostro

Much has been made of Cagliostro's teacher, Althotas – but there are doubts as to whether he ever existed

Once described by Cagliostro as "my best friend and master, the wisest as well as the most learned of men", it was from the enigmatic Althotas that he learned many of his alchemical and occult secrets. He purportedly met Althotas as a young man in Messina, where he followed the wandering alchemist first to Alexandria, Egypt and finally to Malta. Here working in the laboratories of another alchemist, Pinto, it is claimed that Althotas died.

However, over the centuries historians have speculated as to whether Althotas ever actually existed. Largely this is due to the fact that precious other accounts of Althotas except for Cagliostro's own remain. The French 19th century writer, Louis Figuier claimed that the Roman Inquisition had numerous accounts of the mysterious magician. However due to the lack of other accounts, he is largely thought to have been a figment of the Count's imagination and his never-ending desire to embellish his own legend.

ABOVE An illustration of Cagliostro partaking in one of the rituals of his Egyptian Rite of Freemasonry

"Notorious 20th century occultist Aleister Crowley claimed the Count was one of his previous incarnations"

his supposed magical powers. These included conducting celebrated seances and demonstrations of clairvoyance that formed the basis of the meetings of his Masonic circle. According to Ridgely Evans (one of the few available sources on this part of the Count's life), through the use of a spirit medium, Cagliostro would open a door to the heavens and promise his followers secrets including an elixir of life and the ability to commune with spirits.

Cagliostro travelled the globe attempting to propagate his new form of masonry. In St Petersburg his stay was short as, unable to convince Catherine the Great of his majesty, he was quickly ordered to leave. By 1780 he had arrived in Warsaw where he caused a great scandal after two of his chosen spirit mediums confessed that the seances were conducted with trickery and fraud. At another event, he summoned the spirit of an Egyptian high priest but those at the table quickly recognised the rotund figure as none other than Cagliostro himself in a less than convincing disguise.

It was in Strasbourg that Cagliostro purportedly met the Cardinal de Rohan and the two men's fates became intertwined. The Cardinal was interested in alchemy and the occult and became keen to make Cagliostro's acquaintance. Cagliostro soon found favour with the Cardinal, once reportedly serving as his chief alchemist and also helped cure his cousin when other physicians had failed. Now, with the influential Cardinal's support, Cagliostro set his sights on Paris.

At the expense of the Cardinal, Cagliostro stayed in a lavish hotel in the very heart of the city and quickly became the talk of the nobility. On one occasion, he purportedly held a seance at the hotel on the Rue Saint-Claude and was able to summon six spirits – one for each of the guests present. However, trouble was on the horizon and Cagliostro was soon to find himself involved in a scandal that would rock France to its core and further stoke the fires of revolution.

ABOVE Jeanne de la Motte, the architect of the Diamond Necklace scandal

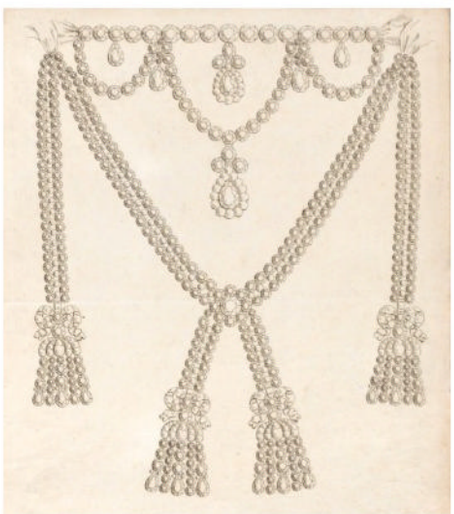
The Affair of the Diamond Necklace

The cause of the scandal was a diamond necklace. Originally commissioned by Louis XV for his supposed mistress, Madame Du Barry, this extravagant piece of jewellery is said by antique jewellery experts Berganza to have cost 2,000,000 livres – around £11 million today – and to have contained an astonishing 647 diamonds totalling 2,840 carats. Unfortunately for the jewellery makers however, the king died before the purchase could be completed, leaving them with excessive debts. Desperate to part with the extravagant neckwear, they approached Marie Antoinette to see if she might be willing to buy the necklace. They were dismayed when she exclaimed the price was too high and so the necklace remained untouched.

That was until Jeanne de la Motte heard of the necklace's existence. Jeanne had begun a relationship with the Cardinal de Rohan, who was desperately seeking to regain the queen's favour. Jeanne duped the Cardinal into believing that the queen wished to purchase the necklace and needed the Cardinal to act as the intermediary. Jeanne's plan was complex, forging letters and even having an imposter disguised as Antoinette meet the Cardinal to further convince him. He agreed to pay the necklace's extravagant price – unaware that Jeanne had the necklace taken to London, where it was taken apart and the diamonds resold separately.

The affair finally came to light when one of the jewellers approached the queen directly after the Cardinal had been unable to pay the first instalment. The affair caused irreparable damage to the queen's reputation and saw the conspirators imprisoned. Jeanne was able to escape to England, but the affair was notorious and has been cited as creating further discontent with the French monarchy, possibly adding further fuel to the burgeoning fires of the French revolution.

But what has this seedy affair to do with the notorious Count? Still today, his exact role in the scandal remains unknown. Cagliostro was by this time well known



BELOW-LEFT An illustration of the necklace which caused a scandal in Paris and further plunged Marie Antoinette into disrepute

BELOW An image of Cagliostro facing the Inquisition at his trial

BELOW The Fortress of San Leo where Cagliostro met his demise

as an acquaintance of the Cardinal de Rohan whose reputation, although he had been fully acquitted as having had no knowledge of the ruse, was now in tatters. The diamond necklace affair saw the end of Cagliostro's influence in France, he was arrested and imprisoned for nine months in the Bastille and immediately banished following his release. Although he would later attempt to have his banishment repealed, it was to no effect and time was running out for Cagliostro.

The Magician's Demise

Following his release from the Bastille, it seemed that Cagliostro intended to recommence his travels across Europe. But times had changed. Various governments, including those of Russia, Germany, Austria and Spain had heard of the various scandals attached to his name and barred him from entry. Making what would turn out to be a fatal mistake, Cagliostro chose Rome as his new hunting ground. But the Roman Inquisition was a force to be reckoned with and had forbidden the practice of Freemasonry, and it did not take long for Cagliostro to become a person of interest.

According to Corrado Augias in *The Secrets Of Italy*, two Papal spies approached Cagliostro and requested to join his Masonic lodge, leading Cagliostro to openly welcome the two men to the order and even began to carry out the initiation ceremony. Facing arrest, it is at this point that Seraphina chose to denounce him to a local priest. There is some poetry in the notion that this legendary swindler, who was behind so many scams and cruel tricks, was himself betrayed by his wife. Particularly as Constantin Photiadès alludes that, whenever the pair were short of money, he would coerce her into having sexual intercourse with a wealthy stranger.

The sentence for Cagliostro's crimes was death, but the court instead agreed to commute the sentence to life imprisonment and he was taken to the Fortezza di San Leo. This imposing castle had previously been an important fortress during the wars of the renaissance but since 1631 had been converted for use as a prison. For the final years of his life Cagliostro rotted away in a small cell, before finally passing away on 26 August 1795, at the age of 52. But even in death the infamous Cagliostro was defiant to the last, with the Chaplin of San Leo noting that in his final moments he "would hear nothing of repentance nor of confession" and stated that the Lord's abandonment of him set "a terrifying example for anyone tempted to intemperately indulge in the worldly pleasures and the delirium of modern philosophy."

The Legacy of Cagliostro

Centuries after his demise in the dungeons of San Leo, the legend of Cagliostro remains. So many stories have become associated with the man born Giuseppe Balsamo, that it is at times impossible to separate the truth from the fiction. Over the centuries, the man's reputation as a master of the occult continued to grow, leading notorious 20th century occultist Aleister Crowley to claim the Count was one of his previous incarnations, alongside other such esteemed figures as Pope Alexander VI.

Although wider public knowledge of the enigmatic count has inevitably faded somewhat over the years since his death, when the name of Cagliostro does reappear, it is usually connected to the likes of witchcraft and devilry. While it does seem likely that Cagliostro's powers were earthly in origin and confined to flimflam and trickery, it cannot be denied that his personality and charisma must have been overwhelming. Whatever Cagliostro was, it seems apparent that his legend will never die.

The Count in Culture

Despite his death over two centuries ago, artists and writers have continued to draw inspiration from the late Cagliostro

Joseph Balsamo

Novel, 1848

French author Alexandre Dumas is best remembered for his tales of historical adventure including *The Three Musketeers* (1844) and *The Count Of Monte Cristo* (1844-6). It's little wonder that he turned to Cagliostro for one of his spirited melodramas, painting him as a key figure in the destruction of the French monarchy and dawning of the revolution.

The Countess of Cagliostro

Novel, 1923-1924

The creation of Maurice Leblanc, Arsene Lupin is a gentleman thief featuring in a number of novels. His best-known foe was Josephine Balsamo – a fictional descendant of the notorious real-life Count. Her first appearance is in the novel *The Countess Of Cagliostro*, and in 1935's *Countess Cagliostro's Revenge*, she would attempt to take revenge from beyond the grave.

Black Magic

Film, 1949

Cinematic giant Orson Welles, of *Citizen Kane* fame, took on the role of Cagliostro or 'Joseph Balsamo' in this lavish costume drama. The film is based on Alexandre Dumas's novel and portrays Cagliostro as plotting to oust Marie Antoinette from the throne. Although directed by Gregory Ratoff, Welles purportedly directed a number of sequences himself.

The Erotic Rites of Frankenstein

Film, 1972

The work of Spanish filmmaker Jess Franco is certainly unique. In 1972 he made two 'erotic' homages to classic horror films, and *The Erotic Rites Of Frankenstein* saw Howard Vernon as the villainous sorcerer Cagliostro try to take control of Frankenstein's monster with the help of his bird-woman accomplice.

Wonder Woman - Diana's Disappearing Act

TV, 1978

Lynda Carter starred as the DC Comics superhero Wonder Woman in a three-season TV series; in the episode *Diana's Disappearing Act*, Dick Gautier appears as one of Cagliostro's descendents and has achieved the alchemist's dream of turning lead into gold. It's up to Wonder Woman to put a stop to his diabolical schemes.

