

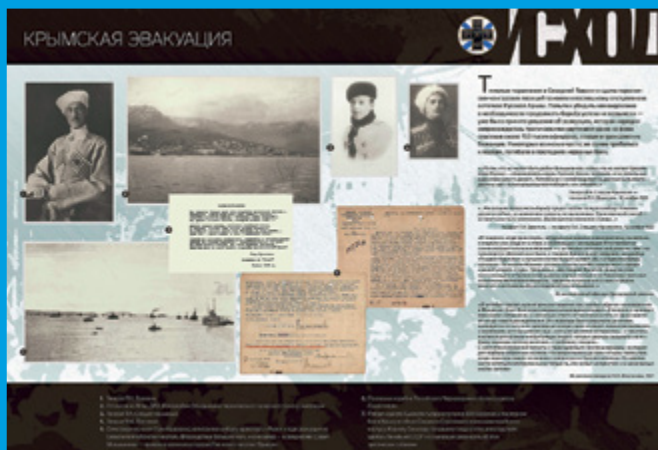
# RUSSIAN MIND

LA PENSEE RUSSE

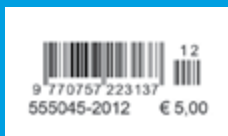
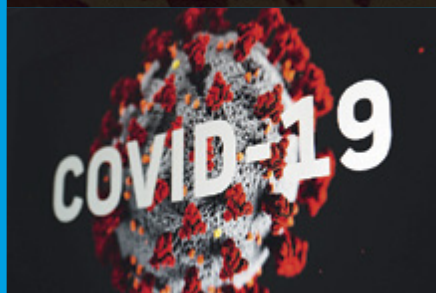
№129/01 (5000)  
January 2021

Russkaya Mysl  
Russian/English

Founded in 1880  
[www.RussianMind.com](http://www.RussianMind.com)



## REFLECTING ON 2020



UK ..... £4.00  
Italy ..... €5.00  
France, Spain ..... €5.60  
Germany ..... €5.00  
Belgium ..... €5.00  
Austria ..... €5.00  
Finland ..... €5.00



# ЛИТЕРАТУРНАЯ ГАЗЕТА



Третий  
век  
с читателем

[www.lgz.ru](http://www.lgz.ru)

**Зарубежная подписка  
с доставкой в любую страну мира**

**Представительство фирмы  
«Ист Вью Информэйшн Сервисез, Инк.»**  
115230, Москва, Электролитный проезд, д.9,  
корп.1, помещение VIII  
тел. +7 (495) 777-6557  
E-mail: [periodicals@ivis.ru](mailto:periodicals@ivis.ru)  
<https://shop.eastview.com/>

**East View Representation  
Office in Moscow**  
115230, Moscow, Elektrolitnyi proezd, 9,  
bldg.1, office VIII  
Tel. +7 (495) 777-6557  
E-mail: [periodicals@ivis.ru](mailto:periodicals@ivis.ru)  
<https://shop.eastview.com/>

**Агентство «Nasha Pressa»**  
Tel.: +49 241 515 87 60  
Fax.: +49 241 168 69 07  
E-mail: [abo@nasha-pressa.de](mailto:abo@nasha-pressa.de)  
[www.nasha-pressa.de](http://www.nasha-pressa.de)



## EDITOR'S LETTER 5000<sup>TH</sup> ISSUE OF "RUSSIAN MIND"



*Dear readers,*

You have received the "Russian Mind"'s 5000th issue. You know what "Russian Mind" is today. It has always been extraordinary. Moreover, its significance has never been determined by a "large circulation" or its "mass character". Instead, it has always, at all times, been a highly-demanded mass medium. The pre-revolutionary "Russian Mind" was distinguished by its "intelligent free thinking" without any signs of radicalism or maximalism. Its liberal positioning was perceived in Tsarist Russia as a form of honesty and revelation, as a belief that God created a human to be free to choose between good and evil. Everything changed with the appearance of the Bolsheviks. In contrast to

the Tsarist government, they did not cater to the "rotten intelligentsia" and simply ceased the "Russian Mind".

Being revived in 1947 in Paris, the newspaper "Russian Mind" had nothing to do with a thick literary and intellectual pre-revolutionary magazine. It originally fitted into the ranks of those who fought against Soviet totalitarianism.

The post-war émigré was no longer as active and diverse as in the 1920s or the 1930s, but it was still vibrant and active. Unlike their predecessors, its representatives no longer believed that "the Soviet power was about to collapse". On the contrary, it was perceived by them, like by everyone else, as victorious and seemingly invincible power. Therefore, emigrants struggled bitterly and painfully like vanquished people, who, like true Russians, knew and believed that "God is not in power, but in truth".

Sometimes I think that being Russian in the West today is not always comfortable, but always ever so significant.

Happy New Year, dear readers!

**Victor Loupan**

**Russian Mind  
No129/01 (5000),  
JANUARY 2021**

**HEAD OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD**  
Victor Loupan

**EDITORIAL BOARD**  
Anatoly Adamishin  
Metropolitan Anthony  
Rene Guerra  
Dmitry Shakhovskoy  
Peter Sheremetev  
Alexander Troubetskoy  
Sergey Yastrzhembsky

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
David Draier

**EXECUTIVE EDITOR**  
Karina Enfenjyan  
[karina@russianmind.com](mailto:karina@russianmind.com)

**POLITICAL EDITOR:**  
Vyacheslav Katamidze

**CREATIVE PRODUCER:**  
Vasily Grigoriev  
[cp@russianmind.com](mailto:cp@russianmind.com)

**DESIGN**  
Yuri Nor  
[design@russianmind.com](mailto:design@russianmind.com)

**ADVERTISEMENT:**  
[sales@russianmind.com](mailto:sales@russianmind.com)

**DISTRIBUTION:**  
[distribution@russianmind.com](mailto:distribution@russianmind.com)

**SUBSCRIPTION:**  
[subscription@russianmind.com](mailto:subscription@russianmind.com)

**ADDRESS:**  
47 avenue Hoche, 75006, Paris, France.  
E-mail: [info@russianmind.com](mailto:info@russianmind.com)

**COVER:**



Editors are not responsible for the accuracy of the information published in news reports, promotional materials and advertisements. Editors do not have the ability to enter into correspondence and do not return manuscripts and illustrations. Editors do not provide background information. Reproduction of any materials from the magazine "Russian Mind" is impossible without the permission of the editorial board.

Cases of the absence of sale of the magazine "Russian Mind", violations of the terms of delivery and other shortcomings in our work may be reported on  
+44 (0) 203 205 0041  
or send on e-mail:  
[info@russianmind.com](mailto:info@russianmind.com)

**CIRCULATION: 27 000 COPIES**



## HIGHLIGHTS

# YEAR 2020 IN REVIEW

*Despite the string of events, the year 2020 has been radically and primarily determined by the pandemic*

VICTOR LOUPAN,  
*Head of the Editorial Board*

There is no secret that our ancestors had believed in curses for centuries. So, if they lived today, they would believe that the year 2020 was cursed by someone. Because our ancestors primarily judged by droughts, natural anomalies, locust infestations, violent fires, and, of course, epidemics!

Let us start with the epidemic. Although, if you carefully recall what had been happening to us over the year 2020, it turns out that every month brought us something certainly disgusting and sometimes entirely terrible. While preparing this article, I involuntarily noticed that all the worst thoughts came out the top of my head. There was some good news though. The Chinese, for example, brought lunar soil to Earth. Great! Russia seems to have settled the conflict in Karabakh. Before that the entire Christian world had silently watched the beating of the Armenians. Russia has also come up with a vaccine against COVID-19!

I wish to add that the events which were very joyful to all of us also took place at a purely human level. For example, births of children and grandchildren! For normal people, it always brings a great joy. So, my elev-



Photo: Martin Sanchez

enth grandson arrived to our family, and he is a wonderful boy!

But personal or individual joys have nothing to do with it. The main thing is collective intelligence and general perception of what is happening in the aggregate.

### January

The year began roughly. As early as on January 3, something happened that led all the mass media to a discussion of the possible start of the World War III. Because the US

Army launched an air strike on the outskirts of the Baghdad Airport and killed one of the most glorious and powerful Iranian military officers, General Qassim Suleimani. He was an extraordinary general, a renowned hero, a commander of the Al-Quds Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps special forces. The furious Iranians promised a fierce revenge.

A week later, on January 11, news agencies published a message that some hitherto unknown virus caused a man's death in China. This is how the "epidemic" with the notorious Coronavirus began, which smoothly

turned into global psychosis. We will come back to this topic later.

### February

The conflict in Syria brought Russia and Turkey to the edge of war. And again mass media started talking about the World War III, because Turkey is a NATO member. In 2020 the Turks generally began to play up not only with Russia, but also with the European Union.

