

A SOLUTIONIST MINDSCAPE
EDITION
02

EVERY
ONE'S
BUSINESS

READER BEWARE. MIND-ALTERING IDEAS ARE CONTAINED WITHIN


A SOLUTIONIST MINDSCAPE



"I am superior, sir, in many ways, but I would gladly
give it up to be human."
- LT. CMDR. DATA

EVERYONE'S BUSINESS

WHAT THIS IS, PARTLY

The background features a stylized, abstract landscape with various geometric shapes. On the left, a large, textured orange crescent shape is positioned. In the center, a magnifying glass with a green frame is focused on a small, lush green tree growing from a bed of white pebbles. To the right, there are several stacked, rectangular blocks in shades of orange and brown, creating a stepped effect. The overall color palette is warm, with greens, oranges, and browns.

Everyone's Business is an experiment in discrete exuberance. The present moment flows along, and carries us all with it. We each are sovereign members of the earth, containing within, multitudes of gifts, skills, intuitions, waiting to be stoked into a type of energetic creativity, that has the potential to create an even better world for us all. Human development is a lifelong, heroic, messy endeavour which thrives in shared purpose, and knowledge. Consider this a playground for the mind, and permission to take the act of living as seriously as needed, to enjoy it as fully as possible.

SUPPORT US OVER AT PATRICK
NON

click the p



A FIREBALL



We live on a ball of water in the midst of a great vacuum, orbiting an orb of fire. If I think too long on this thought, vertigo starts to creep into the soles of my feet, a subtle clenching of the calf muscle takes effect, my body starts to spiral into something akin to the reverse-rigor mortis; as my brain starts to process this reality, the body starts to clock the strangeness of our existence. I'd recommend this contemplation if you need a shake out of inertia.

I have gone out into the world, and undertaken a type of foraging which is more common today than the gathering of our ancestors: foraging, from the comfort of my web browser, information, ideas, concepts, and any other number of things that require me to personally do very little by way of action.

But therein lies the beauty of every human that populates this Edition, and the billions that exist outside of it. They live in the world of deliberate being, of conscious action - the bridge between the seed of an idea, and its practical, working, scalable manifestation, is on show here in this Edition.

Something else emerged once I stepped back from the Edition. Without a deliberate attempt, the blind watchmaker within me created quite a pro-human artefact, not to the exclusion of all other creatures, but as a humane hug to a species that too often is denigrated as problematic and harmful. Everyone's Business is here to showcase a spectrum of ideas current in our time but with added context, ideas that are shaping the very fabric of our future lives, ideas that are there to be interrogated and to be tested. The future is too important to be left to other people, as great as they are. Me, you, as individuals, are part of an interconnected lineage that started with stardust and most likely will end with that, too. Between the beginning and the end, the possibilities are endless, but they remain unrealised unless we take on the mantle of serious dabblers, passionate amateurs and involved citizens, to improve upon what has been created to date. I find technology hugely empowering, and a real marvel. But for now at least, any technological advance, beyond the narrow definition of microchips and electronics, has emerged from human ingenuity, and lots of trial and error. This is not hubris, nor myth-making, but a statement of fact. No other mammal has created paper or, refrigerators, nor are there any mammals who have travelled into space or created space waste. Imagination, creativity, synthesis and innovation, these are traits that humans thoroughly excel at which carry promise and detriment, and they are not to be outsourced to a handful of people, but to be taken up by each of us, should we be up for the challenge.

See you on the other side. Perhaps write me a note, to let me know, that you arrived intact.

Always,

Hardeep, often referred to as, H

[@antsthesizeofwhales](#) [@perse.london](#)

[Edition I](#)

origin: noun of action from past-participle stem of the Latin contribuere, "to bring together, add, contribute."

CONTRIBUTING VOICES

Sam Everington
Nocera&Ferri
Paola Antonelli
Pattern Studio
Penny Martin
The Minimalists
Harry Brignull
Rafaella Baruzzo
Tomoko Kakita

SOME OF WHAT TO EXPECT

GATHER

We gathered makers, grocers, a set designer, a photographer and a furoshiki practitioner to create something one could safely say is even greater than each of these exceptional parts.

WHAT FOUR WORDS

Compulsion, commitment, routine, ritual: we pooled these words and concepts from two very different disciplines, but lo' and behold, together they have much to teach us about how we act in the world.

NUMBER DROP

Letters are all well and good for saying some things. Other times, a number speaks far louder, and with a little more wit. So, we made some calls, and corralled some numbers, to come in, and share their story.

MARCH DISPATCH FROM LILLY

What is occupying the mind of an interior design half the world away, when parts of that world are in the throes of deep suffering...

FURTHER

STIMULI

HARK, WHAT SAY YOU

A look behind the curtain, to see some of the deep code, literal, metaphorical, and philosophical, that drives modern civilisation. A humble topic.

THE MINIMALISTS

You may be familiar with the billboard thought experiment i.e. if you could, in any location, commandeer a billboard, what would be shared upon it? In Edition I we asked Carlo Rovelli, this time, The Minimalists.

DARK ARTS

The wild wild west, or what is more commonly known as the internet, has come along way from Sir Tim Berners-Lee's initial network for connecting academics at CERN. Since then the internet has taken on a darker under belly. A UX designer sheds light on these dark arts.

VALVE

What do you get when you combine radical autonomy with collective purpose at work? Valve Corporation, for one; the early pioneers of video games that are played by millions of people the world over.

ANNOUNCEMENTS PAGE: exciting new things, exciting re-discoveries, solutionists, tinkerers etc etc etc.

AND A BIT MORE

THE WORD IS WITH MEN

In his Nobel speech, John Steinbeck clearly was channeling the anxiety of his time, and, well, ours. The power of words, especially those used in the service of creating fictional worlds, for Steinbeck, has the ability to tip the scale of humanity, into the light, or into the darkness.

REALITY, SOMEWHERE OUT THERE

What is base line reality? How are the stories you most often tell yourself, about your work, relationships, failings, achievements, other people, habits, and everything else, shaped by a specific or random moment in life, which you thereafter rarely update or reassess?

ARCHITECTURE OF CONTEMPLATION

Continuing the series from Edition I, we riff off the question, what are the spaces, and places, that we seek out for expanding one's sense of being, for respite and contemplation? This Edition, Paola Antonelli and Penny Martin share their expansive places.

HOW TO FIKA

80,000 hours of an average lifetime are spent at work. Think of all the lost opportunities for cake, tea, coffee, connecting and washing up.

LEARN TO HACK

NY Times writer Nicole Perloth has been immersed in cybersecurity for several years, and has seen inside the belly of the digital beast. 'Learn to code' took on a disparaging tone, but what merit, if any, lies in Perloth's advice, 'learn to hack'?

SUI GENERIS

Sam Everington has walked many paths, often leading the way in new territories. We sat down with Sam to talk about social prescribing which his practice has been refining for over a decade. The basic premise is that many chronic ailments can be treated by a roster of non-medical interventions, which empowers patients to make effective change in their own lives. The programme initially took root in the Peckham Experiment, which ran from 1926-1950 but has only recently regained a space in modern medicine and social science. We discussed all manner of topics, from humour, joy, the power of extreme politeness in breaking through bureaucratic bluster, and the importance of paying it forward.

UNUSUAL FRIENDSHIPS

How does this read for an ad: 'Former gang members looking to collaborate with a New Englander graduate of Stanford to create geodesic domes in the Lower East Side in the 1970s'? We enquired.

MARIONETTE

Through the unflinching gaze of philosopher John Gray, a question is posed...

more of what to expect:

LEARN TO FUROSHIKI; LETTERS TO THE EDITORS; LOTS OF OTHER THINGS – ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SCROLL AND PERUSE.

Sometimes a whisper has more of an impact than a shout. Pattern Studio is one such hushed corner of the interior design universe. Powered by co-founders Lily Goodwin and Josh Cain, the pair describe their work as possessing a 'sensual minimalism' which could sound oxymoronic, but for the fact that looking at their evolving body of work, the statement largely rings true. Each Edition, we select one mind to share some words. For this month's note, we asked Lily to pen some thoughts of what is currently occupying her mind.