“WE JUST LOVE THE PAST. WE LOVE THE WACKY PEOPLE AND THE CRAZY THINGS THEY DID, AND WE LOVE HUMANITY.”

The hosts of the hugely successful *The Rest Is History* podcast discuss their passion for history, their podcasting experiences, and their favourite episodes

Written by Emily Staniforth

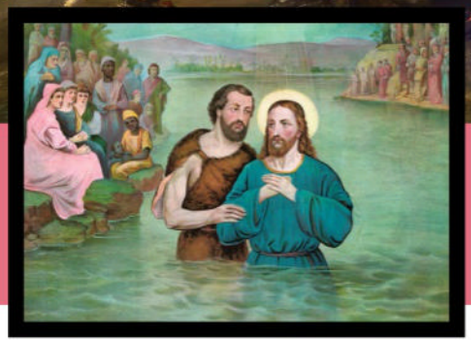
EXPERT BIOS

TOM HOLLAND

Tom Holland (left) is a historian, author and broadcaster whose expertise lies in ancient and early medieval history.

DOMINIC SANDBROOK

Dominic Sandbrook (right) is a historian, author, broadcaster and columnist. He specialises in modern British history.



After being approached by Goalhanger Podcasts to start a history podcast during the COVID-19 lockdown, renowned historian Tom Holland decided to recruit his good friend and fellow historian Dominic Sandbrook to the project. Since their first episode was made available at the end of 2020, *The Rest Is History* podcast has gone from strength to strength, garnering a huge fan base across the world. Now, the hosts have released a book exemplifying the best of the podcast. We sat down to chat with the pair about their podcasting success and their love of history.

How did the podcast first come about?

TH: I went to meet [Tony Pastor at Goalhanger] and we had a long discussion about what exactly the format should be. My background is in ancient history, so should it be focused on ancient history, or should we aim for something a little bit more ambitious and go for modern history? The moment everyone agreed that we should do that, it seemed to me that Dominic was the obvious person to turn to. He's a brilliant historian, not just of modern Britain but of modern America, and also he's been writing reviews for *The Sunday Times* for yonks, so he has incredibly detailed knowledge of a whole range of history.

DS: I think it really helped that neither of us listened to podcasts. We've both done lots of radio and TV, so we've done public-facing things, but we hadn't done anything like this. First of all it was a great liberation to be able to go and do whatever we wanted and not to worry about a commissioner or a controller. We could say what we liked and do whatever subjects we wanted, but also with the format there was nothing to set our course by. The great thing about doing the podcast is that we will do a given topic and sometimes one of us will take the lead, sometimes we might do it equally. Sometimes we might have a guest, and often I really look forward to doing the subjects if they're things I'm really keen to find out about. I think the podcast form has been nothing but good for history because lots of people who wouldn't otherwise listen to history programmes listen to podcasts. To be able to reach that kind of audience is brilliant.

You wrote in the book, Dominic, about the fact that you love history.

DS: Tom and I are a good match because I know that Tom loves history. Tom, if we weren't doing the podcast and he wasn't writing history books, he'd be going on his walks and looking at bits of Roman walls and all that stuff – he loves his history. I can remember when I was an academic saying to somebody that at the weekend I had gone to look at some castle, and he said: "Why would you do that, it's not your period," and I said... "I like history." That seemed like such an outlandish thing to say! I think that spirit is key to the podcast, that we just love the past. We love the wacky people and the crazy things they did, and we love humanity, don't we Tom?

TH: We love humanity. That's what we're all about.

Do you think that love for history helps you connect with the huge audience the podcast now has?

TH: I think it must be. The success of the podcast, and by success I mean the number of downloads, is so beyond our wildest dreams that it must be down to a kind of untapped passion on the part of broad swathes of people for studying the past. If you look at the podcasts, say in the top 10 in Britain, they're politics or football and both of those tell stories – it's the evolving story of the football season or narratives that are being spun out in the world politically. But that's what history provides as well. It provides an infinite number of stories and an infinite number of characters, ways of seeing the world, ways of behaving, that opens your perspective on how many different ways there are to be human. I'm sure that that

TOP One of Tom's favourite series of episodes to research was about the Battle of Trafalgar

ABOVE-LEFT The podcast has covered a range of subjects from as early as the Neanderthals

ABOVE-MIDDLE Lady Jane Grey ruled England for nine days after the death of Edward VI in 1553. She was later executed on the orders of Mary I

ABOVE-RIGHT Last year, the podcast's subscribers voted for Tom and Dominic to cover the life of Jesus Christ

must be the fascination of it, and perhaps it's the great boon of the podcast format, that it is better at finding an audience for that than perhaps any previous medium that's ever existed.

DS: I think the great thing that differentiates us from a lot of the public discourse about history is that we're not very hand-wringing. I'm very conscious of how the numbers doing history in universities have been in such deep decline, and I think one contributing factor may be that when history appears in national conversation, it's either been a subject of very impassioned, angry debate, or it's been with this spirit of "wasn't it terrible? Weren't people dreadful? We know so much better now." It's very politicised and very moralistic. We've tackled some pretty controversial and big subjects: the rise of Islam, slavery and abolitionism, empires and colonialism. But I think we do it in a spirit of approaching it in a balanced and sensible way, and tell different sides of the story and allow different kinds of people to speak. But we will do so in the spirit of not [doing it] in a censorious way and not trying to score moralistic points. We will tell it in all its gory detail and you can make your own minds up as the audience. We will tell you what we think, but we then expect that you won't necessarily agree with us.

TH: I think that also an important framing part, maybe intellectually, for that is that both of us recognise the instinct to moralise is itself a theme of history. It's contingent, it's bred off specific cultural ideological circumstances that are themselves part of the flux of history. We're not a theology or a philosophy podcast, we're a podcast in history and so therefore, moral perspectives are themselves subject to historical inquiry. If we're talking about the Aztecs or the Romans or even the moral assumptions of people in the 1960s, we will recognise that it's not our job to sit in judgement on their moral perspectives because we're not moralists. We're historians and so we try and show their moral perspectives the respect that we would feel for our own.

You've covered such an extensive range of subjects on the podcast. How do you decide what is going to feature, given you have such different areas of expertise and interest, and how does that conversation happen?

TH: Right from the beginning, when we decided that we would have someone whose knowledge is centred in antiquity and someone whose knowledge is centred in the modern period presenting the podcast, it was clear that our aim had to be to cover as much of history as we could. That ambition to tap diverse subjects is what guides what we want to do. That could be chronological, so we've ranged from the Neanderthals right the way up to the defenestration of Liz Truss, but also geographical, so I would say a third British, a third European, a third rest of the world, perhaps, would be the balance. Also tone – if we're doing something that is sombre, grim and serious, then we might try and lighten it and have something that's a bit frothier. That sense of never settling into a groove, never into a rut would be the guiding principle, do you think?

DS: I think we're in a groove Tom, but not in a rut. We take suggestions from our subscribers and last year they voted on what subject they most wanted us to do. Much as we think about the audience, we ultimately do the subjects we want to do and will find interesting. We do all the research ourselves. We don't have any research assistants so there is a lot of work, but actually that's fun. I get really excited when I think about getting the books. It's a bit like preparing for your university essay or something. It's exciting to know that I'm going to be reading about the Borgias [for example] which I don't know very much about: diving into it and having fun with it and communicating that enthusiasm to the audience. Tom always talks about these episodes he did about the Battle of Trafalgar. He went away on holiday and read these books. He came back from holiday having said he was going to do one episode – he ended up doing three. You were absolutely brimming with enthusiasm and that's a wonderful thing.

TH: Also our choice of subject is determined by how much time we have to research it. Over the time we've been doing it we have been writing books, publicising books, writing newspaper articles, so we have a lot else on as well. Our peaks of having free time come and go, so there will be times where we simply can't sit down and prepare an eight-episode study of the French Revolution, because that requires us to be doing nothing else. I remember that we realised we hadn't done anything on the Reformation, which is ▶

> "IT PROVIDES AN INFINITE NUMBER OF STORIES AND AN INFINITE NUMBER OF CHARACTERS"

CHOOSING FAVOURITES

From over 300 episodes, Tom and Dominic highlight the topics they really enjoyed

HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

TH: I really loved doing the Hundred Years' War. We did four episodes on that and I loved that because I had a month free and so I just spent a month reading up on it.

SOMERTON MAN

DS: Tom did an episode about Australia which is about the Somerton Man: a dead body found on the beach in Adelaide [in 1948]. It became the subject of enormous conspiracy theories. It's slightly like a true crime story, but it was the Cold War so there was all kinds of Cold War paranoia and it just became this amazing story. It's something I would never have taken an interest in.

FALKLANDS WAR

TH: There's all kinds of darkness to it and all kinds of casualties and yet the cast of characters in it, Dominic made them so amusing while simultaneously being very, very sympathetic. I particularly enjoyed having a ringside view for that.

YOUNG CHURCHILL

DS: We did a series about young Churchill and when you do characters, storytelling about somebody's life can be, if they're the right character, a tremendous laugh. Churchill was such an irrepressible character even as a young man and he had so many mad adventures. That was really good fun.

JEREMY THORPE

TH: Dominic did one on the trial of Jeremy Thorpe, which he'd written about and it was just so funny. I just felt privileged to be sitting there listening to him talk about it.

GENERAL GORDON

DS: General Gordon was a subject that I don't think many podcasts would do. He's seen as an absolutely emblematic pith helmeted Victorian imperialist. He was an extraordinary character, ending with him on the steps in Khartoum, in the Sudan, with this mob of people coming towards him and him being cut down and fighting them off from the famous painting. We had quite a lot of overseas listeners who had no idea who he was, and they loved that story.

such a huge topic, and also we hadn't done anything on the Tudors for a while. I had no time at all because I was frantically trying to finish a book. Between us we thought we could do Lady Jane Grey because the whole point of Lady Jane Grey was that she didn't rule for very long! That was a much more manageable theme and yet it was a way of touching on the vast broad themes of the Reformation. That would be a good example of the way in which actually having a lack of time can steer us towards certain topics.