Less was written about it, but by the end of the month Africa faced the most massive locust infestation over the entire known history of the continent. Experts say, due to global warming locust activity has increased and it is even more sedulously devouring the crop. As a result, millions of Africans lost their income and, most importantly, food. It pushed them, of course, to migrate even more massively. Especially to Europe.

### March

Due to plunge in oil prices amid the global Coronavirus panic, the Russian rouble has collapsed.

Around the same time, the "epidemic" turned into a "pandemic", and stock markets fell all over the world without exception.

### April

Almost all countries in Europe and America announced quarantine measures. The American word "lockdown" is becoming a popular word. Everywhere presidents and prime ministers are reaching out to



Photo: Edwin Hooper

the peoples to encourage humans to #stayhome. Vladimir Putin also appears on TV screens to announce the first "non-working" days. Following the "lockdown", a new but popular Russian expression "distant work", or simply "distantionka", appears. Like the French or Belgians, Russians spend April at home listening to the president's regular addresses.

### May

Following the brutal murder of black George Floyd by the police, a wave of protests erupts in the United States, which soon escalates into a riot accompanied with robberies, beatings, and murders. US troops are sent to some cities. The American mass media began talking about the beginning of a new civil war. Especially against the

background of the processions near the White House which were highlighted in the context of a very biased election campaign.

Demonstrations and chaotic gatherings of unorganised masses con-



Photo: Clay Banks



tribute to spreading of the Coronavirus. Unexpectedly (especially for the Americans) the USA are becoming the world “champion” in death rate due to the pandemic. Which is extremely strange for such a developed country.

## June

In many countries the pandemic is starting to subside, the national capitals and major cities are reviving,



Photo: RIA Novosti

although Coronavirus has not gone anywhere. People are advised to shy away from each other, wear masks and gloves, and disinfect their hands. Generally speaking, to live in fear.

## July

The main global event of the month included the zeroing of the presidential terms of Vladimir Putin resulting from the amendments introduced to the Constitution of the Russian Federation. According to the Central Election Commission, at least 80% of those who voted at the referendum supported the proposed amendments. It means that, theoret-

ically, Vladimir Putin can be elected, re-elected and maintain his presidency until 2036!

## August

In Belarus, mass protests renewed against the official presidential re-election of Alexander Lukashenko. After the initial days of incredibly brutal police violence, the authorities changed their tactics, after which demonstrations held on Sat-

ported that he was poisoned with a substance from the group of cholinesterase inhibitors.

## September

At the beginning of the month the German government declared that Alexei Navalny had been poisoned with a nerve agent from the Novichok group. Negotiations and arguments of the Russian party were of no concern.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the oldest Supreme Court Justice, died in the United States at the height of the presidential race. She was known for her extremely liberal and feminist views. Mrs. Ginsburg's death has become a political sensation, especially as US Supreme Court judges play a critical part in determining the winner of the presidential election. Her death changed the balance of power in the Supreme Court in favour of the republican or pro-republican majority.

In Belarus, despite ongoing numerous protests, Alexander Lukashenko held a solemn inauguration ceremony for the presidency. However, the EU member states refused to recognise him as a legally elected head of the state.

At the very end of the month a war broke out between Azerbaijan and Armenia, but officially, the “Na-



Historic Armenian cathedral in Nagorno-Karabakh hit by bombings Photo: RIA Novosti

gorno-Karabakh Defence Army”. The very beginning of hostilities is not that significant here as it was to be expected, but the fact is important that the Turkish army and its Syrian mercenary fighters are taking part in them. At first, Azerbaijan denied this fact, but then it was forced to admit it.

## October

The high-profile murder of a previously unknown French middle school teacher Samuel Paty was the main sensation of the month. He was beheaded right in the street, in broad daylight, by an 18-year-old native of Chechnya. The police officers who arrived at the scene of the crime were forced to shoot the young man, because he rushed at them brandishing a kitchen knife. Samuel Paty died because of a scandal inflated on the Internet due to the fact that during his lecture he decided to discuss with schoolchildren the cartoons of Mohammed, because of which the entire editorial office of the Parisian satirical newspaper Charlie Hebdo was shot at point-blank. His killer specially arrived from another city in order to commit his monstrous crime.

Another sensation of the month was the virtual ban on abortion in Poland, which led to massive protests with blocking of roads and highways. The EU authorities also criticised Poland for adopting such a law.

By the end of the month, due to an increase in COVID-19 cases, the French government declared a general isolation regime and imposed a curfew.

## November

According to protracted preliminary calculations, Donald Trump was not re-elected as US president.

But he refused to concede defeat; on the contrary, he accused Joe Biden of illegitimacy and the Democrats of criminal machinations. As we know now, Trump's threats and the litigation he promised will get nowhere.



Photo: Clay Banks

On November 9, a Russian military helicopter was shot down in the airspace of Armenia. Azerbaijan immediately offered its apologies, and Russia accepted them. Unexpectedly on the same day Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a statement on ceasefire and the introduction of the Russian Peacekeeping Contingent to the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. The violent reaction of Turkey which was excluded from the treaty, indicated that it regarded the treaty as an intolerable strategic victory for Russia.

The anti-Russian political orientation of the United States manifested itself once again as the unanimous approval of the Rodchenkov Act by the Senate, which criminalises schemes tolerating violation of the anti-doping rules. Of course, outside the US.

A series of protests took place across the globe against the restrictions associated with the pandemic. The largest of these included the massive strike in India involving 250 million people. People protested not only against restrictions on freedoms, but also against a sharp decline in living standards.

## December

The last month of the year was marked by new US sanctions against Russia in connection with the Navalny case. This time, they directly concern the highest ranking officials, especially engaged in the security and law enforcement agencies. Europe also joined the sanctions, but at a less aggressive level.

Coronavirus also persistently drew attention to itself: its mutation was recorded in the UK. It challenges the vaccination procedure which has already started in a number of EU countries and in the United States too.

Because, if the new, British, virus variance spreads, it will not be clear whether the medicinal properties of the current vaccines will cover it. Is the mutant a slightly modified COVID-19, or are its properties so differ from a previous variance that the virus is completely different? Experts are silent. But the UK is already isolated from the rest of the world, just in case.

## Summary

Despite the string of events, the year 2020 has been radically and primarily determined by the pandemic, that not only led to very dangerous social, economic, and political consequences the essence of which are not yet fully recognised by us, but also to massive cancellations and postponements of all kinds of events, quarantine isolation, protests in many countries, the largest recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s. In post-Soviet Russia, the current economic recession has become the hardest since 1998 – the year of default.

Let us hope that the year 2021 will not be as depressing as 2020.

Happy New Year, dear readers!



# WHAT IS OUR PROGRAMME FOR TOMORROW?

*According to realistic American political analysts, the Democratic Party turns into the “continuous war party”*

**T**eo Gurieli, political analyst, has answered the Russian Mind's questions concerning the US presidential election outcome.

*It seems that in many countries, including Russia, of course, both politicians and ordinary people had followed the American elections with attention. Even now, they are watching with unflagging attention what is happening in the American political arena. How would you evaluate the current events?*

First of all, I would like to point out that I think the game is over. The US Supreme Court refused to consider the claim for revising the election outcome submitted by Texas and supported by several other states. In the middle of December, the process of a phased transfer of power to Joe Biden, who won the presidential election, began.

Trump supporters assure their associates that they still have time until mid-January, but I am sure that the rearguard actions conducted by the Republicans are self-defeating. The Democrats have relied on distortion and massive fraud during the elections, and we saw that the electoral fraud was successful: the Democrats convinced the majority of the national population that Biden would bring it peace and prosperity.

It is a fact that everyone in the United States is tired of bickering in the corridors of power, robbery in the streets, and burning shops. And many believed the Democrats that, after having come to power,

they would make the country not “great” like Trump had promised, but at least peaceful. And it seems that the majority of the population is ready to forgive them everything, including the “long-running”, but completely useless Mueller Committee, which had never been able to prove that Donald Trump won the previous election thanks to the Russians; a ludicrous attempt to impeach Trump; the informational “blackout” that the liberal mass media staged with the start of Trump's election campaign; and support for radicals and anarchists who robbed luxury shops and smashed restaurants. In other words, President Trump did not lose the election; instead, the Democrats cheated the entire America, and moreover – the rest of the world's population.

*Do you think that all attempts by the Republicans to restore justice and find out whether there really was a massive violation, will fail?*

I think, over time there will be numerous exposures of the monstrous ballot fraud that took place in a number of states, long lists of phantom voters who voted for Biden will be published together with the facts of bribery of thousands of people who worked at polling stations. But when the election campaign will over, the Democrats will begin a quick and reliable cleanup of all the national political bodies, expelling the Republicans from them, together with those who still cultivate the desire for justice and denial of meanness. All facts proving that the elections were

unfair and, accordingly, illegal, will be buried. And over time, the liberal mass media will be able, with the facilitation of their deafening propaganda, to do what is still considered impossible today: they will prove that all accusations of the Republicans in dishonest and illegal actions of the Democrats were false.