I'm a designer, one half of a small practice based in Sydney, Australia. Pattern (our practice) affords my life much satisfaction. I work with my best friend who is also my partner, we spend our days carefully crafting spaces that will be beautiful to behold and joyful to those who will occupy them. It is, truthfully, a dream gig. One reason I find this profession so rewarding is that we spend much of our time thinking about how things could be the most pleasing and enjoyable; we work backward from that vision and use our skills to execute it as faithfully as possible. We look for ways to elevate, enhance, refine; for opportunities that might inspire and delight. It is very cool.

But things haven't been as peachy as of late.

In 2022 we find ourselves in the midst of back-to-back disasters; since 2019 we have lived through catastrophic bushfires across Australia, a global pandemic, an affordable housing crisis, and now East-coast Australia's ruinous floods and a war which has seen the largest displacement of people in Europe since WW2. These are big issues, and they have been devastating. We are in a perpetual state of devastation. Short of being a nurse or an emergency services personnel it is easy and understandable to feel like there are very real limitations on how we can contribute to alleviating these dire situations. Working as a designer feels a bit like being a medic in a war who only offers Botox.

What place does a creative have in such calamitous times?

I find reassurance in the reminder that I do in fact have skills that can help steer the ship away from the iceberg that is our future. The aforementioned disasters have all created problems that designers, artists, architects and philosophers can assist with resolving. But here is the most important part (and the most encouraging, for me anyway). We have talents that can contribute to a greater shift. A shift away from the mentality that has gotten us here; greed and the individual above all else. The future of our profession doesn't have to only be designing palatial quarters for the mega-wealthy; actually it can't – our planet doesn't have the resources to continue along the path that has gotten us here. It is possible to design a world that is truly sustainable; environmentally and socially. And that world can be beautiful; delightful, inspiring and joyful. I believe that creatives and artists wield much power. Now more than ever is the time to use it.

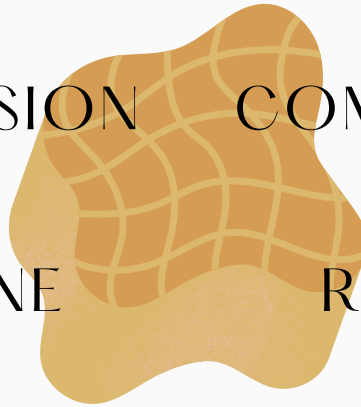
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WHAT FOUR WORLDS

COMPULSION COMMITMENT

ROUTINE RITUAL



Four words: compulsion, commitment, routine, ritual. Reading these words, even simply scanning across them, the mind unfurls a roll call of associations. One reader may experience a tightening of the soul, another, a surety of self; the subconscious easily categorises the spider's web of daily actions and habits into these four sides of two coins.

The grouping of these words initially seems an arbitrary occurrence, that we have combined from two very different disciplines, which is literally accurate. The question is, is there merit to this quadrant of our making? Read, and then decide.

We start with the difference between compulsion and commitment in the context of corporate governance, from the work of Alex Edmans, Professor of Finance at the London Business School. The point he makes in his incisive and persuasive thesis, 'Grow the Pie: How Great Companies Deliver Both Purpose and Profit' is that the desire to compel companies to adopt responsible business practices, is less effective over the long term, for actually driving change than generating commitment from within the company, to causes that are of genuine interest, and purposeful, to the company, and people within that organisation. "Of course", you say, that is obvious. But the difference between the two terms goes deeper. We are talking about the difference between autonomy and autocracy, and which of these two states engenders a flourishing culture of innovation and accountability. Compelling individuals, teams or companies one could argue does not encourage change at a granular, institutional level. It's less a changing of hearts and minds but the chopping of a limb. A bit like the body, where when one function diminishes, an overcompensation occurs in a different part of the body, there can be deleterious, downstream, effects. One of them being, when the media loses interest in a given cause, a given company also quietly exits the scene.

This then brings us to the next grouping of words - routine and ritual. This time these concepts come from psychotherapist Esther Perel. These two words girder the cultivation of an effective relationship. Routine is that which must be completed, the admin, or plumbing, so to speak, of a relationship: taking out the bins, school drop-off, paying the bills - any action that grounds a relationship, that provides a base level of stability and security. Ritual, the close cousin of routine, is that which elevates seeming mundane actions or genuinely unique moments; they are deliberate, express intent, imbue meaning and are stored as memories. Both are important when seeking a mutually enriching, and enduring, connection, of any kind. And one that is fun, and joyful.

So, to thread the quadrant: knowing the difference between compulsion, commitment, routine and ritual and to dial up or down each of these respective concepts, adds a new toolkit to communication. If you have tried to compel others to your line of thought, with little success, in an endeavour you believe is worthwhile, then perhaps switch gears to mutual commitment to a shared goal instead; perhaps some nuance has been missed by taking a prescriptive approach. If routine is starting to feel predictive, or stifling, pick a task or moment and see where you can add a ritualistic component - a tax return may have limited capabilities to be deified, but you can honour the completion with a special meal to celebrate that the onerous task is complete, with a humble but delicious meal with a friend, fresh flowers on the table, a favourite shared song on in the background. At a company level, this is why off-sites are so crucial in strengthening team bonds - work is freed from pure utility, to making eye contact with the people who you spend thousands of hours alongside.. And vice versa, if you are predisposed to more spontaneity but are in constant stress about the admin of life, or avoid seemingly hard conversations, adjust the dial to bring in some order, and structure - not confrontation, just a container to help the idea cross the line. Choose your own adventure.



Powering
Minds

Cultivating
Spirit

CHARAS

The story starts in September 1972.

It lasted for five months, and reverberated for years thereafter.

Three stars coalesced to create a constellation of meaning and action: they were a collective called CHARAS, engineer R. Buckminster Fuller and his protégé, Michael Ben Eli.

Before we get to 1972, let us travel to 1964 when two men, gang members in particular, met at a party when they were each at a tri-cross-road: to die on the streets, to tempt life imprisonment eventually or, to decide there had to be a third way which was life-affirming, not life-denying.

Carlos Garcia (known as Chino) and Angelo Gonzalez Jr. were gang leaders in the Lower East side of Manhattan. In and out of jail, violence proliferated and drugs were becoming the mainstay of their moment to moment existence. At this time, whispers were ladling along the streets of New York of something called the 'Great Society'. These were a series of domestic programmes launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson, to banish once and for all the spectre, and human face, of racial injustice and poverty. Chino and Angelo decided that they would take the opportunity one step further, and establish the Real Great Society (RGS).

Where guns and knives had been the common tools of resolution, now they were replaced with piles of paperwork for grants to help the duo, and an army of hopeful fellow, former gang members, NGO alumni and idealists, looking for a cause. They would build local solutions to the endemic poverty, lack of education, violence, abuse and systemic inequality.

It was in 1968 when the path of a close-sighted, hard of hearing, visionary WASP from New England, R. Buckminster Fuller, would cross with that of RGS. He was invited to speak to the group, who had realised that basic housing, that was affordable and well-maintained, was fundamental in allowing residents to escape the perpetual cycle of poverty.

Bucky, as Fuller was informally known, had devised his version of the geodesic dome, which he believed offered solutions to the housing issue as expressed by RGS.

Fuller spoke to the group for five straight hours. He talked in his customary, world-vision sweeping way, carrying along with his words some of those present more than others, but inside of those listening, even with the hugest seeming gulf in their learning and formal education, a seed was planted, which became CHARAS. Not only were the individuals gathered in that room part of their local environment, possessing the power to make effective change by applying a systems based approach to improving the neighbourhood, but they were also part of a galactic cooperative, aboard 'spaceship earth' as coined by Fuller, and their contribution was of monumental importance.

With this new framework of thinking, and the introduction of the geodesic dome concept, Chino and Angelo broke out from RGS, along with four other members who too became energised by Fuller's belief in them. They formed CHARAS, an acronym of the founders' names, and with Michael Ben Eli, Fuller's right-hand man, they began to plot.