How does it work when a topic comes up that neither of you know an awful lot about?

TH: There are certain topics where we have been guided by sensitivities to get a guest.

DS: Ireland would be the best example of that. We needed an Irish voice and we got a brilliant Irish guest called Professor Paul Rouse from University College Dublin. But also, when the World Cup was on we did an episode for each country and we did some pretty, I hate to use the word obscure, but lesser known subjects, didn't we Tom?

TH: Yes, I would say your knowledge of the Costa Rican Civil War or early modern Korean concubinage wasn't all it could have been, but you plunged in valiantly.

DS: Well I think the audience enjoyed that. I think the audience enjoys the fact that we have done a bit of research ourselves.

TH: Often what can be very exciting and occasionally a little bit unsettling is where you find yourself surprised by the fruits of your research. I remember one that I did [on Senegal] about the Door of No Return and it's the last thing that people taken into slavery in America saw. I read up about it and discovered that the whole thing was an enormous scam by a guy who'd bought it up in the '60s and then started flogging it to African-American tourists in the '70s as a way of providing them with a focus for their desire to make contact with Africa. The whole historiography was absolutely bogus. I'm sure I must have messaged you about that Dominic in a tone of some panic. But we decided we'd go ahead and actually, I think it was a really fascinating topic partly because it was clearly very sensitive and yet it was so fascinating, precisely because it was so sensitive.

ABOVE Tom and Dominic have tackled a variety of sensitive subjects on the podcast such as slavery and colonialism

ABOVE-INSET The Door of No Return in the House of Slaves on Gorée Island, Senegal

DS: I think the fact that you weren't a specialist in it, that you weren't heavily implicated in all those very anguished debates, meant that you could approach it with an outsider's perspective. Often I find the subjects that you know tons about are quite hard to do because you're overwhelmed by your knowledge. I think there is a value in being removed from the subject so you can see the wood for the trees and you can say this matters, this matters, this doesn't matter, and sort of explaining that to the audience and always having the audience in mind. The audience are not idiots by any means. But they're not historians. Some of them are history students, but most of them aren't so having that sense of, what do the audience know? What do they want to hear? Always being conscious of your public is really important.

> "THERE IS A VALUE IN BEING REMOVED FROM THE SUBJECT SO YOU CAN SEE THE WOOD FOR THE TREES"

Can you tell us about the recently published The Rest Is History book?

DS: We chose about 50 of our favourite episodes. Then it was a question of turning them into a [book] because a podcast is quite different from something that's on the page. The team worked brilliantly to come up with ideas about how [for example] to turn a very fun episode that we did about a historical *Love Island* into a short chapter in a book.

TH: But it's interesting that we did the audio book, and that's kind of going back to its roots.

DS: Also, lots of people don't listen to podcasts. Tom and I had pre-existing audiences for our books and our other stuff. But there are always people who say, "I don't have time to listen to podcasts, I don't know how they work," and I think writing a book hopefully allows us to reach a different kind of audience. The weird thing about doing a podcast is you reach such a young audience (50% of our listeners are under 35) and an international audience as well. The book-reading audience perhaps tends to be a bit older. The book hopefully communicates the same enthusiasm and love of history that the podcast does. I feel like if you read the book, there are funny things or there are things that are clearly very light-hearted, but you would actually learn, I hope, something about history.

TH: Yes, and then there are some quite sombre chapters as well, because that is a reflection of what the podcast is like and that's essentially what we wanted to do. We wanted to give people a sense of the podcast's flavour.

THE REST IS HISTORY (BLOOMSBURY, 2023) BY TOM HOLLAND, DOMINIC SANDBROOK AND GOALHANGER PODCASTS IS AVAILABLE TO BUY NOW.

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Greatest Battles

BATTLE OF PARIS

PARIS, FRANCE, 30 MARCH 1814

Written by David Smith

The disastrous retreat from Moscow following the invasion of 1812 would have broken most military commanders, as well as the war-fighting spirit of most nations, but Napoleon Bonaparte had proved to have superhuman resilience, raising a new army in 1813.

He continued to find success on the battlefields of Germany, but his army was too inexperienced to deliver the kind of decisive victories that might have shaped events in his favour. At the same time, Wellington's masterful campaign in the Iberian Peninsula, coupled with savage guerrilla warfare (the so-called 'Spanish Ulcer') was draining French manpower and resolve.

At Leipzig, in October 1813, Napoleon was defeated by the massed ranks of his enemies, losing around 60,000 men and bringing his total losses for

Marshal Moncey, depicted giving orders to a colonel of the National Guard, Claude Odiot, during the Battle of Paris

that year to half a million. It was a staggering blow that forced him to withdraw into France. There, the forces of the Sixth Coalition began to close in.

THE DEFENCE OF FRANCE

With the homeland now under threat, Napoleon hoped that his countrymen would rally to the cause. He called up nearly a million conscripts, including old men and teenagers, believing that he could overawe even the vast armies now marching against him. The problem was that his country had now been fighting for more than 20 years. While patriotism was still strong, war fervour was in shorter supply and only around 110,000 made themselves available to fight. It was a grossly insufficient number, but Napoleon set to work as best he could. He organised a 70,000-strong army to protect Paris and took the rest of his men on an ambitious campaign to defeat the enemy armies. It would push his military genius to its limits, but he was to enjoy a surprising number of successes.

The main threats to Napoleon were three Coalition armies entering north-eastern France. The British advance from the Iberian Peninsula and Heinrich von Bellegarde's Austrian army in Italy posed less of a threat to Napoleon, but still tied up French soldiers. Of more immediate concern was the Army of Bohemia (around 200,000 Austrians commanded by Prince Schwarzenberg), the Army of Silesia (around 60,000 Prussians and Russians commanded by Prince Blücher) and the Army of the North (around 120,000 men, comprising Prussians and Russians commanded by Ferdinand von Wintzingerode and Friedrich Wilhelm Freiherr von Bülow, and Dutch troops commanded by Prince Bernadotte). These armies had a combined total of close to 400,000 men, but coordination would be their weakness. For a start, the Army of the North was unable to move at the designated time – while Schwarzenberg and Blücher set their men in motion in December 1813, the Army of the North would not enter the picture until several months later.

Napoleon made use of interior lines of communication to win limited victories at Brienne and La Rothière, before stopping Blücher in his tracks in the Six Days' Campaign of 10–15 February 1814. Though impressive in isolation, these triumphs did nothing to change the strategic reality: the armies of the Sixth Coalition were marching implacably on Paris.

NAPOLEON'S GAMBLE

However skilfully he played his cards, Napoleon had a losing hand and he realised that it was only a matter of time until his army was worn down. He decided to risk everything on a surprise move to the east, away from Paris and into the lines of communication of the Coalition armies. He hoped that he could cause enough doubt among his enemies to make them break off their advance on the capital.

It was a bold move, but almost certainly doomed to fail even before a letter outlining his plan fell into enemy hands. As Napoleon moved east, a token force of 10,000 cavalry and light infantry under Ferdinand von Wintzingerode was tasked with pursuing him to convince him that the Coalition forces had taken his bait – in reality, they continued to converge on Paris.

On 25 March, Marshals Auguste de Marmont and Édouard Mortier, commanding around 20,000 men between them, were confronted by Schwarzenberg as he moved westward towards Fère-Champenoise. About five miles separated the two French corps, and Marmont initially fell back before the Allied advance, realising that he needed to link up with Mortier to have any chance of holding his ground.

Mortier, however, was under pressure himself and unable to move southwards towards Marmont. He too withdrew to the west and the two finally combined near Sommesous. Continuing to withdraw, their situation became desperate. Allied cavalry plagued them as they slogged westwards through a driving hailstorm. Harried relentlessly, they finally escaped when the Allies became preoccupied with a French supply train to the north. Even so, the two French marshals had lost half their force and fell back towards Paris with just 10,000 men remaining.

The fate of the supply column – 200 wagons of ammunition and food originally intended for Napoleon's army – was remarkable. The escorting force numbered around 4,000 and was a motley collection of National Guard units and the battered remnants of regular regiments. It is unclear if the National Guards had uniforms (they had been instructed to make use of enemy uniforms captured on the battlefield, but they were so flea-ridden that most spurned this offer). Nevertheless, the dishevelled corps, commanded by Generals Pacthod and Amey, performed heroically.

A satirical cartoon depicts Blücher administering a sound thrashing to the upstart Napoleon after the fall of Paris

Image source: wiki/ Bodleian Libraries

Massed Allied cavalry formations pinned the Frenchmen, forcing them to form squares, while artillery units were put in place to rake them with cannon fire. Pacthod and Amey were able to keep their squares moving by temporarily forming them into columns, marching a short distance, and then reforming. This prevented the enemy artillery from having a completely free hand, but as Allied cavalry numbers increased, the French were eventually surrounded and became sitting ducks. Russian cannonballs now ripped through the squares, but discipline remained intact. As squares were shattered, the survivors simply ran to neighbouring formations and continued their brave but futile resistance. Finally, there was no choice but to surrender, but the actions of the supply column had bought time to allow Marmont and Mortier to escape back to Paris with their shattered corps.

French troops form squares as Russian cavalry swirls around them at the Battle of Fère-Champenoise

Image source: wiki/runivers.ru

THE RACE TO THE CAPITAL

Unwittingly, Napoleon had made himself a sideshow. He turned on Wintzingerode at St Dizier, but after thrashing the German general he realised there was no main army behind him. He had fallen for the Coalition's ruse and he now headed back towards Paris as quickly as he could. As the news he received became increasingly dire, he would resort to ever more desperate measures. First of all, he left his infantry and advanced with only his cavalry, then he took just a few officers with him in a mad dash to the capital, believing that his mere presence there might yet save the day.

It was to prove a doomed attempt. Paris would have to fight without the benefit of its leader. Though there was still a Bonaparte in charge, it was the far less capable brother of Napoleon, Joseph, who was in overall command of the capital. Napoleon was asking a lot of Joseph, who had proved ineffective when handed the throne of Spain. He also had severely limited resources at his command and equivocal instructions on how long to defend the city.