*More than 70 million Americans have voted for Trump. Many of them openly express their rejection of the election outcome and do not want to bow to the reality. Does it mean that a confrontation time may come to the country, and there may be an internal conflict?*

If it occurs, such a conflict may catalyse more serious events: armed confrontation in a number of states, major clashes with the police and the army. I hope, it will not come to that. But the fact that centrifugal forces are raising in the United States today is an objective fact. For example, Texas is preparing to announce its desire to withdraw from the United States, resentment is growing in the states that are located between the coastal states: in Montana, Wyoming, Idaho, Utah, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Missouri, Tennessee, and so on. I accept that as a result of a tough political struggle, the United States will split into three countries in a few years: Western, Central, and Eastern states. Such a development of events is considered now as almost impossible, but who knows now what will happen in a few years? In any case, events of that kind would be extremely dangerous for the whole world – after all, we are

talking about a nuclear power with a gigantic arsenal of weapons of mass destruction.

*Let us hope for the best and turn to other questions. The US economy suffered quite a great damage as a result of the pandemic. Under such conditions, will it be able to find ways to restore production, and what does the new president promise to do for that?*

Joe Biden is not considered a major economist, and Kamala Harris has an even lower rating in this field. Obviously, when beginning to fulfil their official duties, they will first of all attempt to destroy everything in the economy what Trump has created during his presidency. It suffices to refer to their own speeches. They gave promises, not just generous, but completely meaningless, because it is almost impossible to complete them under the current conditions. Recall that they believe it is realistic to provide illegal immigrants with benefits and medical care, and their children with free education. Note that at the same time no idea was voiced in Biden's pre-election economic program, that would be distinguished by its originality, thoughtfulness, a new approach to the economic situation in the country, primarily in terms of fight against poverty and unemployment and reduction of the tax burden imposed on ordinary Americans.

*What do you think can serve as inflammable material in the programs of this Democratic duo?*

There are two dimensions here, one is internal, and another is external. If we talk about the internal one, then I cannot skip the following



Photo: History in HD

item in Kamala Harris's program: she plans to force all Americans who have weapons to give them up to the government against some consideration. Let me remind you that now there are approximately 394 million firearms on hand in the United States. Many Americans believe that this will lead to an internal conflict, where the War Between the States would appear like a short-term collision among soccer fans.

*For obvious reasons, we are primarily interested in the external dimension. After all, we are talking about the global security, about the security of Russia. What is our programme for tomorrow?*

Russia's position remained complicated during Trump's presidency. But I feel that it will be even more difficult to us with Biden. Because he will enjoy the support of not only liberals, but also radicals, anarchists, in general, all leftists, who, before the elections, repeatedly received moral support from him – even when they were engaged in outrages. Having broken the resistance of the Repub-

licans, he will achieve a kind of quasi-unification and will receive carte blanche for any action on the international stage. Let us recall that Biden never had either his own position or his own program: he has always been Obama's puppet, and now he is engaged in continuing the Obamisation of the United States.

*Do you think that US foreign policy under Biden will be fundamentally different from that of the Trump administration?*

I think that the difference in their positions will be considerable – in particular, in relation to those global problems that may lead to an international conflict and a global war. President Trump promised to stop sending American soldiers to trouble spots and reduce their presence abroad. Instead, every time he faced a worryingly powerful reaction of his generals, who immediately began arguing that the US security would be threatened in case if they fail to destroy another Afghan village with American mortars. Because the Democrats' position was





Photo: Gayatri Malhotra

always different. According to realistic American political analysts, the Democratic Party turns into the “continuous war party”.

We have to make a reservation right here: this party has always been of a such kind. Democratic President

Truman ordered to bomb Hiroshima and Nagasaki. He also launched the Korean war, in which the USA involved Australia, Great Britain, and even “neutral” Sweden. America lost over 36 thousand soldiers during that war. Kennedy, a Democrat, sent

12 thousand American “consultants” to Vietnam, then supporting them with 300 helicopters managed by American pilots. The war became wide-scale, with the losses amounting to no less than 50 thousand American lives. Based on Clinton’s order (who also was a famous Democrat), the USA together with NATO heavily bombed Yugoslavia. Losses exceeded one thousand and five hundred people. When Obama won the 2008 US presidential election, he swore to bury the hatchet in Iraq and Afghanistan. These declarations were of no worth. The USA never stopped conducting wars over the entire eight-year period of Obama’s presidency. He instructed to bomb Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Libya, Yemen, Somali and even Pakistan. Ex-President Clinton’s faithful partner, Hillary, played her specific role in bombing Libya – while being the US Secretary of State, she reacted very enthusiastically to the news about a horrible martyrdom of Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi.

*In addition to the atomic bombing of Japanese cities that*

*took place at the end of World War II, you have mentioned the regional conflicts too. But the US has always been very cautious about other nuclear powers, right?*

Yes, it really didn’t come to a world war, because the US leaders always

understood: a nuclear war is a verdict on humanity. But today the Democratic Party of the United States of America lives in a world of illusion. Most politicians in Washington truly believe, that Russia and China demonstrate papier mache rockets and cardboard tanks during military parades. They infix in mind of American citizens – like Adolf Hitler infused his fellow citizens beforetime – that “no bomb will reach the capital of the country”. Well, let us remind the appearance of Berlin at the end of WWII: it was

difficult to find a single building in a good condition across the entire city. And it happened back in 1945, when the “God of war” included conventional artillery-type weapons, but not atomic rockets.

Now let us imagine that a single megaton blast value warhead rocket attacks a city comparable in its size with Washington, which is 177 sq. km only. The downtown turns into a barren wasteland, all buildings are destroyed at a 6-kilometer distance from the explosion epicentre, and the others are severely damaged. Only a few survivors remain there, suffering from bad burns. With this, US military experts recognise, that the capitals of the warring nations would be attacked by a dozen of rockets, but not a single one. The fact that an enemy will also be damaged, does not help a lot to hundreds and thousands of fatalities. American experts suggest, Moscow is targeted with 60 or even more rockets; do they really think, that such cities as Los Angeles, or Washington, or Houston are targeted with a smaller number?

*As far as I know, discussions of a new war are being conducted only*



Photo: Jeff Burak

*in the context of the use of conventional weapons, without the use of weapons of mass destruction.*

Should a war begin, it would be conducted with the use of any destruction facilities available to the warring states, that would leave no chance for compassion to their civilians. However, American military strategists suppose that in case of collision between the superpowers Russia will primarily focus its efforts on NATO member states in Europe, while the USA will attempt to interfere after the exchange of initial attacks. Consequently, the Pentagon strategists would be happy, if conflagration of a new world war appeared in Europe first, preferably with the use of conventional weapons. Which would make NATO member states – especially those of them who would host America’s troops in their territories – a hostage of circumstance and targets for strategic and tactical nuclear missiles.

*May a new war, should it happen, become global?*

Once the USA unleash a war against Russia, it will more or less

involve – in addition to NATO member states – some Latin American and Asian countries. At least 400 million people will be killed on both sides (some experts predict that the number of victims may reach 900 million people). Over 320 cities will be completely destroyed, the economies of the developed countries will lose 70 to 90 percent of their working capacity. Even if they avoid a nuclear winter, nuclear fallout will prevent from normal agriculture for many years. So, what is the sense of the war revealing no winners?

The abovementioned should be remembered when the representatives of the Democratic Party together with their supporters among liberals and top military officers call Americans to relax about a war against Russia and China – they say, such war will be short-term and triumphant. Indeed, some politicians will survive in anti-nuclear panic rooms, however even after the victory they will remain politicians living in a poor and unhappy country.

There will be no winners in a new world war.



# A NIGHT AT THE LOUVRE: LEONARDO DA VINCI

*The Musée du Louvre and Pathé Live have partnered to release an exclusive filmed private tour of the landmark exhibition “A Night at the Louvre: Leonardo da Vinci”*

Filmed especially for the cinema, this visit is a unique opportunity to contemplate the most beautiful works of Leonardo da Vinci up close. It takes the viewer on a nocturnal stroll through the Louvre in the company of the exhibition’s curators, Vincent Delieuvin and Louis Frank, whose commentaries provide precious insight into Leonardo’s artistic practice and pictorial technique.

This major and unprecedented retrospective devoted to the artist’s work in its totality demonstrates how Leonardo elevated painting above all other pursuits, and how his investigation of the world – the “science of painting” as he put it – was at the service of an art whose supreme ambition was to give life to his paintings.

The exhibition welcomed more than 1 million visitors, setting an all-time record for the Louvre Museum. This initiative extends the event by making it accessible to an even wider audience worldwide.