What's clear when reading Syeus Mottel's book, the one that inspired this essay, is that no-one involved knew the seeming absurdity of the project they were undertaking. Speaking with Mottel, Ben Eli later recalled that these were both some of the most rewarding months of his life, but also the most challenging, even depressing.

BOOK Charas: The Improbable Dome Builders;
Syeus Mottel, 1974 Drake Publishing, 2018 Pioneer
Works & Song Cave Express | [Here](#)

**WATCH: CHARAS The Improbable Dome Builders:
The Future in Action** Matt Mottel | [Here](#)

Powering
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What is also abundantly clear from this period, is that the dome building created a movement of collective purpose. Scores of people volunteered, freely gave their time, the use of their cars, they worked on through the night and freezing conditions, because they were doing something that meant something. What precisely that meaning was, was up for debate. But the idea that meaning was something that the everyday person was directly able to create and partake in, had never been accessible to the those that society had written off: ex-criminals, former gang members, ex-junkies.

'Casual strangers strolling by caught the infectious feeling and asked if they could help.'

Eventually, soaked with exhaustion, the domes were completed; TV crews had been witness, thousands of passers-by had peered wide-eyed at the audacious structure, and CHARAS and its sprawling army of volunteers had been tested to their limits.

On the Monday afternoon of its completion, a cab snaked through the streets. The door swung open, and out popped a man of small stature, but whose vision had galvanised an entire cohort of seeming misfits and miscreants. Hands were shaken, heartfelt congratulations shared, and a paradigm shifted. CHARAS, Michael Ben Eli, Bucky Fuller and a host of hopeful humans had risen to their promise and shown what could arise when the unlikeliest of people and ideas collided.

BOOK Charas: The Improbable Dome Builders;
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The team had been positively electrified to life with Fuller's sweeping optimism, but the reality was that the CHARAS team had had only a very basic education, and the dome building required deep mathematical and engineering knowledge. One member of CHARAS however, Roy Batiste, had a background in IBM computer repair work, and it was he who learned the principles of 'spherical trigonometry, solid geometry and dome math'. Combining this with the other members' ingenuity and resourcefulness that was unique to a life built directly from the streets, and Ben Eli's doggedness, they were on their way.

The initial aim was to build a 60 foot geodesic dome, which would serve as both a solution and metaphor. The solution sought was to increase the amount of housing that was resilient, fully integrated and did not rely on commercial, middlemen developers. The metaphor was that of pure possibility - if a group of former gang members, living in one of the most impoverished areas in NY state could bridge the gap to the whole earth, custodian approach of a thinker such as a Fuller, then there was no saying what could be achieved if more people switched on to these concepts of 'cohesion and purpose.'

A condemned loft space, 303 Cherry Street, became the headquarters for the endeavour, and over the next few months, it would see a stream of people come through in equal parts inspired, desirous to help, and marvelling at what was taking place. Funds were slow to come in, the process of drawing out the plans, and securing the material for the dome, was lengthy, but in time the parts started to come together. It was also eventually deemed both financially prudent (funds were limited), and achievable, to create two smaller domes within a time frame of a few days.

The trials and tribulations of the construction are told with exciting vitality by Mottel, and it's clear from both his perspective, and through direct interviews with the most instrumental members, that the construction of the domes morphed into a modern day David and Goliath tale: they faced brutal elements which destroyed some of the structures, a major fire broke out, and the public gaze was firmly fixed on them, but the dome builders were determined to succeed.

"The CHARAS group, as a prototype operations of human beings, caught on intuitively that they are really endowed from birth with great intellectual capabilities and they can really employ them, even though they did not go through school. They are able suddenly to master environmental controlling and to realise that they are going to make the breakthroughs. Instead of knocking other people down, with the false idea that "somebody's got to die so that I can live," the kids and the games in the streets of New York are becoming spontaneously aware-literate and confident-that there is enough to go around for everybody-that it's got to be you and me. The movement is in the streets, and it is wonderful news for humanity. The people I see in CHARAS are beautiful people, and their work is the best news I know."

REALITY OUT THERE, SOMEWHERE

Have you ever had that experience, upon waking in the morning, having been deep in the throes of some dreamscape, that it takes several moments to shake back into reality? The alertness of but a moment ago, a sprawling landscape of the imagination replete with its own simulation of space, time, texture, colour and most of the laws of physics intact, must be replaced by another highly potent version of events, which we typically call reality. But how do we truly know, what lies beyond what we believe to be familiar and accepted? Even more, how do we know we are at base level with any of our impressions, judgements or intuitions? Is there even such a thing as pure objectivity, truly? At this point the crumbs of vertigo may once again start to gather by your feet.

RUMI wean yourself

Little by little, wean yourself.
This is the gist of what I have to say.

From an embryo, whose nourishment comes in the blood,
move to an infant drinking milk,
to a child on solid food,
to a searcher after wisdom,
to a hunter of more invisible game.

Think how it is to have a conversation with an embryo.
You might say, "The world outside is vast and intricate.
There are wheatfields and mountain passes,
and orchards in bloom.

At night there are millions of galaxies, and in sunlight
the beauty of friends dancing at a wedding."
You ask the embryo why he, or she, stays cooped up
in the dark with eyes closed.

Listen to the answer.

There is no "other world."
I only know what I've experienced.
You must be hallucinating.

"Humans have too little self-
knowledge to be able to
fashion a higher version of
themselves."

THE SOUL OF THE MARIONETTE:
A SHORT ENQUIRY INTO HUMAN FREEDOM
JOHN GRAY

DISCUSS

20

the age at which a person will start to exhibit the symptoms of schizophrenia. Schizophrenia is hereditary, and it can start to show signs of manifesting as late as your early 30s. A thought for those carrying the burden of these numbers; the sighs of relief or the recognition of symptoms - each birthday in this age range is accompanied by a silent but potentially life-changing asterisk.

17

%, the reduction recorded by tobacco companies in the 1950s, in the public desire to call out big tobacco, when presented with relevant propaganda.

ZUMBER
DROP

50

cigarettes a day, the number equated to a chronic lack of social connection and the effect on one's health.

11

B, the hospital ward number, where England's Olympic Curling champion Vicky Wright worked during Covid, and returned to, after winning gold with fellow team mates.

MANY

worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics, postulated by Hugh Everett in 1957, which theorises that there are many worlds which exist in parallel at the same space and time as our own.

66

million dollars, the compensation earned by former Disney CEO Bob Iger in 2018.

70,000

the number of jobs created over the tenure of Bob Iger at Disney.

400

dollars, the amount bet by Martin Rees in 2017 that "a bioterror or bioerror will lead to one million casualties in a single event within a six month period starting no later than Dec 31 02020." Steven Pinker took the other side of the bet. See [here](#).

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The story of this collaboration, Gather, started with a piece of cloth. One piece of cloth measuring precisely 71cm by 71cm.

In Edition I of Everyone's Business, we spoke with Tomoko Kakita about the Japanese art of furoshiki, the wrapping of gifts, daily provisions, articles of use, in simple or elaborate encasings of fabric. In Japan, as with several arts and crafts of that culture, every element of the furoshiki is imbued with meaning. The item that is to be wrapped will be chosen according to the very specific occasion, time of year and receiver in that given moment. The fabric and wrapping style will reflect the shape and dimensions of the item, the time of year and seasonality. Fabric is gathered artfully around the item, and as much as the enfolding is done with care, the wonder and discovery of unwrapping the gift, be it a gift for a friend throwing a dinner party, or a trinket upon the birth of a baby, is of equal import and meaning. Finally, the wrapping is not discarded unceremoniously as is typical with wrapping paper, but rather reused repeatedly: a container made for everlasting exchange in one long pulse of offering and receiving, as individuals gather in the company of each other.

