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LUXURY MARKETING HOUSE
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Exclusive

How London created the Savile Row of wealth

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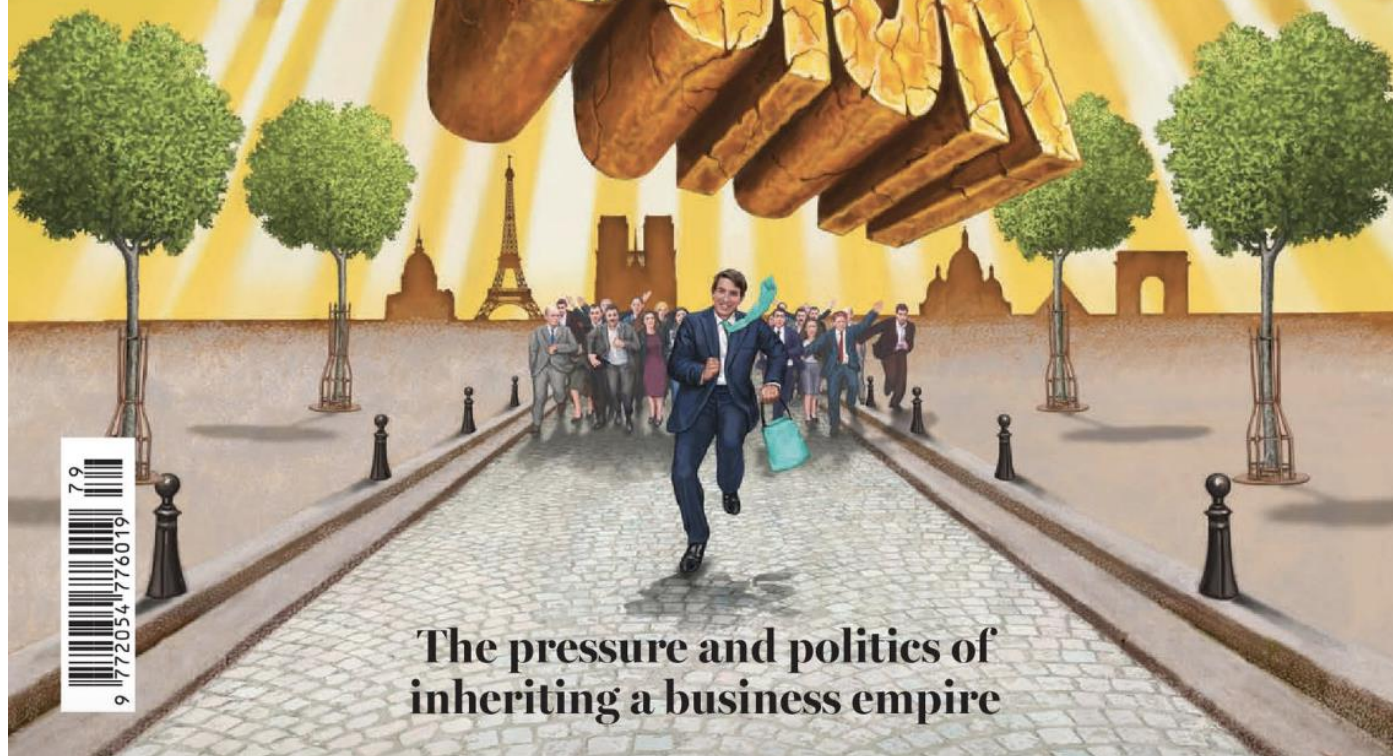
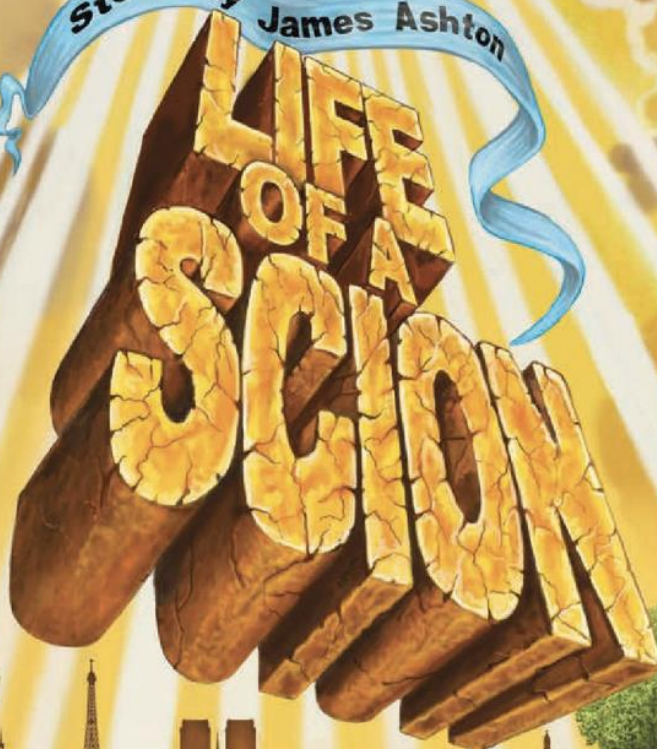
The extraordinary career
of Michel de Carvalho