Photo: Patrick Languallner

This is the first time that the Musée du Louvre will be featured in a documentary film screened exclusively in cinemas in more than 60 countries with translations into 30 languages.

Four nights of filming and a team of 30 technicians went into the making of this film shot with 5K cameras especially for the cinema, under the direction of Pierre-Hubert Martin. The texts are written by Catherine Sauvat and Pierre-Hubert Martin, under the supervision of the joint curators. The narration has been entrusted to Coraly Zahonero, a member of France’s historic national theatre, the Comédie-Française.

Teachers will be able to organise school screenings in nearby cinemas of their choice throughout the 2020/2021 school year.

Educational materials relating to the exhibition will be available free of charge for teachers on the platform dedicated to the event [www.anightatthelouvre.film/education/](http://www.anightatthelouvre.film/education/)

These materials will provide them with keys to better understanding Leonardo da Vinci’s work and help them carry out activities with their pupils before and after the screening.

“It is a great honour to be associated with the Musée du Louvre,” said Thierry Fontaine, President of Pathé Live. This exhibition was such a huge success that many people didn’t have the chance to enjoy it in person. The cinema screening will extend the extraordinary and fascinating work accomplished by the exhibition’s curators, in what has been a long-term



Photo: Alina Grubnyak

project, and further broaden its impact on the general public around the world. I would like to acknowledge and thank the teams at the Louvre for their passion, dedication, and unfailing support, all of which made this ambitious cultural project possible.”

“The exhibition devoted to Leonardo da Vinci closed its doors at the end of February 2020, and we all felt a twinge of emotion when this exceptional gathering of works had to be broken up,” said Jean-Luc Martinez, President-Director of the Louvre. “Pathé Live suggested that we keep a cinematic record of it and I was immediately enthusiastic about the idea. The popularity of the Louvre’s website and social media during the

period of lockdown confirms that there are multiple ways of making art accessible to the greater public. The primary mission of museums is to encourage live encounters with works, but it is also our role to prepare or extend visits, to encourage people to deepen their knowledge and learn how to look at art. This film makes that possible. It reveals the wonder of the pieces on display and celebrates the work of Vincent Delieuvin and Louis Frank, two of the world’s leading specialists on Leonardo da Vinci. It is also extraordinarily beautiful, and I am delighted that it can bring the pleasure of admiring this great painter to so many people around the world”.



# THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

AUGUSTINE SOKOLOVSKI,  
*Doctor of Theology, Priest*

Christmas as a celebration for everyone makes religion a place of hospitality. That being said, I have no doubt that Christmas will always remain a deeply biblical and truly Christian celebration. The whole world celebrates the Feast of the Nativity on 25 December. But a special blessing for the Russian Church and those who know her is that the difference between the Julian and Gregorian calendars creates a 13-day delay, making Christmas a long holiday of 13 days. So why is it 25 December?

There are two possible explanations for this. One explanation is ideological, the other historical. Both theories, like everything to do with Christmas, are complementary. The first stems from the fact that the Roman Empire celebrated the Day of the Invincible Sun on 25 December in honour of the winter solstice. To replace this pagan festival with a Christian one, the Church introduced into the liturgical calendar the feast of the Nativity, that is, the birthday of Jesus Christ. The main liturgical hymn, a troparion, contains the following words in this context: “Your birth, O Christ our God, shine to the world as the light of reason”.

While acknowledging the validity of this explanation, it is important to remember that the most important Christian feast at that time next to Easter was the feast of the Epiphany, that is, the feast of the appearance of the Saviour to the world on 6 January (19). Today, the baptism of Christ is celebrated on this day, but originally this day was a celebration of

the appearance of the Saviour to the world – simultaneously birth, baptism, the arrival of the Messiah and epiphany. A separate feast in honour of the birth of Christ was gradually accepted, and in some ancient Eastern churches (Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopian) it remained 6 (19) below the previous date.

The second version of the date of the feast says that at the time of Jesus Christ there was a conviction among the Jewish people that the Righteous One, ie the Messiah and Redeemer, had to die on the day of his conception. Jesus’ crucifixion on the cross was the only date that could be chronologically verified. This was because in the particular year in which Jesus was crucified the Jewish Passover was tied to the corresponding date. The crucifixion fell on 25 March. And nine months counted from the day of the Annunciation, that is, the conception of Jesus from the Virgin by the Holy Spirit, gave the date of 25 December. The development of history, biblical studies, theology and other sciences allows the drawing of such conclusions.

Each event and concept has its own range of understanding. The range of understanding of Christmas by the secular community “swings” from Christmas as the day of the birth of “Jesus Christ” to a symbolic, familial, communal, fairytale celebration that has no ideological or religious significance.

In order to get a sense of the rich semantic baggage which theological thought in the fourth and fifth centuries associated with Christmas, we

can turn to one of the “theorists” of the Nativity event, the great teacher of the Church of Carthage, Bishop Augustine (354–430). Regarding the nature of the celebration of the Nativity of Christ the Saviour in those days when this feast day was just introduced into the Church calendar, Augustine writes the following in one of his only recently (!) uncovered sermons: “In humility our Creator appeared as creation. He who created us was created for our sake. God, who was before time, became man in time to redeem us from time. The Great Physician came to heal our tumour. From the east of the sun to the west, the human race lay in sickness. It needed a great physician. In the beginning, this physician sent his helpers. But when the people despaired in their waiting, he himself appeared” (Word 32:5).

As in many of his other works, Augustine never ceases to amaze us with his modernity. Here is time and its overcoming; sickness and the inability of human being to heal itself; here is God understood as the true physician. Already the thoughts of the great theologians of that time saw in Christmas not only the commemoration of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, but also a synthesis of space and time, a reflection of the whole history of humanity through the prism of the relationship between man and God.

In the Russian Orthodox Church, Christmas is preceded by a forty-day period of Lent. It is essentially the same preparatory period in which both the Church and society prepare for the celebration of Christmas.

Unfortunately, the 70 years of atheist dictatorship in Russia have eliminated many of the secular traditions of Christmas preparation so it is very difficult for us to understand what the pre-Christmas season was like in the secular, pre-revolutionary society of the Russian Empire.

The Lord comes not in the great city of Jerusalem but in a little cave near Bethlehem he is born. In the event of Christ’s birth, the Magi from the far East – who according to tradition were also kings – come to worship him. They do not even notice that it is a manger surrounded by animals. For the kings see the Lord before them and the whole world becomes his palace, the abode of the great King.

The abolition of all human and invented divine majesty and splendour. In the event of the birth of Christ, the angels praise like children. They claim the praise of the shepherds. Everything happens in reverse order. For now it is no longer the people who call upon the angels as mediators as was the case before. But the angels themselves call upon the people to rejoice.

In the event of the birth of Christ, the night becomes light. The praise of the angels fills not heaven but earth. Not through threats but through love for humanity it glorifies the Creator by singing that henceforth in humanity is the good pleasure of God.

In the event of the birth of Christ one person remains alone. The only one who never understood the changing times: King Herod. He asks

the Magi to tell him the secret of the birthplace of the Messiah so that he can “go and worship”. Worship as kings used to worship the King of kings. But the Lord is going away from him. The Lord goes to Egypt and does not want royal worship.

In the event of Christ’s birth all faithful come together to witness with their presence and their joy the truth that God has changed the world. That from now on everything is different. In the event of Christ’s birth, the big has become small. The small, like the bread and wine in the Eucharist, has been transformed into the great. We who are so different and so similar, such limited people,

human beings, each of us with our number of years of experience, our biography, are made now endless, without end.

When we celebrate the Lord’s birthday, we should understand this feast as a call. It is not a historical commemoration, nor a beautiful, decorated and impeccably loving one that appeals to every citizen of our planet but instead it reveals the very essence of our own existence.

In the event of the birth of Christ, God is with us. There are so many meanings hidden in the great and saving day of Christmas that today, on the day of the feast, we need to focus on the essentials. God is with us!





# TWENTY-FIVE SITES ON UNESCO'S WORLD NETWORK OF BIOSPHERE RESERVES

UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere (MAB) programme recently added 25 new sites in 18 countries to the World Network of Biosphere Reserves. UNESCO biosphere reserves seek to reconcile human activity with the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity. "The time for transformation is now. Crises also create opportunity, the opportunity to change how we see our relationships with nature, with each other and with the Earth," said Audrey Azoulay, UNESCO Director-General.

## **Ordino Biosphere Reserve (Andorra)**

Located on the central axis of the eastern Pyrenees, in the north of Andorra, the Ordino Biosphere Reserve covers an area of 82.7 km<sup>2</sup>. It presents a good sampling of the biological diversity. Traditional agriculture and



Ordino, Andorra. Photo: Andrea Rodrigues

herding have shaped the landscape, dominated in part by forests of Scots pine, fir, sessile oak and hook pine. Notable for the protection of a number of rare and endangered species

on the IUCN Red List, Ordino is home to the great Tetra, emblematic of the Pyrenees, the bearded vulture and the Pyrenees lizard, and it is a hotspot for Lepidoptera (butterflies).