Gather. That's where the concept first reared its head. As much as furoshiki is a material gathering of fabric to contain material goods, the act of gathering together itself, be it at a playgroup with fellow parents, a street corner in a busy bazaar, or a dormitory room, becomes a metaphysical container for chance conversations, laughter, connection and even challenge. I thought about the past two years, the lack of gathering that occurred – the painstakingly planned dinners, the spontaneous gatherings of friends over a coffee, the meticulous organising of birthdays, the celebration of anniversaries: for nearly two years, all gathering nearly came to a complete halt. Daily life increasingly took on a patina of unreality, with even the most mundane gatherings removed, our lack of social connectivity stripped the colour and richness out of the everyday.

The collaboration here was a chance to reinstate the excitement, and to distil the beauty, of coming together. We reached out to individuals who, in the creation of their products and art, are one of the millions that discretely facilitate and enliven communal moments. They are the makers, designers, platforms, craftspeople, who coalesce around a given value or expression. They bring these alive to such an extent that others can partake in, allowing you and me to be a part of a larger chain of connectivity and joy, as we return to gathering.

The following are the minds whose work you see in the photoshoot presented here:

Furoshiki practioner Tomoko Kakita
Arome Bakery in Covent Garden
Creative duo Nocera&Ferri
Farm shop Spring-To-Go
Chocolatiers Brik
Grocer Natoora
The team at per se

These creators and producers were brought together as their produce and craft bring genuine delight. They create goods that are well sourced, consciously made and test various bounds, from the process of manufacture, to reimagining our very supply chains. Nocera&Ferri, with Tomoko Kakita's furoshiki, were presented with these items, and the concept of people gathering again, with the joy and excitement this elicits. These images are the product of this concept, and the results, I hope you agree, are rather wonderful.

However, alongside the shoot, something else transpired, a parallel world of gathering emerged which took me quite by surprise...



Tomoko Kakita: Otsukimi お月見 moon viewing
Arome Bakery: Shokupan loaf
Brik Chocolate: Marbe eggs; 103 bee pollen tile
Natoora: Winter tomatoes
Nocera&Ferri: Photography and Styling
per se: Curation, Creative Direction

As I connected with each of these brands I got to know the array of humans behind the scenes and realised that I was witness to many other forms of gathering that go on all around, all the time, but rarely do we clearly articulate the underlying importance of this desire - to collate people, values, things, that we truly treasure and that actually bring us to life.



I was to pop in to collect the Shokupan loaf, for which I have an especial predilection, and a Gula Melaka Coconut Twist, on the Friday before the shoot. The team at Arome had accepted the opportunity to collaborate with warmth and excitement. I asked for Soukina as I entered and was soon introduced to her beaming smile and open demeanour. I was informed that the bun wouldn't last as well for the shoot on Sunday, as the glaze would be absorbed by the dough, rendering the bun less 'glossy', and was a no-go. As a fervent bun advocate, I was disheartened, especially as we had mood boarded the baked good, with the shot already in mind. Soukina explained this with ease and friendliness - her desire was that the product look its absolute best, especially as it was one of the team's favourite items at the bakery. But I charmed my way into an acquiescence, promising that our desire was to do justice to the carefully crafted bun. I then asked more about Arome, and Soukina's role - she had been with the bakery from the beginning, when it was a fledgling pop-up to its now current location in Covent Garden. As I have spotted often when popping into Arome, the bakery floor is positively pulsing with industriousness and zeal. Navigating a business through a pandemic had allowed for people to gather around a common mission. Soukina was passionate about the product, which incidentally makes her an exceptional sales woman - I left also with a slice of their signature honey butter loaf.

In this same vein, Rafaella of Brik chocolate, was another example of someone who had gathered something, but this time it was focused on resources and resolve: Rafaella and her co-founder Kia signed a lease for their new kitchen in February 2020, right as the pandemic hit in the U.K. But the only way was forward, regardless of events so alien and unpredictable. The lease was in motion, and the vision they had, to create their textured, marvellous chocolate, was as strong as ever. They went out to partners, creating collaborations with brands and artists, to keep the operation going, and to share their artistry. To hear Rafaella speak about Brik, the process of making which has to straddle the line of innovation and actual manufacturing reality, is to listen to someone who has devoted hours, and years, of her life in developing deep knowledge of this specific industry, from time spent at Rococo Chocolate to a sabbatical in South America to learn from the cocoa bean growers directly.

We each seek containers, whether knowingly or not, to hold our values, our hopes, our aspirations and expectations. Some do this primarily through relationships, others look to work, some, pursuits of the body, the mind, or artistic expression.

At Skye Gyngell's concept Spring-To-Go, the produce spans fresh vegetables from biodynamic farms Vern Farrow and Heckfield Home Farm, cheese from La Latteria, baked marvels from Spring_itself, and Allpress coffee. The items have been deliberately, thoughtfully gathered, and set within a space that allows for joyous discovery. What's more, and perhaps what intrigued me about the space on Ledbury Road, was that it was designed by Skye's sister, Briony Fitzgerald. It's not just about the perfect strangers we choose to build and create with, but those closest to us.



In a nondescript mews, off Plumstead common, Lara and Luca of Nocera&Ferri work from their home studio, creating images that appealed to me for their layered, rich, simplicity. As the products from Natoora, Brik, Arome Bakery and Spring-To-Go were laid out, and Tomoko prepared the tsutsumi for the furoshiki, Lara started to unpack a universe of objects gathered from all around the world. There were precious, antique, handmade papers, seashells, rocks of unique demeanour, all manner of dried flowers and plants, surreal looking sea sponges, bricks - you name it, it was there. Lara detailed, with Luca's nodding head as proof, that she was in a state of continual observation and gathering. Each item has a story, each story contains within the energy of discovery, and perhaps most fundamentally, transformation. Lara, much like Prospero, pulls into her power seemingly everyday, or utterly unique objects, and translates them into photoscapes that move, and delight, the observer.



Tomoko Kakita: Tsutsumi 包 wrap, blossom
Brik Chocolate: textured egg; concrete ball; terrazzo tile
Spring-To-Go: Castelfranco, Fern Verrow & Heckfield
Natoora: Artichoke
Nocera&Ferri: Photography and Styling
per se: Curation, Creative Direction

So, what presented first as a story of people gathering once again to nurture and reinforce the bonds that keep us close, unfurled into an orchestra of connected humans, gathering in all manner of spaces, places and times, to create and preserve, the products and services that act as containers and conduits for these connections to be enacted, and, fortified.



Tomoko Kakita: Otsukimi, Blue Path
Arome Bakery: Gula Melaka Coconut Twist
Brik Chocolate: 102 concrete tile; 201 marble tile
Natoora: Forced rhubarb; Sicilian oranges
Nocera&Ferri: Photography and Styling
per se: Curation, Creative Direction

TOMOKO KAKITA
A DEMO
@MASPACEDESIGN

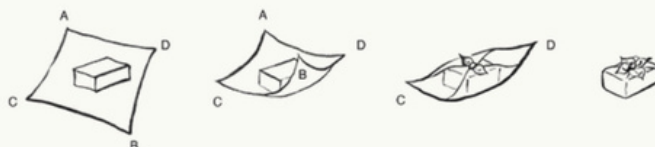
LEARN TO FUR OSHIKI



Flower Petal Wrap
花びら包

In this furoshiki by Tomoko, the four edges take on the form of petals from a flower; a charming way to wrap a special present, one could say.

- 1 Place the box in the centre of the Tsutsumi
- 2 Tie **A** and **B** once. Tie **C** and **D** once on top of **A** and **B**
- 3 Tie a knot with **A** and **B**, then tie a knot with **C** and **D**



NICOLE PERLROTH, NY TIMES
IN CONVERSATION WITH
LEX FRIDMAN

LEARN TO HACK

"Be a hacker, and apply yourself to defence...

It's really hard to get people to work on defence, it's always been more fun being the pirate than the coastguard.

There are 3.5 million unfilled cybersecurity positions around the world.

If you're a hacker, if you're interested in code, if you're a tinkerer, learn how to hack...and use those skills for good.