Plus

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Story by James Ashton



The pressure and politics of
inheriting a business empire





THE AGENDA



The Hedgehog

Our socially distanced sniffer spies a stately stampede, a portrait of a king and an unexpected A-lister. Edited by **Alec Marsh**



Bridgerton surge

With more than 82 million people from 83 countries having watched stars Phoebe Dynevor and Regé-Jean Page romping across its corridors, stairwells, lawns and herbaceous enclosures, Castle Howard is bracing itself for a second *Bridgerton* surge, I hear.

The John Vanbrugh-designed country house in North Yorkshire has received a spike of inquiries since the racy Regency romance started streaming on Netflix at Christmas, a Castle Howard spokeswoman confirms: 'We're hoping that when the world opens up and people are able to travel a little further in June that they will want to come and see Castle Howard in all its glory.'

Chatelaine Victoria Howard, who lives at Castle Howard with her husband,

Nicholas, says the family is delighted by the success of the show. 'It was a little bit of a surprise,' adds Howard, executive chairman of the castle and estate. 'We know that Netflix can produce very good stuff – so we were hoping it would be very good – but obviously it seemed to capture the public's imagination.'

Having worked at HarperCollins, which published the Julia Quinn novels the series is based on in the US, Howard knew what to expect. 'The scenes didn't come as any surprise,' she tells me. 'It's good, tasteful sauciness.'

And Howard is cautiously optimistic that the show will lead to an increase in visitor numbers. 'We are hoping to make the most of it,' she says. 'It's obviously great exposure. We will be encouraging the fans to come and see where it was filmed.'

The castle, which was able to open its gardens to the public in March, is planning to offer *Bridgerton*-themed teas as well as more interpretative displays about the relationship between a great house and its estate village – where the series was also filmed.

All the money from visitors goes into conservation, says Howard: 'It's incredibly important. We have a huge conservation deficit at Castle Howard and lost a lot of revenue in the last year. Hopefully the success of *Bridgerton* will help make up a bit of that.'

WHAT PRICE FAILURE? Once hailed as 'the British Obama', ex-MP Chuka Umunna has followed ex-chancellors George Osborne and Sajid Javid into the gilded corridors of JP Morgan. The former Labour leadership contender-turned Independent Group for Change MP-turned Liberal Democrat-turned Edelman executive director (oh, do keep up) is now leading the bank's ESG work across Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Let's hope he finds as much satisfaction in this new corporate life as Sir Nicholas Clegg does in his as Facebook's vice president for global affairs and communications.

Miniature fortune?

The art world was agog in January when St James's art super sleuth Philip Mould revealed the discovery of a previously unknown miniature portrait of the cross-dressing French king Henry III, a contemporary of Elizabeth I, signed by the noted court painter Jean Decourt.

Mould spotted the work when it 'came up in a country auction,' where it was thought to be an unimportant portrait of Walter Raleigh. Accordingly,



it had a paltry estimate, Mould tells me. He declines to say exactly how much he paid, but does reveal the figure was only in the 'high hundreds, low thousands'.