## **Complex W-Arly- Pendjari (WAP) Transboundary Biosphere Reserve (Benin, Burkina-Faso, Niger)**

An ensemble of three existing biosphere reserves, the site straddles the borders of emblematic West African biogeographic regions, including Sahelian, Sudanian and Guinean, which present a varied biodiversity. It comprises wetlands of international importance recognized under the Ramsar Convention, and is a haven for vulnerable and endangered species, including the cheetah, elephant, lion, leopard and lappet-faced vulture.

The biosphere reserve is a barrier against the advance of desertification from the north.

## **Oueme Lower Valley Biosphere Reserve (Benin)**

Located on the south-eastern Atlantic shore of Benin, the Oueme Lower Valley, the biosphere reserve is a natural hotspot with Guinean equatorial biodiversity to the west and Congolese equatorial biodiversity to the east. Its diverse landscapes notably include tropical and subtropical humid deciduous forests, grasslands, savannas and shrubs. It also encompasses freshwater, coastal and marine ecosystems, home to west African lungfish and marine turtle species.

## **Fogo Biosphere Reserve (Cabo Verde)**

The youngest and only volcanically active island in the south of the Cabo Verde archipelago, Fogo Biosphere Reserve culminates at an altitude of 2,829 metres. It is home to various indigenous species, such as birds and reptiles, including the rare endemic López-Jurado's Half-toed Gecko, Vaillant's Mabuya and marine turtles (Green turtle and Olive Ridley). It is home to over 37,000 inhabitants.

## **Maio Biosphere Reserve (Cabo Verde)**

This mostly marine biosphere reserve is home to several endemic species, including turtles and cetaceans, as well as an abundance of fish, seabirds and marine reptiles. One of the most arid places in the country, Maio features gorgeous beaches, which, alongside its festivals, craft markets and historic heritage, attracted a growing number of tourists in recent years. Most of the island's population of close to 7,000, make a living from

the production of maize, beans, melons and salt, as well as tourism.

## **Mwali Biosphere Reserve (Comoros)**

Particularly well preserved, Mwali Island is home to an exceptional biodiversity of regional and global significance with high rates of endemism among different groups of flora and fauna, both on land and in the sea. It is recognized as an area of high conservation priority by the Ramsar Convention. With a fertile volcanic soil and a permanent hydrographic network, the area could potentially increase its agricultural production, which is a challenge due to its fragile ecosystem.

## **Asterousia Mountain Range Biosphere Reserve (Greece)**

Uninterrupted human presence since the Neolithic Age has left Asterousia, in the southern part of Crete with a rich archaeological heritage of scattered human settlements set in mountainous landscape of natural and semi-natural habitats, as well as natural areas of high ecological value hosting more 55% of the island's animal and plant species. Asterousia Mountain Range is the southernmost mountainous area of Europe.

## **Panna Biosphere Reserve (India)**

Located in the centre of India, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, Panna is characterized by forests and marshy vegetation, with an abundance of rare medicinal plants as well as other non-timber forestry products, such as Kattha, gum and resins. It is a critical tiger hab-

itat area and hosts the Panna Tiger Reserve, as well as the World Heritage site of the Khajuraho Group of Monuments.

## **Bunaken Tangkoko Minahasa Biosphere Reserve (Indonesia)**

The Bunaken Tangkoko Minahasa Biosphere Reserve in North Sulawesi is located in the heart of the Coral Triangle of the Indo-Pacific Region in Indonesia. The biosphere reserve spans a total 746,405.92 hectares of terrestrial and marine habitats. The area encompasses a mosaic of ecological systems including a coastal area with coral reefs and seagrass, mangrove and coastal forests, islands and terrestrial ecosystems. The biosphere reserve is home to over 130 species of mammals including the Dian's tarsier.

## **Karimunjawa-Jepara- Muria Biosphere Reserve (Indonesia)**

The Karimunjawa-Jepara-Muria Biosphere Reserve in Central Java is located in the mountainous region surrounding Mount Muria. The biosphere reserve is critical in preserving the biodiversity of the central region of the island of Java. Its three



Panna National Park, India. Photo: Harsh Tank



protected regions encompass more than 120,000 hectares including the Karimunjawa National Park, the Mount Muria Protected Forest, and the Mount Celering Nature Reserve.

### **Merapi Merbabu Menoreh Biosphere Reserve (Indonesia)**

The biosphere reserve spans 254,877 hectares. It is home to the Gunung Merapi National Park, Gunung Merbabu National Park and Sermo Wildlife Reserve, each site is critical in protecting various endemic Javanese species. The Java-Bali montane forest type at the site protects the biodiversity of the Indo/Malayan region as well as a limestone formation in the Menorah area.

### **Almaty Biosphere Reserve (Kazakhstan)**

The Almaty Biosphere Reserve is located on the Zailiysky Alatau ridge, on the watershed of several river basins featuring a number of lakes. Its wild fruit forests, predominantly consisting of wild apple trees, are home to diverse fauna, including 177 bird and almost 1,000 insect species. Well over 1,000 species of plants are protected in the biosphere reserve, and 2,300 animal species have been documented.

### **West Altai Biosphere Reserve (Kazakhstan)**

The mountain-taiga forests of West Altai Biosphere Reserve are largely untouched. They include the only black taiga forests in the country, as well as Siberian and dark taiga. Wolverines and musk deer live in the biosphere reserve, which is on

the seasonal migration routes of wild ungulates. The local fauna includes more than 160 bird species.

### **Minett Biosphere Reserve (Luxembourg)**

Located in densely populated southern Luxembourg and bordering France, the biosphere reserve has the country's second largest concentration of inhabitants and employment after the capital. It is home to more than 171,000 inhabitants, nearly one third of Luxembourg's population concentrated over 200 km<sup>2</sup>. The region has a long tradition of hospitality towards immigrants resulting in a multicultural, dynamic and cosmopolitan population of over 150 nationalities.

### **Addu Atoll Biosphere Reserve (Maldives)**

Addu, the southernmost atoll of the Maldives, comprises a total of 30 islands, 17 of which are uninhabited. It is one of the most diverse coral reef ecosystems in the Maldives including lagoons, reef passes, seagrass beds, sandbanks, coral islands, lush tropical vegetation, mangroves, wetlands, brackish lakes locally known as kil-



*Big Almaty Lake, Kazakhstan. Photo: Polina Skaia*

his, agricultural land and residential areas. About 14,352 ha of its total area of 17,174.40 ha are marine areas, with an outstanding biodiversity that includes over 1,200 fish species.



*Addu, Maldives. Photo: Monamed Nashah*

### **Fuvahmulah Biosphere Reserve (Maldives)**

A large island in the southern part of the Maldives, the biosphere reserve encompasses an entire atoll ecosystem, including the most diverse of coral ecosystems in the country with healthy habitats and unique coral sand beach formations. The surface of the island is in the form of a very shallow bowl with two mangroves and wetlands (locally known as Kilhi) at medial low points, forming two small linked sub-catchments.

### **Toson-Khulstai Biosphere Reserve (Mongolia)**

The Toson-Khulstai Biosphere Reserve is located in North-Eastern Mongolia between forest steppe and grassland ecosystem and is part of the largest intact temperate grassland on Earth. The biosphere reserve aims to protect the low mountains, rolling hills, and dry steppe ecosystems that are the habitat of the Mongolian gazelle and other wildlife, such as the globally endangered White naped crane, the upland buzzard, the steppe eagle and the Siberian marmot.

### **Hadejia Nguru Bade Biosphere Reserve (Nigeria)**

Located in the Sudan-Sahelian zone of Nigeria, in the Lake Chad basin, the biosphere reserve encompasses the first Ramsar site designated in Nigeria, the Bade Ngruru Wetland, as well as the Baturiya Game Reserve, a former community forest. The region is recognized glob-

ally as internationally important for bird conservation. The creation of the biosphere reserves is part of a regional effort to update and improve knowledge of Lake Chad's natural resources.

### **Oban Biosphere Reserve (Nigeria)**

Oban Biosphere Reserve is located in the Cross River State in the south-eastern corner of Nigeria. The 557,682 ha biosphere reserve encompasses the Oban Forest Reserve, the Cross River National Park, and the Obudu Plateau. It harbours a significant portion of Nigeria's remaining tropical rainforest, with 1,568 plant species of which more than 80% are endemic, and it is crucial in protecting megafauna such as the critically endangered Cross River Gorilla, the Nigeria-Cameroon Chimpanzee, the forest elephant and many other rare and endangered species. Approximately 28,000 inhabitants live within the biosphere reserve.