Joseph was limited as far as his military capacity was concerned, but he was able to see that defending the city from the numbers marching upon it was next to impossible. He urged Empress Marie-Louise to leave and take Napoleon's son with her, but she remained until the last possible moment, only evacuating on 29 March.

Coalition forces available for the assault on Paris numbered around 110,000, but only 60,000 of these were detailed for the initial attack. This was still a healthy numerical advantage as the French were scrambling to amass a serious number of men. Options were limited. On paper, there were 30,000 National Guards in the city, but most of them were unarmed and only around 12,000 were able to take part in the fighting, commanded by Marshal Moncey. The Young Guard, though nowhere near as revered as the Old Guard, would have been a solid unit, numbering 3,600 infantry and 1,500 cavalry, but most had been sent away from the city (including a detachment detailed to act as bodyguard for the empress when she left) and only 600 infantry and 300 cavalry remained to defend the city. They were thrown in with 4,000 recruits to form a division commanded by General Michel. Marshals Marmont and Mortier, still reeling from their harrowing experience at Fère-Champenoise, split overall command of the defending forces, which numbered around 40,000 including civilian volunteers and cadets.

There was still a glimmer of hope. The Allied armies were not working well together and their movements were slow at best. This was exemplified

by the fact that it took them four days to advance on Paris after their success at Fère-Champenoise. If resistance at Paris could be stubborn, there was an outside chance that Napoleon might appear and save the day once more. Everything would depend on how efficiently the Allies attacked the city.

THE DEFENCE OF PARIS

For both political and practical reasons, Paris had not been extensively fortified. Hasty efforts were made at this late stage, but nowhere near enough to present a serious impediment to the Allies. Joseph placed his headquarters at Montmartre, outside the city limits at the time. As late as 28 March, he placed artillery on the heights at Montmartre and Belleville. He had been ordered by Napoleon to fortify this position, but had failed to do so.

The Allies planned a three-pronged attack with their 60,000 men, with more available to be funnelled into the battle as it developed. Blücher was tasked to move against Montmartre, Barclay de Tolly aimed to capture Belleville and the Crown Prince of Württemberg was to take Vincennes as well as offer support to de Tolly if needed.

The piecemeal nature of the Allied advance played into French hands at the beginning of the battle. On the morning of 30 March, the central part of the three-pronged assault creaked into action, de Tolly hurling his men against the French troops under Marmont around the village of Pantin. French resistance was stubborn, but they were already stretched to the limit facing just one of the Coalition's corps.

By 11am, de Tolly's advance had ground to a halt, but at the same time Württemberg moved into action on the Allied left. He made progress, capturing a bridge over the Seine at Charenton and two hours after he made his move, Blücher was finally ready on the right of the Allied formation.

With de Tolly also renewing his advance around 1pm, the French found themselves hard pressed in three areas and simply did not have the manpower to resist. They were pushed back steadily. Marmont withdrew and when de Tolly's men took Belleville, they gained valuable high ground where they could site guns capable of reaching the city. To all intents

Napoleon bids farewell to his Old Guard as he prepares to go into exile for the first time

Image source: wiki/ napoleonprisonner.com

FRENCH

JOSEPH BONAPARTE

The older brother of Napoleon Bonaparte, Joseph had been made king of Naples from 1806–08 and then king of Spain from 1808–13. He abdicated after the French defeat at Vitoria and was made Lieutenant General of the Empire from Paris as Napoleon took on the Sixth Coalition. He moved to the United States following the war.

AUGUSTE DE MARMONT

Marmont had risen up the ranks of the French military until he was eventually handed the reins of the army in northern Spain during the Peninsula War. However, seeing the writing on the wall for Napoleon, he signed a secret agreement with the Allies to surrender and bring the war to an end, going on to support the Bourbons.

SIXTH COALITION

ALEXANDER I

Son of Grand Duke Paul Petrovich, Alexander I became emperor of Russia in 1801. He had variedly been an ally, enemy and neutral towards Napoleon ahead of the Sixth Coalition. Following Bonaparte's failed invasion of Russia in 1812, he joined forces with Prussia, Britain, Sweden and Spain to push the French back on all fronts.

KARL PHILIPP

The Prince of Schwarzenberg was a Generalissimo and Field Marshal of Austria. He had been at Wagram when the Austrians were badly defeated by the French in 1809 and fought alongside the French against Russia at Gorodechno in 1812. He entered Paris having already defeated Napoleon at the Battle of Leipzig.

5x: © Getty Images

FREDERICK WILLIAM III

The King of Prussia was thought to have reluctantly joined his partners in the Sixth Coalition having remained neutral in the past. However, he travelled with the main Prussian army and attended the post-war Congress of Vienna to secure important territorial gains for his kingdom, save for taking all of Saxony.

and purposes, the defence of Paris was already over.

Joseph had fled Paris, totally overwhelmed with the responsibility of mounting an effective defence. He had given Marmont and Mortier permission to negotiate a surrender if things became desperate. With enemy forces on three sides, Marmont judged that this moment had arrived and sent an aide to open discussions with Schwarzenberg.

Around the same time Mortier was handed a message from Napoleon which encouraged resistance but made it clear fighting inside the city itself was not to be allowed. Mortier therefore sent his own representatives to negotiate a surrender.

While these negotiations took place, Montmartre came under attack from Allied cavalry. This high ground would also offer a position for artillery to bombard the city, although such considerations were on the verge of becoming irrelevant.

Schwarzenberg could afford to be generous. He offered a ceasefire if the French would withdraw their men into the city. Negotiations would then continue on the final terms of the surrender. In one of war's little tragedies, word of this agreement did not reach Mortier in time to prevent him from fighting to defend Montmartre from a Russian advance. The position fell after the battle, and the war, had already effectively ended.