Neuter the bugs in that code that get used by autocratic regimes to make people's life a living prison, plug those holes, defend industrial systems, defend our water treatment facilities from packs where people are coming in to poison our water; that I think is an amazing job on so many levels; it's intellectually stimulating, you can tell yourself you're serving your country, you can tell yourself you're saving lives, keeping people safe, and you'll always have amazing job security."

“Most people do not listen *with the intent to understand*; they listen with the intent to reply.”

STEPHEN R. COVEY

HARK, WHAT SAY YOU

A SOLUTIONIST MINDSCAPE

“The conscious and intelligent manipulation of the organized habits and opinions of the masses is an important element in democratic society. Those who manipulate this unseen mechanism of society constitute an invisible government which is the true ruling power of our country..We are governed, our minds are moulded, our tastes formed, our ideas suggested, largely by men we have never heard of. This is a logical result of the way in which our democratic society is organized. Vast numbers of human beings must cooperate in this manner if they are to live together as a smoothly functioning society. ...In almost every act of our daily lives, whether in the sphere of politics or business, in our social conduct or our ethical thinking, we are dominated by the relatively small number of persons...who understand the mental processes and social patterns of the masses. It is they who pull the wires which control the public mind.”

Edward Bernays, 'Propaganda', 1924

Depending on your age and generation, you may have been born directly into a world of bytes, or not. We are talking about the difference in conjuring up the image of a rainforest when you hear the word 'amazon', or a specific company, or thinking of the psycho-sociological phenomenon when you hear the word memory, or thinking of data.

Technology is a catch all phrase for any type of tool that essentially accelerates information processing or synthesis: in the twenty-first century we may envision computers and phones, but for our predecessor hominids one million years ago, this took the form of fire, in the 1430s this looked like the printing press, and in 1779 this would have been the spinning mule, a machine used to spin wool. So it is safe to say that each age has been both the predecessor, and ancestor, to some form of technology.

The first cousin of technology is time - looking at the evolution of life on this planet, the forward flow of time has given rise to a near constant stream of improvement and innovation. But time is also fickle, and many matters of intent and import become lost in our neophilia; the passage of time smudges out the original vision that powered each respective technology, leaving subsequent generations to intuit only very poorly, how our modern age has been shaped by exponential forces beyond one's immediate purview.

The power of technology, as we note here, has been the topic of conversation for millennia. So, here we have a reminder of some of the missives expressed by those who power much of our current reality, and some older prognostications, which are still circulating potently in our collective conscious.

Make of it what you will.

"We want Google to be the third half of your brain."

Sergey Bin in Sept 8, 2010

"Remember...Amazon is not really our competition. Sleep is our competition."

Nefflix CEO in an email to colleagues.
Reed Hastings, 2017

"This invention confirms the great doctrine already propounded, that when capital enlists science in her service, the refractory hand of labour will always be taught docility."

Ure, on the invention of the self-acting spinning mule, known as the 'Iron Man', designed in 1835 to replace factory workers.
Andrew Ure, 1835

"Your thumbs will learn."

On a press tour to promote the first iPhone a journalist complained to Steve Jobs that the virtual keyboard didn't work and he kept making typos. "The keyboard's too small for my thumbs," said the journalist, to which Jobs replied as above.
Steve Jobs, 2007

We refer to the question: What sort of creature man's next successor in the supremacy of the earth is likely to be. We have often heard this debated; but it appears to us that we are ourselves creating our own successors; we are daily adding to the beauty and delicacy of their physical organisation; we are daily giving them greater power and supplying by all sorts of ingenious contrivances that self-regulating, self-acting power which will be to them what intellect has been to the human race. In the course of ages we shall find ourselves the inferior race.

Samuel Butler, in the essay 'Darwin Among the Machines', on the inevitable end point of Darwin's theory of natural selection
Samuel Butler, 1863

ANNOUNCE- MENTS

a spotlight on new projects, on old but still relevant ideas, on potential solutions and all other manner of happenings



A SOLUTIONIST MINDSCAPE

01

THEY'RE BACK

Humpback whales are no longer an endangered species. At the peak of the commercial whaling industry only 1,500 humpback whales were left alive, today that number is close to 40,000. The case has been made that the population is still vulnerable, even if not endangered. So, let's keep up the progress made this far.

02

GJENGE MAKERS

In 2017 Nairobi entrepreneur, Nzambi Matee, started Gjenge Makers, a company that transforms unwanted plastic into durable construction material, including bricks. Run as a sustainable enterprise, to date it has recycled over 100 tonnes of plastic waste and created 112 jobs. [Explore](#)

03

PEN

Inspired by personal faith and powered by a PhD in Mechanical Engineering from MIT, Heather Beem founded PEN - an organisation that offers a series of workshops where West African STEM teachers learn, design, and share practical activities which complement the national curriculum and are created from cost effective and local materials. [Explore](#)

04

MOONSHOT CAPITALISM

Economist Mariana Mazzucato has worked for years to wean the public consciousness off the web 1.0 version of capitalism which still powers much of this century. In her latest book, 'Mission Economy; A Moonshot Guide to Changing Capitalism' Mazzucato challenges the current attitude we have towards 'people and planet' with the observation that, 'this status quo is not only pathological, unsustainable, and bad for our health; it is also entirely unnecessary.' [Explore](#)

05

R&R

Genetic rescue, at scale, of the earth's biodiversity - interested? Revive and Restore is on a 'mission to enhance biodiversity through the genetic rescue of endangered and extinct species.' They have funding available for enterprising scientists and solution-builders. [Explore](#)

06

MANUAL

Imagine another loss of information event akin to the burning of the Library of Alexandria. Or the burning of knowledge of the Aztecs by the invading Spanish. In 1996 The Long Now Foundation posed the question, "What books would you want to restart civilization from scratch?" [Explore](#) their 3500 books.

07

COMPBIO

If you are looking to work on the latest in computational biology, then you may want to look into the lab of MIT professor Manolis Kellis. In the words of the lab, 'you'll get to work in a highly collaborative environment at the interface of computer science and biology'. We'd recommend seeking out Professor Kelli's talks and conversations online, he is a formidable educator and true to his Greek heritage, wise. Sounds like fertile ground upon which to work [Explore](#)

08

COLOUR, LIGHT, RHYTHM!

"I love creation more than life, and I must express myself before disappearing." The Louisiana Museum of Modern Art is currently awash with a riot of colour courtesy of Sonia Delaunay. An experimenter in form, media and colour development, her body of work is as vast as it is full of depth and resonance. It's on now, until 12 June 2022. [Explore](#)

A new generation of artists, writing genomes as fluently as Blake and Byron wrote verses, might create an abundance of new flowers and fruit and trees and birds to enrich the ecology of our planet. Most of these artists would be amateurs, but they would be in close touch with science, like the poets of the earlier Age of Wonder. The new Age of Wonder might bring together wealthy entrepreneurs ... and a worldwide community of gardeners and farmers and breeders, working together to make the planet beautiful as well as fertile, hospitable to hummingbirds as well as to humans.

- FREEMAN DYSON

THE MINIMALISTS

Joshua Fields Millburn and Ryan Nicodemus;
The Minimalists

We asked the duo that are The Minimalists, should they be given free reign of a billboard, what message would they impart upon it?

“ You can't
change the
people
around you,
but you can
change the
people
around you.”

DARK ARTS

You are not imagining it, there are millions of bots, neural networks, humans, working to nudge or shove you into unintentional digital acts. This list here is the work of Harry Brignull, a UX specialist who first coined the term 'dark patterns' in 2010. Being a programmer, he was noting time and again, as a consumer, the overt traces of coercive tactics being used by companies to elicit users into actions that were not intended by the user.

Trick questions

While filling in a form you respond to a question that tricks you into giving an answer you didn't intend. When glanced upon quickly the question appears to ask one thing, but when read carefully it asks another thing entirely.

Sneak into basket

You attempt to purchase something, but somewhere in the purchasing journey the site sneaks an additional item into your basket, often through the use of an opt-out radio button or checkbox on a prior page.

Roach motel

You get into a situation very easily, but then you find it is hard to get out of it (e.g. a premium subscription).