### **Okangwo Biosphere Reserve (Nigeria)**

In the Coastal Evergreen Rainforest along the Gulf of Biafra, Okangwo is in the north of the Cross River National Park on the edge of the Cameroon Highlands between the Cross and Sanga Rivers. This combination of river systems provides the basis for a unique wealth of biodiversity. Faunal species in the area include the African elephant, African buffalo and bushpig, as well as the critically endangered Cross River Gorilla.

### **Bosques de Neblina – Selva Central Biosphere Reserve (Peru)**

Located in the Amazon basin, in a transition area between the Andes and the Amazon forest, the site

shares its northern border with the Oxapampa-Ashaninka-Yanesha Biosphere Reserve. Bosques de Neblina hosts species of high bio-ecological value. Emblematic species include the vulnerable Andean bear and the Andean cock-of-the-rock. The Pam-pa Hermosa Natural Sanctuary, one of the last remaining tropical montane forests in the region, and the Pui Pui woods, are of paramount importance for the protection of river headwaters, which provide safe freshwater to the population.

### **Island of Porto Santo Biosphere Reserve (Portugal)**

The biosphere reserve, located in the archipelago of Madeira, combines terrestrial and marine areas. The terrestrial areas host more than 1,600 taxa with a high level of endemism, including 15 types of flora that are exclusive to Porto Santo. The biosphere reserve is home to several species of marine reptiles and mammals, notably the rarest seal in the world, the Mediterranean monk seal, and the loggerhead sea turtle. Its marine biodiversity is yet to be fully catalogued.

### **Kologrivsky Forest Biosphere Reserve (Russia)**

The landscape of Kologrivsky Forest in the north-eastern part of the Russian Plain features landscapes influenced by human activities as well as undisturbed southern taiga



*Kologrivsky Forest. Photo: Andrian Kolotilin*

ecosystems, including pine forests, spruce forests, small-leaved forests, marshes, meadows and water reservoirs. There are over 1,000 species of flora and fauna registered in the biosphere reserve, including four floral and 13 fauna species inscribed on the Red List of Threatened Species of the Russian Federation. That list also includes some birds nesting in the reserve, among them the willow ptarmigan, the osprey, the eagle owl and the azure tit.

### **Gishwati Mukura Landscape Biosphere Reserve (Rwanda)**

The Gishwati Mukura Landscape Biosphere Reserve is located in the Albertine Rift in Rwanda. Globally recognized biodiversity hotspot, the area hosts a variety of endemic and endangered species, such as the Eastern chimpanzee and the Golden monkey. The biosphere reserve has a population of approximately 337,782 living in rural areas.

### **North-East Tobago Biosphere Reserve (Trinidad and Tobago)**

The North-East Tobago Biosphere Reserve presents a rare largely intact Caribbean Island Ridge-to-Ocean ecosystem that includes the world's oldest tropical rainforest reserve, the Tobago Main Ridge Forest Reserve, established in 1776. It encompasses 83,488 ha, with a marine area of 68,384 ha that is home to coral reefs and mangroves. Overall, 1,774 species have been recorded in its 19 habitat types and it is home to globally unique and endangered plants and animals including 83 IUCN Red List species and 41 endemic species. By joining the World Network of Biosphere Reserves, the community aims to revitalize cultural and spiritual bonds between people and nature.



# DRINK OF KINGS



Photo: Andrew Charles

Champagne wines are made by Champagne growers and houses who take pleasure in giving pleasure – people who craft their wines with a single-minded passion that has endured now for more than three centuries. Joie de vivre is their mission – to create wines that bring enchantment to every occasion, heighten every gourmet experience and make every event a celebration.

## How to choose Champagne

The Champagne labelling (label, back label, neck label) requires the following mandatory information: the word ‘Champagne’; the level of sweetness (whether brut, sec, demi-sec, etc); the percentage of

alcohol by volume (% vol); the bottle capacity (l, cl or ml); the brand of Champagne; the name of the producer; the name of the commune where that producer is registered and the country of origin (France); the producer’s registration code; the batch code; the words ‘produce of France’; the allergen content; the warning about drinking during pregnancy.

## Producer information

Every label must display the producer’s registration code issued by the Comité interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne (Comité Champagne), preceded by two initials indicating the category of producer:

- NM – Négociant Manipulant. An individual or company, with or without vines of their own, buying grapes, grape must or wine to make Champagne on his/her own premises.
- RM – Récoltant Manipulant. Grower who makes and markets own-label Champagne from grapes exclusively sourced from his/her own vineyards.
- RC – Récoltant Coopérateur. Co-op grower who sells, under his/her own label, a partly or totally co-op produced Champagne.
- CM – Coopérative de Manipulation. Wine co-op that markets Champagne made on co-op premises from members’ grapes.
- SR – Société de Récoltants. A family firm of growers that makes and markets own-label Champagne

from grapes sourced from family vineyards.

- ND – Négociant Distributeur. Distributor who buys in finished bottles of Champagne then labels them on his/ her own premises.

- MA – Marque d’Acheteur. Buyer’s own-brand Champagne.

## Understanding labels

Blanc de Blancs indicates a Champagne exclusively made from light-skinned grapes, typically Chardonnay but sometimes much rarer, ancient cultivars, used alone or in combination (Pinot Blanc, Pinot Gris, Arbane and Petit Meslier, which together represent just 0.3% of plantings). Blanc de Noirs: indicates a Champagne exclusively made from black-skinned grapes (Pinot Noir and/or Meunier).

Year of harvest indicates a vintage (‘millesimé’) Champagne, exclusively made from the fruit produced in the year displayed on the label and containing no reserve wines. The year of harvest is also displayed on the cork.

Grand Cru or Premier Cru: indicates a wine exclusively produced from vineyards holding Grand Cru status (17 villages) or Premier Cru status (42 villages).

Miscellaneous technical details may also be displayed on the back label or wine bottle medallion (the varietal composition of the blend, the vineyard or named vineyard plot of origin, date of disgorgement, etc.).

## Bottle styles

In the 19th Century the classic Champagne bottle was joined by a wide variety of bottle formats – bottles with

biblical-sounding names of obscure origin, designed to capture the spirit of any and every festive occasion.

The design of the Champagne bottle is born out of necessity – the need to withstand high pressure and repeated handling. All other things being equal, this leaves room for subtle variations in style, some new, some inspired by ancient bottle shapes. Champagne wines are typically bottled in dark green or sometimes amber glass, with the notable exception of rosé Champagne, which comes in clear glass bottles. All Champagne wines must be sold in the bottle in which they underwent second fermentation – whether this is a jeroboam or a half bottle.

## Serving Champagne

Champagne is best enjoyed in a tulip glass: tall and bulbous enough to allow the bubbles to develop to the full but narrowing at the top so as to concentrate the bouquet. The saucer-shaped Champagne coupe is to be avoided. Wash Champagne glasses by hand with hot water only, never soap or detergent. Gently wipe dry, aiming to safeguard all those natural imperfections in the glass that make for a proper show of

bubbles and a fine, persistent ring on the surface of the wine.

The ideal serving temperature is 8–10 °C. Champagne is best chilled by placing the bottle in a bucket filled with ice and water for 20 minutes, or in the refrigerator for several hours.

## Opening a bottle of Champagne

Start by removing the foil wrapping (pull on the tab if there is one). Now hold the cork down firmly with one hand and tilt the bottle away from you (and others). Then untwist the wire loop at the base of the muzzle. Next, still holding the cork firmly, gently rotate the bottle with your other hand so that the cork comes sliding (not popping) out. The cork should display the word ‘Champagne’ and where relevant the year of vintage.

When it comes to pouring Champagne, never fill the glass more than two thirds full, so leaving space for the aromas to unfold. Leave the wine to open in the glass for a moment, giving it time to reveal the full richness of its bouquet. It is then best to drink the bottle without delay, since Champagne will start to go flat within a few hours of opening



Photo: Deleece Cook



BOOKS

# 7 BOOKS TO INSPIRE YOU IN 2021

What better time to make new resolutions and plan ahead than at the start of a new year! Here are a few books that will set the scene for the year to come and inspire you to do great things.

## The Friendship Formula by Caroline Millington

Friendship is such an important part of our lives but how much to we really know about it? In her first book, Caroline Millington introduced the concept of kindness – blending mindfulness with being kind to yourself.

That means setting boundaries to get the best out of your relationships and making your emotional wellbeing a priority. Now she shows readers how to apply this concept to create and maintain long-lasting, nurturing and functioning friendships.

Friendship is a beautiful thing but there are times it can be tricky to navigate: when friendship becomes toxic; how to break up with a friend; what to do if a friend “ghosts” you and surviving friendship betrayal; how motherhood can impact on female friendships; friendship grief and how to cope with losing a friend. This book shows you how applying kindness to the difficult

side of friendship can help you get the best out of those friendships that really matter.