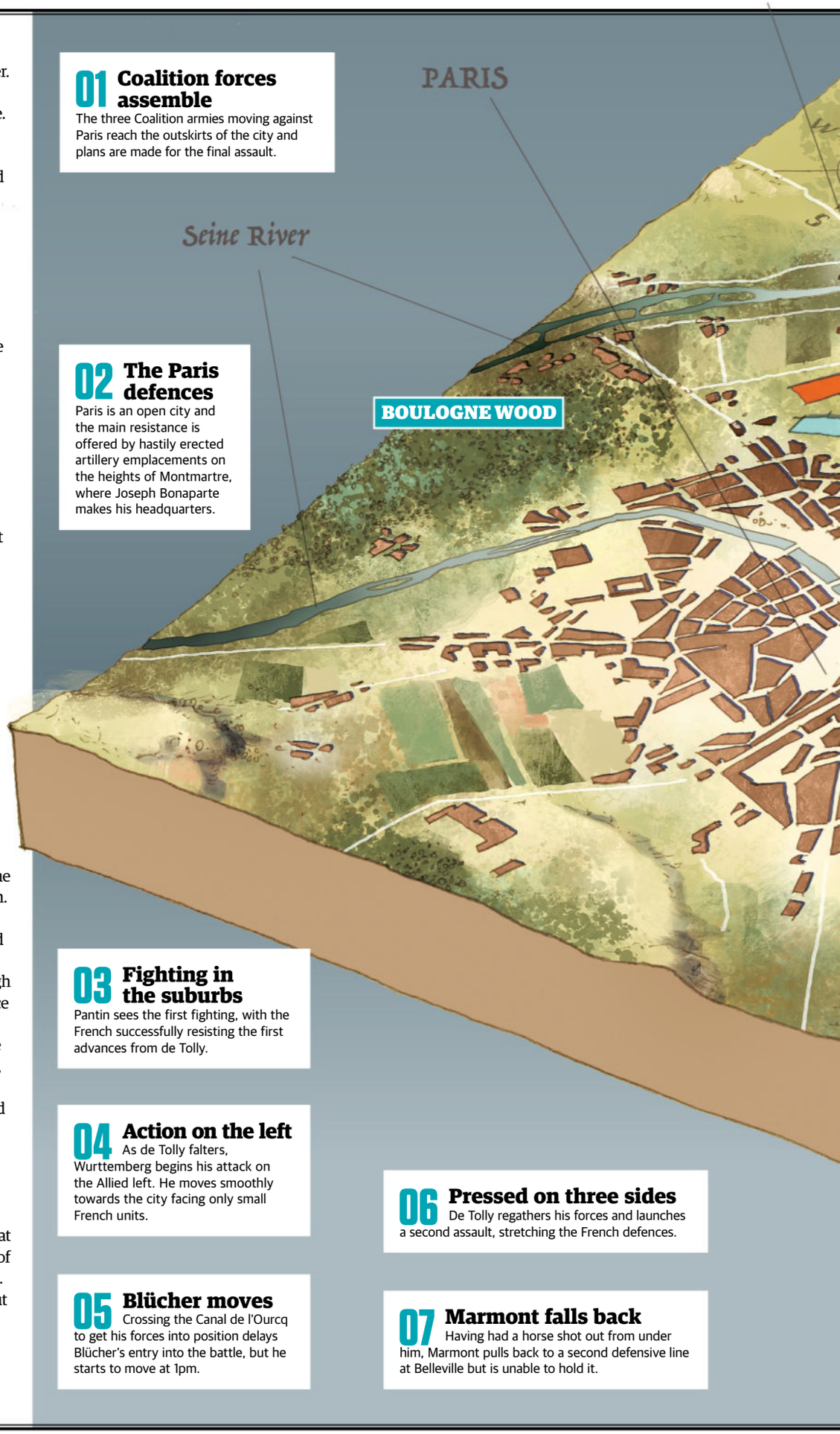
THE AFTERMATH

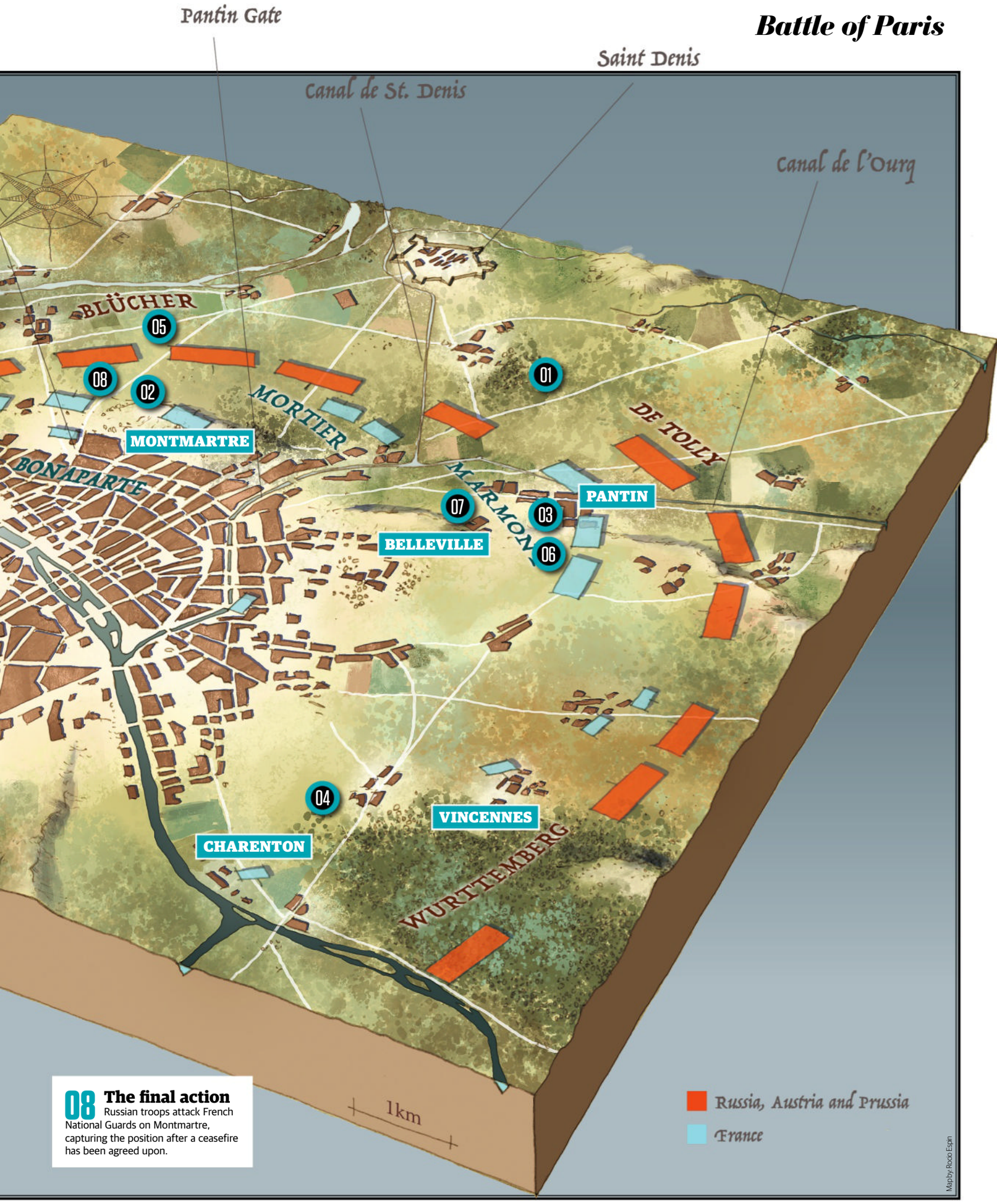
Napoleon had reached Fontainebleau when he received news that the defenders of Paris had surrendered. He briefly considered continuing the struggle, especially when elements of the Paris garrison joined him. The terms offered by the Coalition forces had been magnanimous. The Russian emperor in particular showed restraint, Alexander resisting the temptation to do to Paris what Napoleon had done to Moscow in 1812. Marmont and Mortier had been allowed to leave the city, as long as they were gone by 6am on 31 March. No pursuit would be made until 9am.

Absorbing the remnants of the Paris army would have given Napoleon sufficient men to cause mischief, but Marmont decided enough was enough and kept his corps around Paris, pledging allegiance to a new pro-Bourbon government. When others of his marshals insisted to Napoleon that the game was up, going so far as to refuse an order to march, he reluctantly agreed to abdicate.

Napoleon then began his first exile, on the island of Elba. It was to prove short-lived and he would remain on Elba for less than a year. He had been granted a generous pension of two million francs per year, as well as sovereignty over the island, but as the Allies argued among themselves over the new map of Europe, and with rumours swirling that he was about to be moved to a less pleasant place of exile, he made his last desperate bid to rule France.

Napoleon insisted that he wanted only peace, but his enemies were unconvinced, and the Seventh Coalition was quickly formed. Napoleon's last campaign would last just 100 days and would end with defeat at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815.





08 The final action
Russian troops attack French National Guards on Montmartre, capturing the position after a ceasefire has been agreed upon.

What If...

THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD WASN'T FORMED?

The Underground Railroad was an important act of rebellion against slavery within the United States

Interview by Callum McKelvie

INTERVIEW WITH

© Richard Blackett

RICHARD BLACKETT

Richard Blackett is a historian focusing on the history of slavery and the abolitionist movement. He is the author of *Making Freedom: The Underground Railroad And The Politics of Slavery* (University of North Carolina Press, 2013), among numerous other works.

The 'Underground Railroad' (UGRR) was the name given to routes of escape for enslaved people labouring in the southern United States. Operating during the 19th century, 'conductors' guided the escapees and hid them in buildings owned by sympathetic abolitionists. But if the Underground Railroad never formed, would it have had a wider impact on the abolitionist movement? Perhaps even on the civil rights movement of the 20th century?

What was the Underground Railroad?

The Underground Railroad was an unofficial, unorganised (largely) movement of abolitionists and of people generally who were opposed to slavery and who came to the assistance of those who were escaping from slavery. They did this by providing food, safe havens and doing their best to ensure that the enslaved people got to whichever of the various 'Free Soil' destinations they were fleeing to. It is an organisation that emerged roughly in the middle of the 1830s and continued as an integral part of the abolitionist movement until well after the Civil War.

Who were some of the key figures?

Some of the leading figures are Isaac T Hopper, active in the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society in the early 1840s; Levi Coffin of eastern Indiana and Cincinnati, known as the President of the UGRR; William Still, who ran operations in Philadelphia beginning in 1852 and is considered the 'father' of the UGRR; Thomas Garrett, who ran operations almost single-handedly in Wilmington, Delaware; and Sydney Howard Gay, who wore an additional hat as editor of the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, in New York City.

Where does the name 'Underground Railroad' come from?

The origins of the term are not entirely clear. Purportedly it got its name from a slaveholder who lost track of a runaway just as he was about to retake him, and who, in desperation, turned to an onlooker and said the fugitive must have disappeared underground. The term also coincides with the national spread of the railway system.

How does it fit in with the wider abolitionist movement of the time?

The 'modern' abolitionist movement had its beginnings in the early 1830s with the formation of the American Anti-Slavery Society headquartered in New York City and with the publication of its newspaper, *The Liberator*, edited by William Lloyd Garrison in Boston. Over the years, the Society concentrated its efforts on establishing local chapters throughout the North, using paid agents, lectures and published pamphlets to spread the word. In the early years, it eschewed violence emphasising instead "moral suasion" – that is persuading slaveholders that slavery was morally indefensible. They also flooded the South and Congress with pamphlets and newspapers calling for

© Alamy

Main image source: © Getty Images

RIGHT
A depiction of slaves fleeing from Maryland to Delaware


ROUTES OF THE
UNDERGROUND
RAILROAD
1830 - 1865
Compiled from "The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom" By Wilbur H. Siebert.
Copyright 1898 by The Macmillan Company.
LAKE SUPERIOR
LAKE MICHIGAN
LAKE HURON
LAKE ERIE
LAKE ONTARIO
MINNESOTA
WISCONSIN
MICHIGAN
IOWA
ILLINOIS
INDIANA
OHIO
KENTUCKY
MISSOURI
TENNESSEE
VIRGINIA
PENNSYLVANIA
NEW YORK
Mississippi R.
Missouri R.
Ohio R.
Chicago
Detroit
Toronto
Rochester
Buffalo
Albany
Cleveland
Jackson
Grinnell
Davenport
Des Moines
Burlington
Tabor
Quincy
St.Louis
Springfield
Indianapolis
Richmond
Vincennes
Evansville
Louisville
Cincinnati
Columbus
Ft. Wayne
Toledo
Oberlin
Salem
St.Clairsville
Pittsburgh
Washington
Harrisburg
Baltimore
Washington
Gallipolis
Ripley
Portsmouth
Parkersburg
Chester
Longitude West from Greenwich

THE PAST

1849

HARRIET TUBMAN

Harriet Tubman was a 'conductor' who is said to have helped some 70 enslaved persons escape to freedom. Born around 1822, Tubman was able to flee to Philadelphia in 1849, where she began assisting enslaved persons. Despite the risk to her own safety, she would consistently return to Maryland in order to rescue enslaved family members and friends. During the Civil War, Tubman worked as a spy and scout for the Union Army, as well as a nurse. Tubman campaigned consistently for greater rights for women and pursued suffrage. Towards the end of her life she also established a home for the aged.

1830-1870

THE ABOLITIONIST MOVEMENT

The abolitionist movement in the United States took place roughly from 1830 to 1870 and began in northern states such as New York. Largely inspired by the British abolitionist movement, those fighting for the cause distributed petitions, ran for political office and wrote and distributed anti-slavery literature. There were numerous abolitionist figures, including journalist William Garrison and Frederick Douglass, whose writings on the horror of slavery were widely read.

1859

JOHN BROWN

During the 19th century, John Brown gained prominence as an abolitionist who was prepared to fight for his belief in anti-slavery. He worked as a conductor on the Underground Railroad and created an organisation to assist slaves fleeing to Canada. When the town of Lawrence, Kansas was brutally attacked by a pro-slavery group, Brown led a retaliatory attack on Pottawatomie Creek. In 1859 he led an attempted slavery rebellion at Harpers Ferry but was eventually forced to surrender. He was tried for murder, slave insurrection and treason and was executed.

the abolition of slavery. Before the end of the decade, they had brought into the organisation women which would, by 1839, lead to a split over the 'proper role' of women in the movement.