Privacy zuckering

You are tricked into publicly sharing more information about yourself than you really intended to. Named after Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg.

Price comparison prevention

The retailer makes it hard for you to compare the price of an item with another item, so you cannot make an informed decision.

Misdirection

The design purposefully focuses your attention on one thing in order to distract your attention from another.

Hidden costs

You get to the last step of the checkout process, only to discover some unexpected charges have appeared, e.g. delivery charges, tax, etc.

Bait and switch

You set out to do one thing, but a different, undesirable thing happens instead.

Confirmshaming

The act of guilt-tripping the user into opting into something. The option to decline is worded in such a way as to shame the user into compliance.

Disguised ads

Adverts that are disguised as other kinds of content or navigation, in order to get you to click on them.

Forced continuity

When your free trial with a service comes to an end and your credit card silently starts getting charged without any warning. In some cases this is made even worse by making it difficult to cancel the membership.

Friend spam

The product asks for your email or social media permissions under the pretence it will be used for a desirable outcome (e.g. finding friends), but then spams all your contacts in a message that claims to be from you.

ARCHITECTURE OF CONTEMPLATION

Nietzsche, in his January essay, talks of 'architecture for those who wish to pursue knowledge' and 'expansive places for reflection.' What are these spaces, the principle of design, the underlying ethic, and how can we enfold these ever more keenly into our daily lives?'

We asked Paola and Penny, which spaces do they respectively frequent, however often or sporadically, that provide space for respite and contemplation, and why this space(s) specifically?

What emerged were two radically different universes, perhaps confirming that the multiverse is real. We have one view from the metropolis, and another, from the wilderness.

Where does your quiet self find respite between these two?

PENNY MARTIN
Editor-in-Chief
[the_gentlewoman](#)

In 2020 I moved to the East Neuk of Fife, temporarily. But I found I could think things through more carefully here, and for longer, so I stayed.

IG: [@pennyjanemartin](#)

PAOLA ANTONELLI
Senior Curator, Architecture & Design
Director, Research & Development
[moma](#)

I have two spaces that make me feel free and in peace, and open my mind to good ideas and deeper reflection: a seat on an airplane in mid-flight, and a seat in a train in the New York subway. In both cases, I feel in a protective bubble, shielded from scrutiny and pragmatic limitations. The subway in particular is a place of rabbit holes, each fellow passenger hitting me with their undeniable personality, each a testament to the privilege and responsibility of being a thinking and acting human being.

IG: [@paolantonelli](#) [@design.emergency](#)

SUJ GENERALS

with Sam Everington; **GP Bromley-by-Bow Centre**

Awaiting Sam in the Union Cafe, I sit and look around the space that is a living, breathing organism of optimism and pragmatism – that of the Bromley-by-Bow Centre. I first came across the work of Sam through the work of Johann Hari, author of 'Lost Connections'. What had first intrigued me was the concept of 'social prescribing' which Sam, along with a team of fellow GPs, has been for over a decade developing in tandem with traditional medical approaches. What I left with, was the impression of being in the presence of someone who had decided, emphatically, to live as fully as possible, and had remained integral to that self-promise, by giving others the tools to live just as abundantly.

"Don't strive for happiness, strive for meaning."

Sam has a habit of doing things on, and for a, purpose. He has worn many hats, from a barrister to a pilot, sitting on the boards of several public health organisations, going after big tobacco and in his current incarnation, as a GP at the Bromley-by-Bow Centre (BBBC), a change-maker. But we are not talking about a typical kind of change that one would expect from a GP surgery. Over a decade ago Sam, with his peer healthcare professionals, noticed that patients were presenting a raft of symptoms which did not allow a decisive diagnosis: general fatigue, chronic, unidentifiable pain, hypertension, anxiety, a certain malaise of the spirit. If the patients were not identifiably, medically, ill, then the cause of their affliction must lie elsewhere.

"Doctor, while I'm here..."

This disarmingly simple line, Sam notes, is a clear tell, an entry way into understanding where this 'elsewhere' is located in the patient. What became abundantly clear to the doctors at the practice, was that the suffering their patients were undergoing made perfect sense. The lack of financial security, a recent job loss, the passing of a loved one, working through addiction, debt, suffering from domestic abuse: give a person even one of these social ailments and see how they start to stutter and wilt in their lives; often the person you are walking past on the street is suffering from an amalgam of these issues. This is where social prescribing comes in.

In an article written by Dominik Alex Nowak and Kate Mulligan in the journal, College of Family Physicians of Canada, the authors outline the issue at hand, 'medical training and guidelines are often reductionist and disease specific. In both prevention and treatment, the biomedical model is focused on proximal causes, such as comorbidity and lifestyle, rather than fundamental causes, which are often social.'

The BBBC seeks to bolster its biomedical model with prescribing services, activities and support that aim to get at the 'fundamental causes' that lead, essentially, to illnesses of despair:

'Social prescribing was developed in recognition that the majority of factors affecting mental and physical ill health are social and economic — people need friends and a feeling of belonging, a sense of purpose, financial security, a safe home and hope for their future.'

Gardening classes, pottery workshops, counselling, jobs coaching, food bank provision, housing and financial advice, these are just a small silo of the services cultivated at BBBC. So far, so common sense. These are communal services that have required years of work and diligence by motivated individuals

SUJ GENERICIS

continued

who have decided that status quo is not good enough. Sitting opposite Sam I know I am witness to one such individual. And that is what is intriguing about Sam - in his view, it is the combination of an empowered, healthy, action-driven individual, tapping into community and shared resources, that creates holistic, long-lasting change in our lives; one for all, and all for one.

Talking of his early life and parents, one can see where the dye was set. His father, "the most gentle QC you could imagine", and his mother, who was "wild but passionate about helping others", created a childhood with clear signals on paying it forward, and cultivating, as is the Norwegian way, deep familial bonds through the practice of *hygge*. There was also a seminal event in Sam's life whilst working in Norway, the country of his birth, and incidentally a fundamental part of his identity, at a naval shipyard. One morning, as work started, Sam witnessed a friend die before his eyes, as a crane came down upon him.

"Life is not a rehearsal."

At seventeen years of age Sam gained a type of self-knowledge that often comes with the passing of time. Instead for him, it was the passing of a life that but seconds before had seemed so vital, so certain. Drawing a thread through the decisions that Sam pursued thereafter, one can see someone choosing a life of active service: pivoting from the path of a barrister upon realising there was a mismatch of values, hitchhiking across the country to apply for medicine at various universities, choosing to specialise as a GP, challenging the menacing power of tobacco ads and shining a light on the structural racial discrimination within the NHS. This would lead to brushes with the law, an OBE and a knighthood. One life, no rehearsal.

Sam has plenty of humour - which incidentally is an important tool for patient communication - and understands well that he does not conform to stereotype; he aims to listen to ideas across the political, and philosophical, aisle. He is a firm proponent of taking personal responsibility for one's health, diet and fitness and mentions the work of Jordan Peterson as important. He likes to embroider, and at the ripe age of 50, has decided to take up wood carving. It is also clear that he has been in enough boardrooms and meetings, to know when ego and ideology overpower data and effective leadership. The 'command and control' approach is a perfect anathema to Sam - at BBC diverse collaboration is the social currency that continues to power the entire enterprise. Leadership is clearly something Sam thinks deeply about, and is called upon to enact, often. His advice on how win on patients' behalf and influence policy makers?

"Be ruthlessly focused on, and worry about, things that you can do something about, not things you can't do anything about. Go for the long game, these changes don't happen overnight."

The power of non-conformity exudes from Sam, and challenges even my perception of how far candour can get you. As our conversation, which has far exceeded the planned time slot, draws to a close, Sam tells me about the time he was interviewed by the GMC to be on the council. The last 'killer question' reared its head, "is there anything that if it were to come out, it would be embarrassing for the organisation?" to which Sam replied:

"I said, well, actually, there are three things: I got a caution for criminal damage, I was arrested and charged with fraud and I've been admonished by the GMC. Where would you like to start?"