## The Book you Wish Your Parents Had Read by Philippa Perry

So, you’re a working parent of small children who never seem to sleep or slow down. If they’re not banging pans or poking plug sockets they’re screaming for more – more sugar, more telly, more of your weary, downtrodden soul. It can be hard to keep your cool, harder still your sanity. You know you’re a good parent, but you also know you could be better. Philippa Perry’s bestseller is the game-changer you need.

It’s not like the usual parenting ‘handbooks’ that promise lofty ‘hacks’ to behavioural bliss. Instead, Perry reassures you gently,

but firmly that parenting is not a ‘hackable’ chore, and children are not problems to be fixed or projects at which to excel.

Parenting is a relationship and kids are individuals to be understood and supported. Ultimately, investing in your kids won’t only

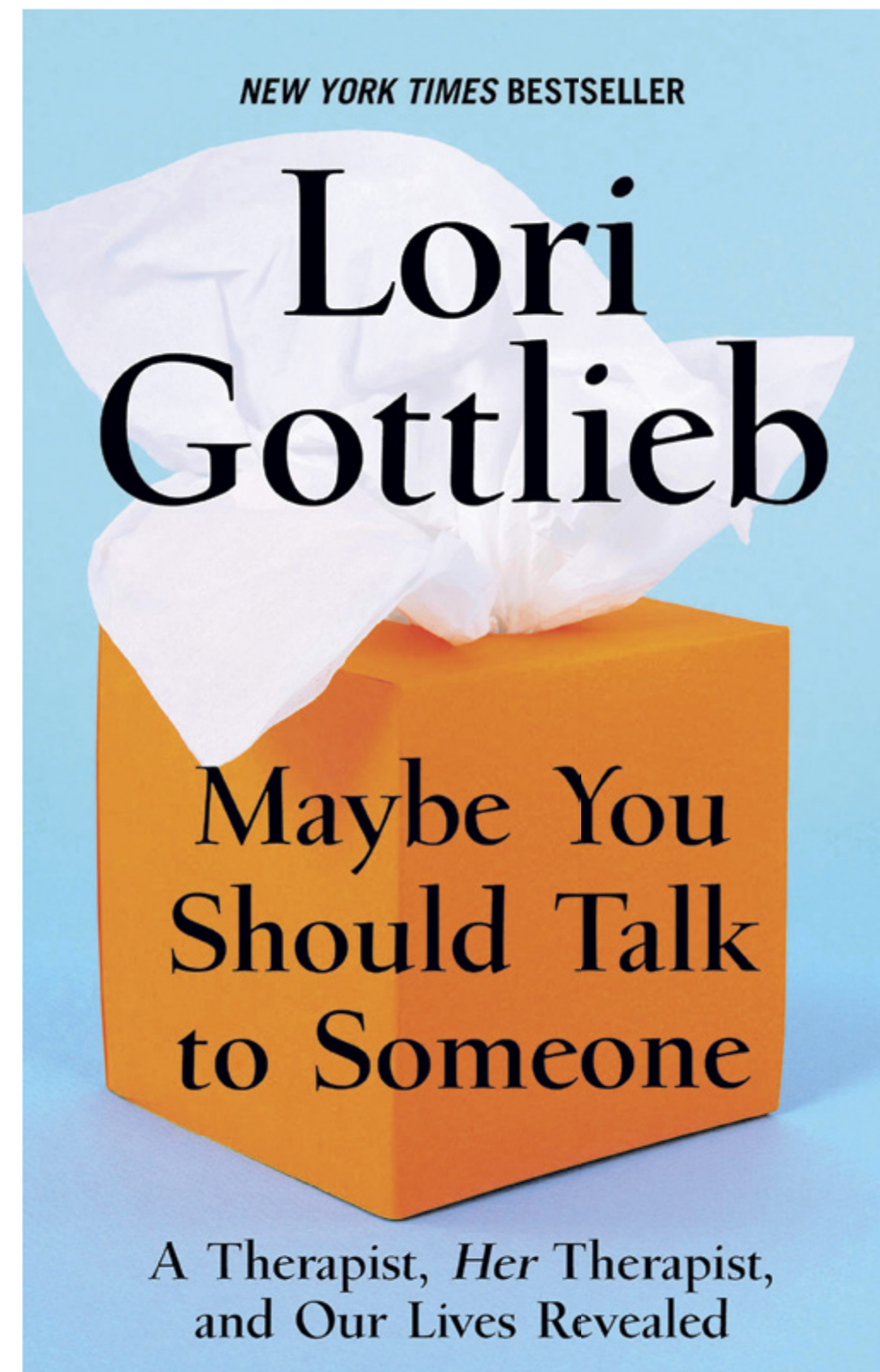
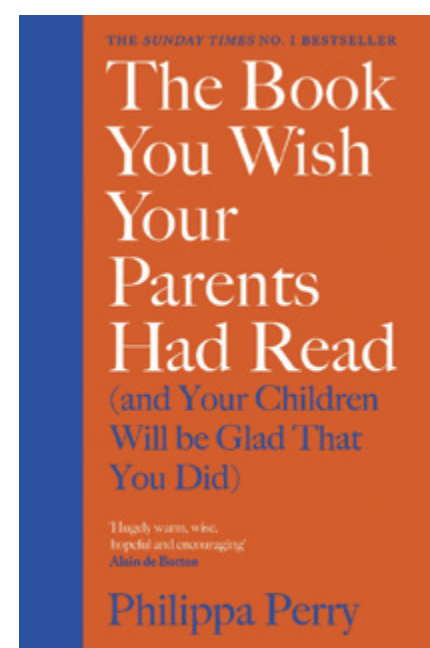
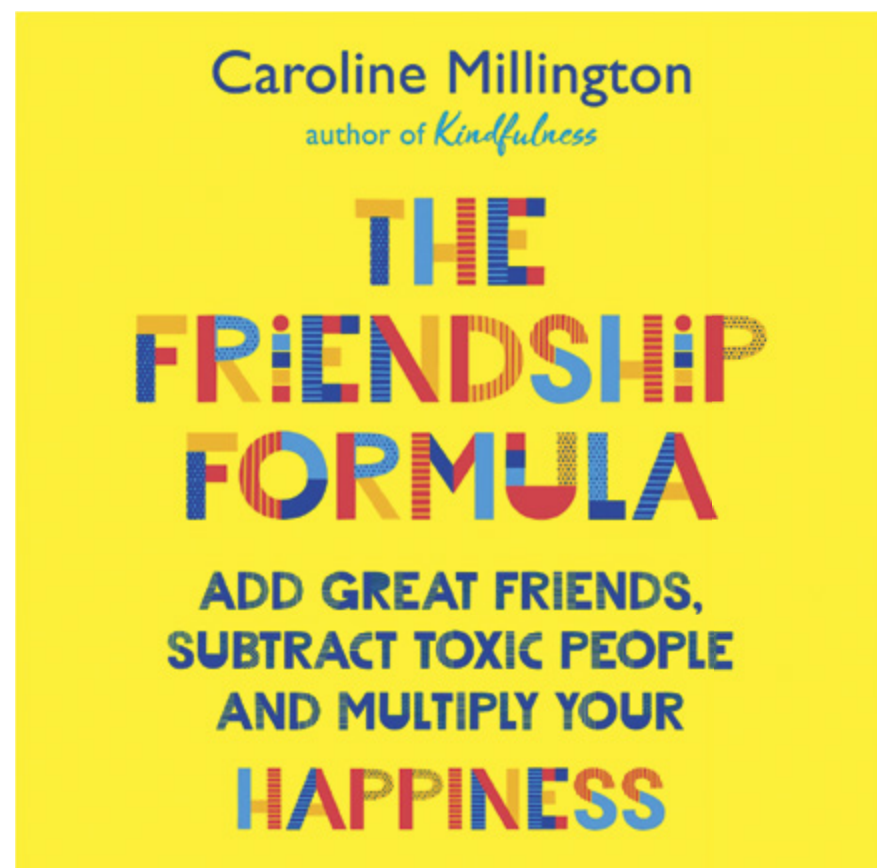
make them better people in the long run, but you as well. It is, in short, a book about relationships – the ones we have with our kids, ourselves, our pasts and the world around us.

## Maybe You Should Talk to Someone by Lori Gottlieb

Every year, millions of people sit on a therapist’s couch – and some of these patients are therapists. In her remarkable new book, Lori Gottlieb tells us that despite her license and rigorous training, her most significant credential is that she’s a card-carrying member of the human race. “I know what it’s like to be a person,” she writes, as a crisis causes her world to come crashing down.

Enter Wendell, the quirky but seasoned therapist in whose office she suddenly lands. With his balding head, cardigan, and khakis, he seems to have come straight from Therapist Central Casting. Yet he will turn out to be anything but.