There were also differences over the best methods to achieve their goals. Increasingly, there were calls for participation in the political system, using the government to effect change. Finally, in the years following the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law in 1850, there was an increasing acceptance of the use of force, epitomised by John Brown's unsuccessful attack on the federal armoury at Harpers Ferry in 1859.

What do you believe is the key legacy of the Underground Railroad?

The Underground Railroad, this unofficial political organisation that attempted by its actions to undermine the ability of the slave system to function as effectively as it wanted to, is important because it provides us with a historical example of resistance to slavery. Its work is predicated on an understanding that it is the enslaved people who initiate the resistance by fleeing the plantations. The job of the Underground Railroad was then to assist those people to get to their point of destination. These destinations could be in Canada, or perhaps a free northern state, or any other Free Soil destination.

You can paint a map of resistance to enslavement in the United States by identifying 'Free Soil'. In this case, the enslaved mainly fled to the northern states and parts of Canada. However there was also Free Soil in the British territories of the northern Atlantic, for instance, in places like the Bahamas, and, after the British emancipation in 1834, Jamaica. These places and others became destinations for slaves attempting to reach freedom. It is possible to paint a kind of geographic picture that encircles the United States. But we can't understand the significance of the movement without paying very close attention to what the enslaved were doing, and why they felt compelled to escape and flee to places that were totally unknown to them.

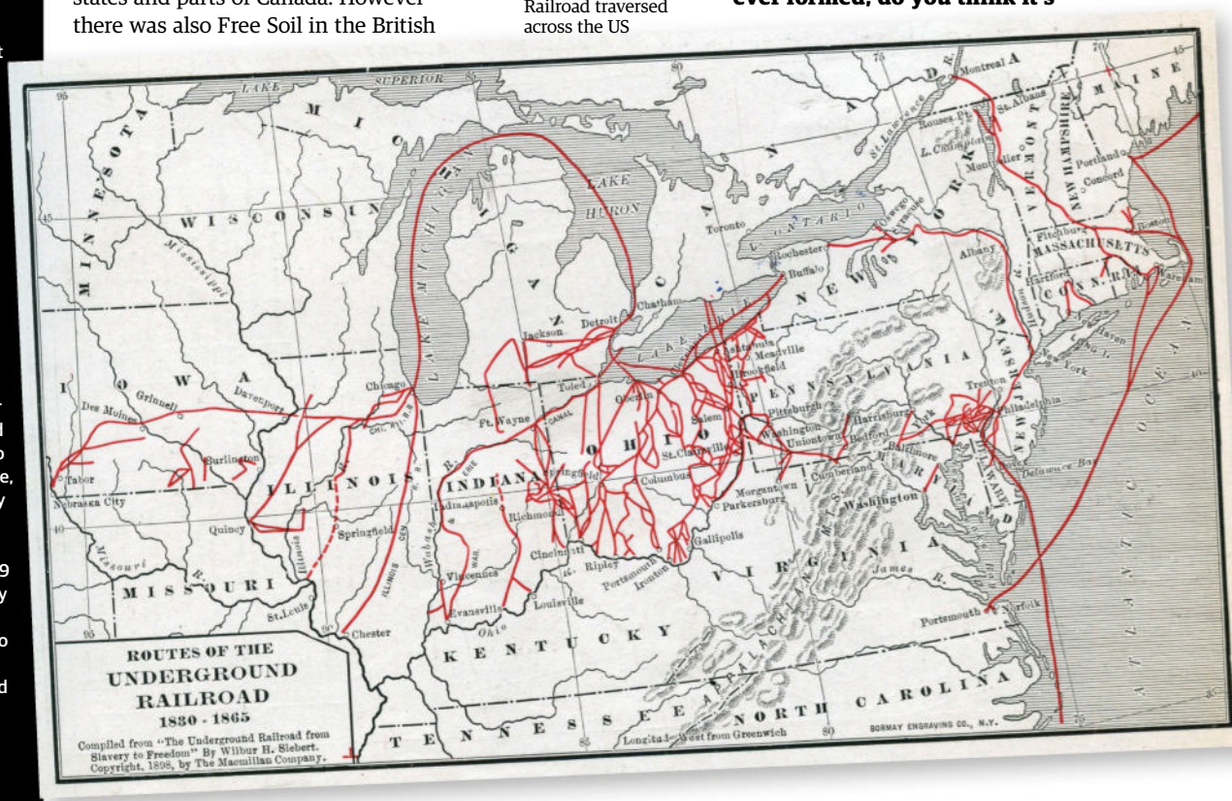
How did the Underground Railroad help contribute to abolition?

Because it's one of the targets of 19th-century resistance to the system of slavery.

It provided the abolitionists, anti-slavery societies and their members with a practical opportunity to show their resistance to the system. And in doing so, they created problems for southern slaveholders as well as for the South, generally, by syphoning off what they saw as their principal means of existence. In short, they were taking away the much-needed labour from the plantation system. Now, it's important to state that this is not a significant number of people. This is not a mass exodus. But what it is is a consistent flow. The result is an assault on a system that prided itself on maintaining control over its labour force.

If the Underground Railroad hadn't ever formed, do you think it's

BELOW
The Underground Railroad traversed across the US



ABOVE
Underground Railroad 'conductor' Harriet Tubman with friends and family

possible there would have been an impact on the wider abolitionist movement?
That's a tough question to answer. It's a hard one for the simple reason that, by the late 1830s and 1840s, it's such an integral part of the anti-slavery movement in the United States, that it's very difficult to envisage the movement growing and succeeding without the kind of resistance that the Underground Railroad provided.

If you take a look at contemporary anti-slavery literature, it often appears front and centre. For example, the highest selling novel written in the 19th century, which is Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, starts with a slave woman with her infant in her arms, fleeing across the frozen Ohio River. Now that was not some fictional invention, that was based on an actual event that really happened. So these escapes by enslaved persons are critical to our understanding of the abolitionist movement. Because without it, people are trying to simply win popular support for the abolition of slavery without the voice of the slaves themselves. Slaves, by their physical action of escaping, provide their voice and therefore meaning to the abolitionist movement. It's hard to say, but I doubt it would have succeeded to the extent it did.

Do you think it is fair to say that if the Underground Railroad had never existed, there would have always been similar escape groups, whether they were organised or not?
Yes, I think these escape routes will have happened whether or not people came up with the idea of the Underground Railroad. Wherever slavery existed, enslaved people would try to run away from it and escape. Not just in the United States but in the British colonies in the Caribbean and Brazil. It's clear that wherever slavery existed, the enslaved people ran away. So that fact in itself is testimony to the efforts of the enslaved to always try and find freedom, to put physical distance between themselves and their enslavement.

So if the Underground Railroad hadn't ever formed, what do you think the impact would be for America today?
Let me put it this way; the Underground Railroad, and the broader abolitionist movement under which it operated, is the first integrated movement resisting American racial oppression. It's the kind of example that others would later look to when we begin to talk about something like the 20th-century civil rights movement. Here is a movement in the 19th century that brought together a group of people across racial lines and across gender lines, in the name of resistance. This alone makes it very significant in the broader scope of the struggle of Americans to live up to their principles of all men being free and equal.

The Underground Railroad is a vital part of that effort of Americans to live up to the principle of achieving equality.

THE POSSIBILITY

1852

UNCLE TOM'S CABIN

Selling 300,000 in its first year in the US, and 1.5 million copies in Britain in one year, according to the Harriet Beecher Stowe Center, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was one of the 19th century's most popular books. Stowe originally intended to write a handful of instalments for an anti-slavery newspaper, before the story grew. Stowe collected first-hand accounts of slavery. The book remains controversial, but without the Underground Railroad, this impactful but divisive work of literature would never have been written.

1863

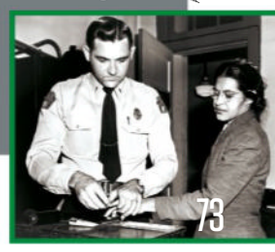
THE END OF SLAVERY

In 1863, Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, though it was limited only to states that had seceded. Two years later, the 13th amendment was added to the United States constitution and ensured that slavery was abolished. However, the bill did not have an easy passage through Congress, with the House not originally passing the bill. Lincoln was able to ensure that the bill would make it through in January of 1865. Could the Underground Railroad never existing have affected the eventual abolition of slavery?

1950s

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

In the 1950s, the struggle for racial equality entered a new phase. Fighting against outdated segregation laws, the movement was ignited by activists like Rosa Parks. Dr Martin Luther King became one of the movement's leaders and coordinated bus boycotts soon saw segregated busing being ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. In 1954 segregation in public schools was deemed unconstitutional and in 1957, Eisenhower signed the Civil Rights Act. As Richard Blackett suggests, the Underground Railroad was an inspirational act of resistance, so would a world without it impact these later important movements?



Through History

JEWELS OF INDIA

A new book showcases the magnificence and artistry of jewelled luxury objects from India's past

All images: © The al-Sabah Collection

In the latest collaboration with the al-Sabah Collection in Kuwait, a new publication from Thames & Hudson spectacularly highlights the glory and grandeur of historic Indian jewellery and other bejewelled objects. Salam Kaoukji, an author and curator, guides us through a world of beauty and extravagance in a selection of over 300 precious objects from the 16th and 17th centuries. All were made during the Mughal empire and Deccan sultanates and showcase a wide range of craftsmanship and techniques. As Kaoukji points out in the introduction to *Adornment And Splendour: Jewels Of The Indian Courts* (Thames & Hudson, 2023), the collection on display is "widely recognised as the most significant in the world."

The collection itself was brought together by Sheikh Nasser and Sheikha Hussa al-Sabah in order to demonstrate the variety of artistic uses of jewels from India. Among the jewels captured within the book are examples of gemstone carvings, enamelling and inscriptions on jewels, highlighting the skill and creativity of the Indian artists who produced them for their wealthy patrons. Also included are several objects that have never been included in a publication before.

AMULET CASE

Possibly dating from the late 16th century, this elaborate amulet case would have been used to hold an equally elaborate amulet. During this period, some amulets had space in which to keep religious texts as a means of warding off evil.