Earlier this year Mould spoke of his ambition to sell the miniature to the Louvre, presumably at an appropriate markup. Has the Parisian institution bitten? 'We have agreed terms with an overseas institution and will be announcing it in a couple of months' time subject to getting the appropriate export licence,' he says.

All very interesting, but as every *Antiques Roadshow* fan knows, the only question that matters is how much? Naturally, the *Fake or Fortune* star is isn't telling. But Hedgehog can report that a Decourt portrait – of a lady, likely to be an unidentified female courtier – was sold by Christie's in 2016 for £785,000.

Furthermore, it was merely 'attributed' to Decourt, rather than signed by him. With all that, one can only imagine that Mould will be laughing all the way to the banque.

ASK LUXURY PROPERTY developer Niccolò Barattieri di San Pietro if he's worried about the pandemic fuelling an exodus of HNWs from London and you expect a bullish response. After all, the Northacre CEO's projects include transforming the former New Scotland Yard home of the Metropolitan Police in Westminster. 'I remind people of what happened when the telephone was invented,' Barattieri di San Pietro tells *Spears*. 'Everyone said, "Well, this is the end of cities, everyone's going to move away because you don't have to see each other." Exactly the opposite happened.'

As for reports that the capital's population is falling as Londoners seek out green open spaces, he says: 'People have missed people more than trees. London has 3,000 parks and 25,000 acres of green space.'

The developer also offers a final riposte to prime central London sceptics: 'If someone had said to me, "There is going to be a pandemic, we're all going to be at home for a year and no one will be able to travel," I would expect London prices to come down. But they haven't – in some boroughs they've gone up.'

Red leather day

Savile Row tailor Richard Anderson, who celebrates 20 years in business this year, has come up with an eye-catching piece to wow his customers – a daring new single-button coat in soft Ferrari red Napa leather. 'It took a couple of times to get there but I'm delighted with it,' says Anderson. 'I've had a couple of orders and I know my customers will love it.' Most people will opt for the jacket in blue or black or brown. 'I don't think we will have many red sales,' he laughs. 'Maybe in China.'



OH SWISS BANKERS, where are you? The London corporate relocation market has 'completely shut down', according to sage buying agent Jonathan Hopper at Garrington, who notes: 'They disappeared in March and haven't been seen since.' Alas Hopper doesn't see things getting better until the summer, and even then the market won't come

back fully as companies can now cover 80 per cent of their jobs online. 'If the global mobility market doesn't return to the same volumes, that is going to have a big effect on the London rental values,' he warns. Could it really be permanent? Eccord's Jo Eccles – busy relocating Goldman Sachs' bankers to London when Hedgehog calls – disagrees. 'Demand hasn't died, it's just been deferred,' says Eccles, who assures me it'll be business as usual in 2022.

Cox's family turn

Having won a Golden Globe as media mogul Logan Roy, *Succession* actor Brian Cox is a perhaps unlikely star of the micro-budget *Lawrence: After Arabia*, which follows TE Lawrence's last years spent in Dorset before his death following a motorcycle accident in 1935. Cox voices Lawrence's father and the epilogue for the film, which, as director Mark Griffin tells *Spears*, had a budget of 'well under six figures'. How did he get the A-lister on board? A happy accident apparently: Cox's wife, Nicole Ansari – who counts *Deadwood* and *The Blacklist* as acting credits – was cast as Lawrence's mother, Sarah, and loved it: 'That was fed back to Brian, and when we asked him to help us he said, "Yeah, sure,"' Griffin says.



A date in London was arranged, a studio prepared, and Cox delivered. How did Griffin find directing an A-lister on his first film? 'Not only was I directing him, but they were my lines as well,' he laughs. Then at one point, he recalls, there was a "who wrote this rubbish?" moment. 'We rewrote the line on the spot,' says Griffin. It must have helped – *Lawrence: After Arabia* has already picked up a couple of awards and is scheduled for release later this year. 📌