And that's where we leave Sam, ever ready to start, to challenge, to change; the curtain is up, the play has started.

HOW TO FIKA

FIKA:- a traditional break from work typically involving a hot beverage of some sort. In Swedish offices, you are very much expected to take a fika, regardless of how busy you are. Matters of business are not to be discussed, but rather you should chit-chat affably with your colleagues and get to know those across, above and below you in the official 'pecking' order of things.

1

See the value in yourself, and your peers at work, as individual universes that live a rich, unique life, beyond that which is visible to the workplace eye;

2

Part of that precious life is spent at work, with you, which is your privilege to share, and theirs also, regardless of the difference in work, job title, duties;

3

Compile a brief missive explaining the concept of fika (feel free to copy and paste the definition above);

4

Offer three time slots to your colleagues in a poll, with the understanding that the majority decision will lead to a company wide invitation for that time and a dedicated space;

5

Ask two colleagues to help you source excellent coffee, that is bottomless, a dram of tea for those so inclined or depending on the time of day, another refreshment altogether; and a delicious nibble of a kind;

6

Meet in said dedicated space at said time, make eye contact with colleagues, open with lines such as, 'have you ever done fika before' with a cynical eye roll if that will help you break the ice;

7

Have a nice time. It may take a few fikas to shake free from a sense that you are being delayed from work or your commute home;

8

Rinse (the cups) and repeat (the togetherness).

THE WORLD IS WITH MEN

John Steinbeck
Nobel prize | Banquet speech | 1962

"Your Majesties, Your Royal Highnesses, Min Vackra Fru, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I thank the Swedish Academy for finding my work worthy of this highest honor.

In my heart there may be doubt that I deserve the Nobel award over other men of letters whom I hold in respect and reverence – but there is no question of my pleasure and pride in having it for myself.

It is customary for the recipient of this award to offer personal or scholarly comment on the nature and the direction of literature. At this particular time, however, I think it would be well to consider the high duties and the responsibilities of the makers of literature.

Such is the prestige of the Nobel award and of this place where I stand that I am impelled, not to squeak like a grateful and apologetic mouse, but to roar like a lion out of pride in my profession and in the great and good men who have practiced it through the ages.

Literature was not promulgated by a pale and emasculated critical priesthood singing their litanies in empty churches – nor is it a game for the cloistered elect, the tinhorn mendicants of low calorie despair.

Literature is as old as speech. It grew out of human need for it, and it has not changed except to become more needed.

The skalds, the bards, the writers are not separate and exclusive. From the beginning, their functions, their duties, their responsibilities have been decreed by our species.

Humanity has been passing through a gray and desolate time of confusion. My great predecessor, William Faulkner, speaking here, referred to it as a tragedy of universal fear so long sustained that there were no longer problems of the spirit, so that only the human heart in conflict with itself seemed worth writing about.

Faulkner, more than most men, was aware of human strength as well as of human weakness. He knew that the understanding and the resolution of fear are a large part of the writer's reason for being. This is not new. The ancient commission of the writer has not changed. He is charged with exposing our many grievous faults and failures, with dredging up to the light our dark and dangerous dreams for the purpose of improvement.

Furthermore, the writer is delegated to declare and to celebrate man's proven capacity for greatness of heart and spirit – for gallantry in defeat – for courage, compassion and love. In the endless war against weakness and despair, these are the bright rally-flags of hope and of emulation.

I hold that a writer who does not passionately believe in the perfectibility of man, has no dedication nor any membership in literature.

THE WORLD IS WITH MEN

continued

The present universal fear has been the result of a forward surge in our knowledge and manipulation of certain dangerous factors in the physical world.

It is true that other phases of understanding have not yet caught up with this great step, but there is no reason to presume that they cannot or will not draw abreast. Indeed it is a part of the writer's responsibility to make sure that they do.

With humanity's long proud history of standing firm against natural enemies, sometimes in the face of almost certain defeat and extinction, we would be cowardly and stupid to leave the field on the eve of our greatest potential victory.

Understandably, I have been reading the life of Alfred Nobel – a solitary man, the books say, a thoughtful man. He perfected the release of explosive forces, capable of creative good or of destructive evil, but lacking choice, ungoverned by conscience or judgment.

Nobel saw some of the cruel and bloody misuses of his inventions. He may even have foreseen the end result of his probing – access to ultimate violence – to final destruction. Some say that he became cynical, but I do not believe this. I think he strove to invent a control, a safety valve. I think he found it finally only in the human mind and the human spirit. To me, his thinking is clearly indicated in the categories of these awards.

They are offered for increased and continuing knowledge of man and of his world – for understanding and communication, which are the functions of literature. And they are offered for demonstrations of the capacity for peace – the culmination of all the others.

Less than fifty years after his death, the door of nature was unlocked and we were offered the dreadful burden of choice.

We have usurped many of the powers we once ascribed to God.

Fearful and unprepared, we have assumed lordship over the life or death of the whole world – of all living things.

The danger and the glory and the choice rest finally in man. The test of his perfectibility is at hand. Having taken Godlike power, we must seek in ourselves for the responsibility and the wisdom we once prayed some deity might have.

Man himself has become our greatest hazard and our only hope.

So that today, St. John the apostle may well be paraphrased ...

In the end is the Word, and the Word is Man – and the Word is with Men."

A MOST SAGACIOUS ANIMAL

Below: curated, alternative sources of education, fellowships, institutions and orthogonal learnings methods, that accelerate innovation, minus the Fordism.

THIEL FELLOWSHIP | [INFO](#)

\$100,000 of funding, a vision or idea at play or in the works, intensive mentoring and accelerated resource allocation. One condition: drop out of college / university.

MARGINAL REVOLUTION UNIVERSITY | [INFO](#)

From economists Tyler Cowen and Alex Tabarrock, well...a series of courses on economics. But that's just the beginning. For now let's sum it up as smart people doing notable work.

WONDRIUM | [INFO](#)

Bringing a new meaning to a 'smart' tv, an intellectual buffet with over 700 teachers sharing their knowledge, served up as an app too, that may in time come in ahead of your Netflix one.

ROGUE FILM SCHOOL | [INFO](#)

Werner Herzog's inner world could furnish the world over several millennia. For now he's working in the 21st century, bringing grizzlies and meteorites into our collective, catastrophic consciousness. The school is on long-standing pause but the reading and watching list is a beginning and end in itself (#10, #11).

THE SEVEN

From storied colleges and universities, to elementary building blocks, these are some of the leading providers of MOOC (mass open online courses).

[Udemy](#) [edX](#) [Code Academy](#) [Khan Academy](#) [Coursera](#) [Udacity](#) [The Great Courses](#)

LEARNING HOW TO LEARN | [INFO](#)

'Learning How to Learn: Powerful Mental Tools to Help you Master Tough Subjects', the fundamentals of how the brain learns, with immediate actionable tips, for any age.

CENTURY | [INFO](#)

An AI-enabled online home learning platform that tailors study materials to the needs of every child; one teacher, 30 students, is no longer an option for the future.

KIDE SCIENCE | [INFO](#)

The home is the original laboratory for young minds, according to this Finnish start-up which is bringing the art of STEM to the imaginations of 3-8yr olds the world over.

VALVE CORPORATION

Game maker Valve Corporation does things differently. It has taken a few iterations to get the optimal Venn diagram of individual autonomy, company-level collaboration and continued capital growth, but they have managed it. Here are a series of excerpts from the Valve Handbook for New Employees

OF CAPITAL AND MEANING

Welcome to Flatland

'Hierarchy is great for maintaining predictability and repeatability. It simplifies planning and makes it easier to control a large group of people from the top down, which is why military organizations rely on it so heavily. But when you're an entertainment company that's spent the last decade going out of its way to recruit the most intelligent, innovative, talented people on Earth, telling them to sit at a desk and do what they're told obliterates 99 percent of their value. We want innovators, and that means maintaining an environment where they'll flourish. That's why Valve is flat. It's our shorthand way of saying that we don't have any management, and nobody "reports to" anybody else. We do have a founder/president, but even he isn't your manager. This company is yours to steer—toward opportunities and away from risks. You have the power to green-light projects. You have the power to ship products.'