PENDANT IN NAME OF SHAH JAHAN

Made from grey nephrite jade and inlaid with gold, this pendant is inscribed in the name of Emperor Shah Jahan (ruled 1628-1658). The inscription begins on one side of the pendant and continues on the other side.

PENDANT

Made from gold, diamonds, rubies and emeralds with a pendant emerald bead, this pendant was made in the mid 17th century under the Deccan sultanates. It is believed that the back of the pendant was completed by an assistant due to the poor settings of the diamonds.

ARMBAND

▲ This stunning armband dates from the early 17th century and is set using the kundan technique. It is made from gold, with the intricate design made from rubies, diamonds, emeralds and yellow sapphires.

FINGER RING

▶ Unusual in style, this finger ring features the design of a bird perched on a rotating bezel, which allows it to move. The ring is made from gold with rubies, emeralds, sapphires, diamonds and chrysoberyl cat's eyes.

ENAMELLED BOX

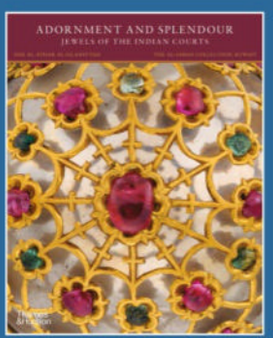
▼ This highly decorated enamelled and bejewelled box is set with rubies, emeralds and diamonds. The lid of the box features small rubies aligned to imitate the look of pomegranate seeds, and the enamelling is done in the design of poppy flower heads.

EAR PLUGS

A pair of ornately decorated ear plugs from the 17th century, these objects are a prime example of enamelled jewellery from the period. They are made from gold and strung with pearls, while the enamel decoration takes the form of poppies and leaves.

JEWELLED ROCK CRYSTAL CUP

This cup is carved out of rock crystal and is set with rubies and emeralds and inlaid with gold. The design of the cup's adorned decoration resembles the famous fleur-de-lys motif.



Adornment and Splendour: Jewels of the Indian Courts (Thames & Hudson, 2023) by Salam Kaoukji is available to buy now.

REVIEWS

The books, TV shows and films causing a stir in the history world this month

© Alamy

NAPOLEON

An exciting, eccentric take on the French military legend's life

Cert: 15 **Director:** Ridley Scott **Cast:** Joaquin Phoenix, Vanessa Kirby, Tahar Rahim **Released:** Out now

Ridley Scott is one of cinema's supreme visual stylists and a director adept at tackling most genres of film. If his legacy resides specifically in two hugely influential sci-fi movies, 1979's *Alien* and 1982's *Blade Runner*, his fondness for continuing Hollywood's historical epic tradition has often also yielded thrilling results. It should be noted too that his latest harks back somewhat to his debut. 1977's *The Duellists*, about the rivalry between two aristocrats, took place in France during the Napoleonic Wars. Now, 46 years later, Scott has finally turned his attention to the big man himself.

Joaquin Phoenix stars – and reunites – with Scott for the first time since 2000's *Gladiator*, in which the American actor played the psycho Emperor Commodus; and that particular film was inspired by Jean-Léon Gérôme's *Pollice Verso* painting (1872), depicting a victorious gladiator awaiting the signal from the crowd to kill or show mercy. Scott turned to Gérôme again in *Napoleon* (2023), as he directly recreates the French artist's famous painting *Bonaparte Before The Sphinx* (1886), during Egypt campaign scenes. It is a stirring moment in a film that both romanticises and humanises the military legend.

Phoenix of course was never going to play Boney straightforwardly. He is renowned for eccentric and intense performances, and here is no different. French critics and historians have already lined up to throw rotten fruit and vegetables at the film for its lack of historical accuracy. Not that Scott cares a jot. Did Napoleon *really* fire cannons at the pyramids at Giza? Did he *really* witness Marie Antoinette's execution? Did he *really* make dog-like ruff-ruff noises, when signalling to Josephine that he wished to partake in sexual congress? Where the film has earned praise is its historic fidelity to early 19th century battlefield tactics and formations. So it's not all bad.

Spanning the early days of the Corsican's career to his last lonely days on St Helena, screenwriter David Scarpa has hinged his script on the French expression *À l'amour comme à la guerre* (to love as to war). The film bats back and forth between the battlefronts of Europe and the battlefront at home. Here, Kirby is equal to her leading man, delivering a sultry Josephine, but who is also realistic in outlook about her marriage and place in society as a woman in her era. Phoenix and Kirby make a fine Boney and Josephine, the actors bringing an irreverent playfulness to their scenes.

Scott is a maestro of action cinema, and so the Toulon, Austerlitz, and Waterloo recreations are thunderously exciting and marvels of choreography. That the 86-year-old director led a team that shot the film in 61 days is frankly jaw-dropping, given the complexity of what is staged throughout its 2 hrs 38 mins. The Battle of Austerlitz is the film's truly magnificent centrepiece, showing not just the gory theatre of war, but Napoleon's ruthlessness and crafty tactics, which historians say he puffed up for propaganda purposes, throughout his life.

Napoleon might not offer the truest depiction, but it's damn good cinema. ***MC***

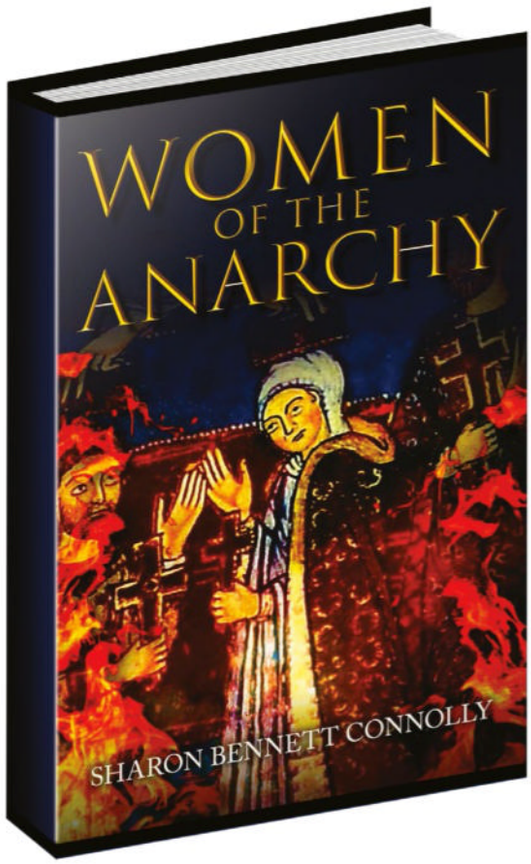
★★★★★

Reviews by
Martyn Conterio, Catherine Curzon, Emily Staniforth

WOMEN OF THE ANARCHY

The story of two Matildas, an empress and a queen

Author: Sharon Bennett Connolly **Publisher:** Amberley **Price:** £22.99
Released: 15 January 2024

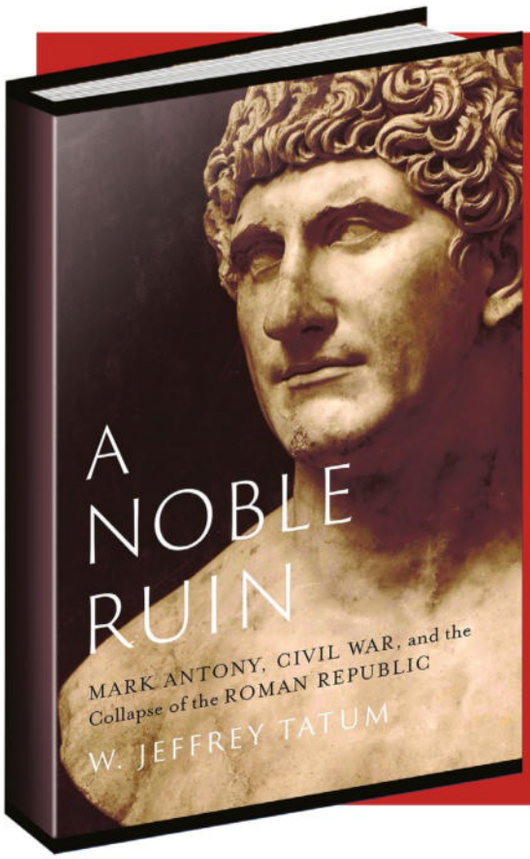


In *Women Of The Anarchy*, Sharon Bennett Connolly tells the parallel stories of two cousins named Matilda. The first, Empress Matilda, saw her throne usurped by Stephen of Blois in 1135, an act that launched a bloody 19-year civil war known to history as the Anarchy. As she fought for the crown that was her birthright, she found herself pitted against another Matilda: this one the wife of King Stephen.

As granddaughters of a queen and descendants of Alfred the Great, the two women at the centre of this story both believed that it was the right of their own blood to rule, and both were determined to prevail. With Stephen of Blois captured by the forces of Empress Matilda, it was up to his queen to carry on the war and, she hoped, secure his eventual release. Neither of the women would ever see battle, but they made their mark in other ways. From strategy to negotiation to making the sorts of decisions that the powerful barons believed were the province of men alone, the two women altered the course of the war and also the path of history itself.

Women Of The Anarchy is particularly notable for the story of Matilda of Boulogne, the queen who has often been a supporting player in her husband's story. It's also a reminder of the challenges unique to royal women, both at home and in the wider world. This is a fascinating story that will appeal to anyone with an interest in the power plays of the medieval world. ***CC***

★★★★☆



A NOBLE RUIN

An evocative portrait of Mark Antony and the fall of Rome

Author: W Jeffrey Tatum **Publisher:** OUP USA
Price: £26.99 **Released:** 1 March 2024

In *A Noble Ruin: Mark Antony, Civil War, And The Collapse Of The Roman Republic*, W Jeffrey Tatum presents a new and deeply layered examination of the life and times of Mark Antony. Though it is a story that has been told and retold in fact and fiction until it has become almost legend, this complex new portrait attempts to lay bare the man behind the stories and in doing so, present a new take on the end of the Roman Empire.

With a mountain of tangled and often contradictory sources available, Tatum has sifted through the information to assemble an authoritative and surely exhaustive biography of this most famous of all Romans. Rich in detail that illuminates but never obscures the greater issues, *A Noble Ruin* presents an entirely new picture of Mark Antony, one in which he emerges as not a symbol of heroic antiquity but a very human figure. Tatum is also adept at relating sweeping and complex issues in a way that draws immediate focus to their place in history and their importance in the contemporary moment.

Supported by a wealth of sources and a multi-page bibliography, this is not a book for the casual reader. It is unlikely to be the last word on the subject, but it is also so rich in detail and minutiae that it may well be a step too far for those who are not already steeped in Roman history. That said, *A Noble Ruin* will reward any who wish to immerse themselves in the ancient world. ***CC***

★★★★★

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HISTORY OF WAR **RECOMMENDS...**

Lawrence of Arabia

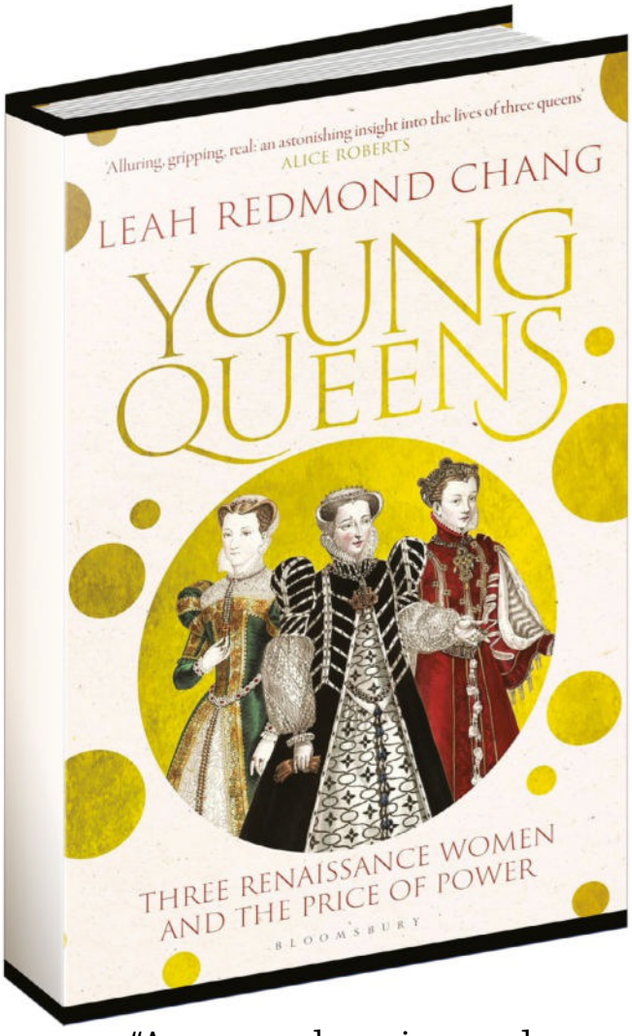
Author Sir Ranulph Fiennes **Price** £25 **Publisher** Penguin

Sir Ranulph Fiennes is no stranger to warfare in the arid territories in which his biographical subject, Thomas Edward Lawrence, the famed Lawrence of Arabia, played out his epic life. The book brings to light the deep affection Lawrence felt for the Arab people. There is no doubt in the author's mind as to what Lawrence had achieved: "He remains a symbol of opposition to repression and of how one man's dream can achieve miracles against all odds."

YOUNG QUEENS

A fascinating exploration of three powerful women in Renaissance Europe

Author: Leah Redmond Chang **Publisher:** Bloomsbury Circus Ltd **Price:** £25 **Released:** Out now



"A comprehensive and thoroughly entertaining study of three exceptional Renaissance queens"

In the 16th century, three women were linked through family bonds and the weight of power. Catherine de' Medici, Elisabeth de Valois and Mary, Queen of Scots were all powerful queens, serving their own nations and the states of their spouses to varying degrees as their power fluctuated throughout their lives. Tied together through marriage and blood, they ruled during an extraordinary period of history in which some of the most important political players were female. In *Young Queens: Three Renaissance Women And The Price Of Power*, Leah Redmond Chang effortlessly navigates the political landscape of Renaissance Europe, particularly France, and the personal intricacies of the women in question to tell their extraordinary stories in a new and fascinating approach.

Of the three queens featured, Catherine de' Medici dominates this book. Prepared for a life of authority from birth, Catherine was part of Florence's influential Medici family and the great granddaughter of Lorenzo de' Medici, known as Il Magnifico. As a result, Catherine knew her voice was a powerful one from a young age, as Redmond Chang demonstrates from the beginning of *Young Queens*. Following her life, the book charts Catherine's marriage to the future King Henry II of France, her influence at the French court and the precarious position she found herself in when her husband became the heir to the French throne. It seemed as though Catherine was unable to get pregnant at the beginning of her marriage, an issue that became more pressing after her husband became the Dauphin. However, motherhood ended up playing a major part in Catherine's life as she, against the odds, ended up giving birth to ten children. The dynasty she created she worked to protect until the end of her life.

Elisabeth de Valois was Catherine de' Medici and Henry II's second child and oldest daughter. Despite being the child of such a memorable and extensively studied historical figure as Catherine, and eventually becoming the wife of the infamous Philip II of Spain, Elisabeth is less well known than her other family members. However, Redmond Chang does an excellent job of bringing her into the limelight, highlighting her as a peacemaker between her home of France and her husband's nation of Spain.

Mary, Queen of Scots comes into the picture when she is five years old. Having been Queen of Scotland since she was a newborn, her mother placed her at the French court where she would grow up and later marry Catherine's eldest son Francis. Redmond Chang recounts how she was brought up alongside Elisabeth, bonding them through shared political and emotional experiences, before she eventually followed her own path as Scotland's Queen and rival to England's Elizabeth I.

Overall, Redmond Chang's work provides a comprehensive and thoroughly entertaining study of three exceptional Renaissance queens through a lesser explored connection between the group. Intertwined in all these historical narratives, Redmond Chang showcases the queens' individual personalities, fleshing each woman out into a fully formed, rounded human being with their own nuances and idiosyncrasies. ***ES***

★★★★★

HISTORY VS HOLLYWOOD

Fact versus fiction on the silver screen

SPARTACUS

Director: Stanley Kubrick **Starring:** Kirk Douglas, Laurence Olivier, Tony Curtis **Country:** Italy **Year:** 1960

Does this tale of rebel gladiators hold up in the arena of historical records?

VERDICT: While inspired by many true events, invention and embellishment reign in this epic historical drama.

01 Spartacus claims to be the descendant of a long line of slaves, going back to his grandfather. This is not based on any historical record. In fact, while he was from Thrace, it's thought that he was a Roman soldier and then imprisoned and enslaved.

02 Although trained as a gladiator at Capua, which was a well-known school, Spartacus never actually fights in an arena, which is accurate. The uprising of the slaves beginning in the school's kitchen also tracks with the historical record of events in 73 BCE.

03 Spartacus did lead his men to a stunning victory over Clodius, the Roman praetor. The film shows this as a surprise night attack against a poorly prepared camp. In reality, it was even more daring, as they abseiled down Mount Vesuvius to flank the Romans.

04 Spartacus and his army make it their aim to free every slave in every town in the film, but such a motive is not established in the historical records. They are estimated to have freed around 90,000 enslaved people as they travelled Italy, however.

05 The most famous scene of the film, as Spartacus's men stand in turn to claim "I'm Spartacus!" is unfortunately fictitious. Spartacus died in battle thanks to a spear to the thigh. It is true, however, that some surviving rebels were crucified.

All images: © Alamy, © Getty Images

Did you know?

Kahlo learned many of her recipes from her mother and Diego Rivera's second wife, Guadalupe Marin.

BLACK MOLE

CLASSIC DISH FROM OAXACA, MEXICO, 14-20TH CENTURY

Ingredients

- 8 chilhuacle or cascabel chillies
- 4 mulato chillies (seeded and deveined)
- 4 pasilla chillies (seeded and deveined)
- 375g lard
- 1 head of garlic roasted
- 2 large onions roasted
- 3 stale tortillas (torn)
- French bread roll (torn)
- 100g blanched almonds
- 75g shelled peanuts
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 75g sesame seeds
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp dried marjoram
- 2 tsp oregano (preferably Mexican)
- 10 coriander seeds
- 10 black peppercorns
- 8 cloves
- 100g raisins
- 70g dark chocolate
- 2kg ripe tomatoes, roasted and peeled
- 500g tomatillos (small green tomatoes)
- Salt and sugar to taste

Mole derives from the Aztec word 'mulli', which translates simply as mix or sauce. There are a great many varieties of mole from across Mexico, all deriving from this original concept. It's a mix of cocoa and chilli peppers, with regional produce being the differentiating factor.

A passion for food is clear enough to see in the artistic works of Frida Kahlo, but she was also known among friends and family for her dinner parties. In 1994, Kahlo's step-daughter Guadalupe Rivera and author Marie-Pierre Colle published *Frida's Fiestas: Recipes And Reminiscences Of Life With Frida Kahlo*, which celebrated some of the favourite recipes of the renowned Mexican icon. And, naturally, mole plays a key role.

Among the many recipes in the book is one for black mole sauce, usually served with turkey or chicken. Some of the chillies may need some hunting down, but aren't necessarily as hot as you might think.

METHOD

01 Fry the chillies in the lard until they are aromatic, being careful not to burn them.

02 Transfer the chillies to a large saucepan and fill with hot water to cover them. Bring to a boil and then allow them to simmer until soft. Scoop them out and set aside.

03 Fry the onions and garlic in the lard pan until translucent. Add the tortillas, bread, almonds, peanuts, cinnamon stick, sesame seeds, cumin seeds, thyme, marjoram, oregano, coriander seeds, peppercorns, cloves, raisins and chocolate to the pan.

04 Combine this mixture with the chillies and tomatoes in a food processor. Mix until a puree is formed. Strain the mixture to make sure it's smooth and then cook in lard again to thicken and combine the flavours.

05 Add a little of the meat stock from whatever you're serving the mole with, as well as sugar and salt to taste. Best served with braised turkey or chicken. Top with sesame seeds.

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