Risks

'What if I screw up?'

Nobody has ever been fired at Valve for making a mistake. It wouldn't make sense for us to operate that way. Providing the freedom to fail is an important trait of the company—we couldn't expect so much of individuals if we also penalized people for errors. Even expensive mistakes, or ones which result in a very public failure, are genuinely looked at as opportunities to learn. We can always repair the mistake or make up for it.

'A fearless adventure in knowing what to do when no one's there telling you what to do'

Screwing up is a great way to find out that your assumptions were wrong or that your model of the world was a little bit off. As long as you update your model and move forward with a better picture, you're doing it right. Look for ways to test your beliefs. Never be afraid to run an experiment or to collect more data.

It helps to make predictions and anticipate nasty outcomes. Ask yourself "what would I expect to see if I'm right?" Ask yourself "what would I expect to see if I'm wrong?" Then ask yourself "what do I see?" If something totally unexpected happens, try to figure out why.

There are still some bad ways to fail. Repeating the same mistake over and over is one. Not listening to customers or peers before or after a failure is another. Never ignore the evidence; particularly when it says you're wrong.'

What to Work On

'Why do I need to pick my own projects? We've heard that other companies have people allocate a percentage of their time to self-directed projects. At Valve, that percentage is 100.

Since Valve is flat, people don't join projects because they're told to. Instead, you'll decide what to work on after asking yourself the right questions (more on that later). Employees vote on projects with their feet (or desk wheels). Strong projects are ones in which people can see demonstrated value; they staff up easily. This means there are any number of internal recruiting efforts constantly under way.'

ON BUILDING WONDER *For grown ups, and cues for grown ups with young minds in their purview*

A SOLUTIONIST MINDSCAPE

LINKS

READ: **The Pleasure of Finding Things Out: The Best Short Works of Richard P. Feynman**; Richard P. Feynman

WATCH: **Pixels in Progress** a real time simulation of fungi growth. One phrase: other-worldly; Adam Heslop

DO: **Geometry Games** from geometrician Jeff Weeks, author of *The Shape of Space* and general topographical wunderkind

CREATE: **Metamorphosis II**; create as M.C. Escher with this virtual online documentary



FURTHER STIMULI

ON REFRAMING *New ways to see old things, new ways to understand old things*

LINKS

READ: **1491** Atlantic article; '...the Amazon rain forest may be largely a human artifact'; Charles C. Mann

BLOG: **Wait But Why; The Story of Us** Tim Urban sticks his way through the entire human enterprise to date

PAPER: **The Road to Eleusis, Unveiling the Secret of the Mysteries**; why did Greece become the seat of civilisation? By R. Gordon Wasson Albert Hofmann Carl A. P. Ruck

NOTE: **Let's talk about cellular reprogramming**; Dr David Sinclair, co-director of the Paul F. Glenn Center for the Biology of Aging at Harvard Medical School



NEW PARADIGMS *Can someone fill me in?*

WATCH: **Modern Love**, Esther Perel; 'Never have we expected more from our intimate relationships, and never have we crumbled under the weight of so many expectations.'

LISTEN: **The Wonders of Web3 And Much More; from Tim Ferriss**, for those of us feeling somewhat tumbleweed-esque considering meta verses, web3 and bitcoin, some context

LISTEN: **Two Million Years in Two Hours: A Conversation with Yuval Noah Harari**; with Tristan Harris, of The Centre for Humane Technology, discussing dystopias and utopias



CONVERSATIONS *Listening is the new reading, sometimes*

LISTEN: **The Knowledge Podcast** Shane Parish in conversation with Marc Andreessen, co-founder and general partner at the venture-capital firm Andreessen Horowitz

WATCH: **John Danaher: The Path to Mastery in Jiu Jitsu, Grappling, Judo, and MMA**; Lex Fridman in conversation with John Danaher, a philosophy PhD turned BJJ sensei.

LISTEN: **Authority and the Individual**, Bertrand Russell, Reith Lectures 1948; a philosopher, mathematician, and social reformer, Russell goes deep and broad.



PARALLEL LIVES *It's a big world out there*

READ: **The Interpreter**; inside the world of the Pirahã who have 'no numbers, no fixed color terms, no perfect tense, no deep memory, no tradition of art or drawing.'

WATCH: **My Name is Salt**, directed by Farida Pacha; follow one family of thousands that every year, uproots itself to a saline desert, for eight months, to harvest salt.

OBSERVE: **The waggle dance**; a complex communication of movement between bees, to help locate and source nectar, expressing angles, distance and plenitude.



LINKS

WEBSITE: **EXAMINE** nutrition and supplemental information, delivered independently, without cost

TOOLKIT: **Stanford SPARQ tools**, devised by Dr. Alia Crum, Director of the Stanford Mind & Body Lab, a holistic way to reframe stress to improve quality of life

IG: **Huberman Lab**, from neuroscientist Dr Andrew Huberman, a source of objective, highly researched, science backed information, and immediately actionable tools

STORY: **Hardcore History**, by Dan Carlin; the **Lex Fridman Podcast**; **The Dropout**; some listening for long, meandering walks, HIIT workouts and everything in between



AND A TOUCH MORE

CHANGING STATES

Ways to get the most out of our devices, without them getting the most out of us

LINKS

APP **Freedom** Desirous to switch out the distractions of your device, whilst still getting maximal use? Freedom has some ideas to help



APP: **Reveri** A Stanford psychiatrist and behavioural scientist partners with technologists to unlock the benefits of self-hypnosis on sleep, stress, addiction and pain



LISTEN: **Song of the Antarctic Weddell Seals**; from the McMurdo Oceanographic Observatory, listen to seals chit-chat for two hours; and no, there is no synthesiser



UN-DO: **10 minute yoga nidra practice**; a way to access deep relaxation, at any moment in the day, but it is restful, so choose your timing wisely. Child-friendly



GUIDANCE

Some, well, guides

GREEN: **A Guide to Greening your School**; from the RHS, can also be applied to other hubs of brick and concrete in need for a bit of GLC (green, loving, care)



ICE: **A Visitor's Key to Iceland**; 'Here a collapsing bridge allowed a murderer to escape - and proved his innocence! In this hot spring a famous outlaw boiled his meat.'



MEDIA: **Samaritans' Media Guidelines**; how to maintain the highest, and most responsible standards in the sharing of sensitive, and distressing information on suicide. Words matter



GIVING

Organisations for the betterment of others

DATA: **Giving What We Can**; one framework in approaching charity donations



PENS: **Donors Choose**; donors send supplies = teachers accept = children benefit



BLOOD: **Give Blood, NHS**; not for all, but in case it's for you



ADVISED

Learning from another, is akin to skipping to the last page of a book, with all of the knowledge intact

WATCH: **Virgil Abloh**; in this Q&A with the 2020 winners of the LVMH Prize, Abloh is candid, expansive and utterly practical in his advice to future creators of all types



READ: **On Children**, Kahlil Gibran; parenting, or any kind of guardianship is a high stakes scenario; some words to reframe, and perhaps ease, the burden of responsibility



OBSERVE: **The waggle dance**; a complex communication of movement between bees, to help locate and source nectar, expressing angles, distance and plenitude



LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

A SOLUTIONIST MINDSCAPE

"Who, though they should adduce no reason, would convince me with their authority alone." — Cicero



Write to us.

Share with us what made sense, what didn't.

Tell us something we could have done better, to make this better, for more individuals.

Tell us ways in which something featured here had an impact on your individual day-to-day, or 50-year view, of life?

What would you like us to make everyone's business in the next edition?

Send in your thank you, to be featured, if you like.

Any other thoughts. Helpful ones, hopefully.

ASK@PERSELONDON

THE END OF THIS EDITION

we so hope there was something
of service,
in here,
for you.

THANK YOU

Everyone's Business is a for-all endeavour
Hardeep of perse.london oversees this endeavour
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