As Gottlieb explores the inner chambers of her patients’ lives – a self-absorbed Hollywood producer, a young newlywed diagnosed with a terminal illness, a senior citizen threatening to end her life on her birthday if nothing gets better, and a twenty-something who can’t stop hooking up with the wrong guys (even one from the waiting





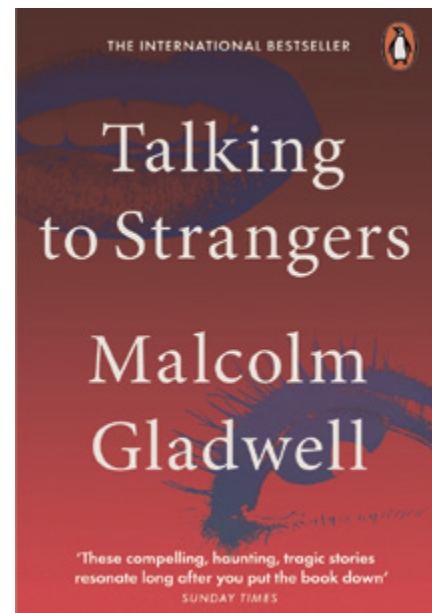
room) – she finds that the questions they are struggling with are the very ones she is now bringing to Wendell.

With startling wisdom and humour, Gottlieb reveals our blind spots, examining the truths and fictions we tell ourselves and others as we teeter on the tightrope between love and desire, meaning and mortality, guilt and redemption, terror and courage, hope and change.

Maybe You Should Talk to Someone is revolutionary in its candour, offering a deeply personal yet universal tour of our hearts and minds and providing the rarest of gifts: a boldly revealing portrait of what it means to be human, and a disarmingly funny and illuminating account of our own mysterious lives and our power to transform them.

### Talking to Strangers by Malcolm Gladwell

Talking to strangers is one of the most important things we do, and it can have the most profound effect on our successes and failures in life. The trouble is, according to Malcolm Gladwell, most of us are terrible at it. It's why we're so easily deceived. It's why charm usually trumps honesty. Why lies can sound



sexier than truth. And it's certainly why Neville Chamberlain thought he could trust Hitler, and why we so readily believed Amanda Knox was a cold-blooded killer.

Using these fascinating examples from history – and many more – Gladwell, in his inimitable way, takes us on an adventure through the history and psychology of human misunderstanding.

“The point,” Gladwell said, “is to help [readers] reflect on, or think about in new ways, the way they behave and their society behaves. That is the best kind of self-help, it's not a prescription for how to improve your life, it's a prompt.”

### How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie

This is by far the most famous confidence-boosting book ever published, with sales of over 16 million copies worldwide.

Millions of people around the world have improved their lives based on the teachings of Dale Carnegie. In *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, he offers practical advice and techniques, in his exuberant and conversational style, for how to get out of a mental rut and make life more rewarding. His advice has stood the test of time and will teach you how to:

- make friends quickly and easily
- increase your popularity
- persuade people to follow your way of thinking
- enable you to win new clients and customers

- become a better speaker
- boost enthusiasm among your colleagues

This classic book will turn your relationships around and improve your interactions with everyone in your life.

Dale Carnegie, known as ‘the arch-priest of the art of making friends’, pioneered the development of personal business skills, self-confidence and motivational techniques. His books – most notably *How to Win Friends and Influence People* – have sold tens of millions worldwide and, even in today's changing climate, they remain as popular as ever.

### Candide by Voltaire

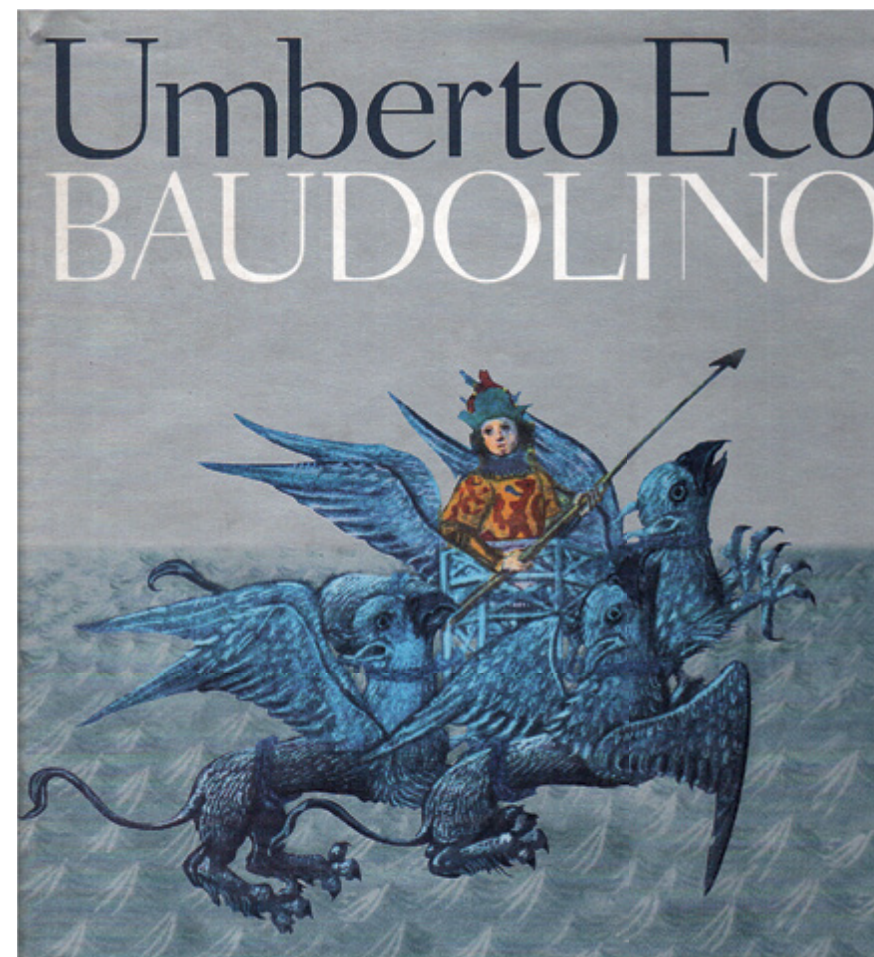
*Candide* is a French satire first published in 1759 by Voltaire, a philosopher of the Age of Enlightenment. It begins with a young man, Candide, who is living a sheltered life in an



Edenic paradise and being indoctrinated with Leibnizian optimism (or simply “optimism”) by his mentor, Professor Pangloss.

The work describes the abrupt cessation of this lifestyle, followed by Candide's slow, painful disillusionment as he witnesses and experiences great hardships in the world. Voltaire concludes with Candide, if not rejecting optimism outright, advocating a deeply practical precept, “we must cultivate our garden”, in lieu of the Leibnizian mantra of Pangloss, “all is for the best” in the “best of all possible worlds”.

*Candide* is characterised by its sarcastic tone as well as by its erratic, fantastical and fast-moving plot. A picaresque novel with a story similar to that of a more serious bildungsroman, it parodies many adventure and romance clichés, the struggles of which are caricatured in a tone that is mordantly matter of fact. Still, the events discussed are often based on historical happenings, such as the Seven Years' War and the 1755 Lisbon earthquake. As philosophers of Voltaire's day contended with the problem of evil, so too does *Candide* in this short novel, albeit more directly and humorously.



### Baudolino by Umberto Eco

Perhaps a bit of an unconventional addition to the list of inspirational reads, this book is perfect for 2021. In extraordinary times when we are all affected by the pandemic, there can be nothing better than switching off and transporting into a fantasy world filled with wonder and satire.

It is April 1204, and Constantinople, the splendid capital of the Byzantine Empire, is being sacked and burned by the knights of the Fourth Crusade. Amid the carnage and confusion, one Baudolino saves a historian and high court official from certain death at the hands of the crusading warriors and proceeds to tell his own fantastical story.

Born a simple peasant in northern Italy, Baudolino has two major gifts-a

talent for learning languages and a skill in telling lies. When still a boy he meets a foreign commander in the woods, charming him with his quick wit and lively mind. The commander who proves to be Emperor Frederick Barbarossa-adopts Baudolino and sends him to the university in Paris, where he makes a number of fearless, adventurous friends.

Spurred on by myths and their own reveries, this merry band sets out in search of Prester John, a legendary priest-king said to rule over a vast kingdom in the East-a phantasmagorical land of strange creatures with eyes on their shoulders and mouths on their stomachs, of eunuchs, unicorns, and lovely maidens.

With dazzling digressions, outrageous tricks, extraordinary feeling, and vicarious reflections on our post-modern age, this is Eco the storyteller at his brilliant best.



# ITALY TO TAKE CENTRE STAGE AT EUROPEAN FILM MARKET IN 2022

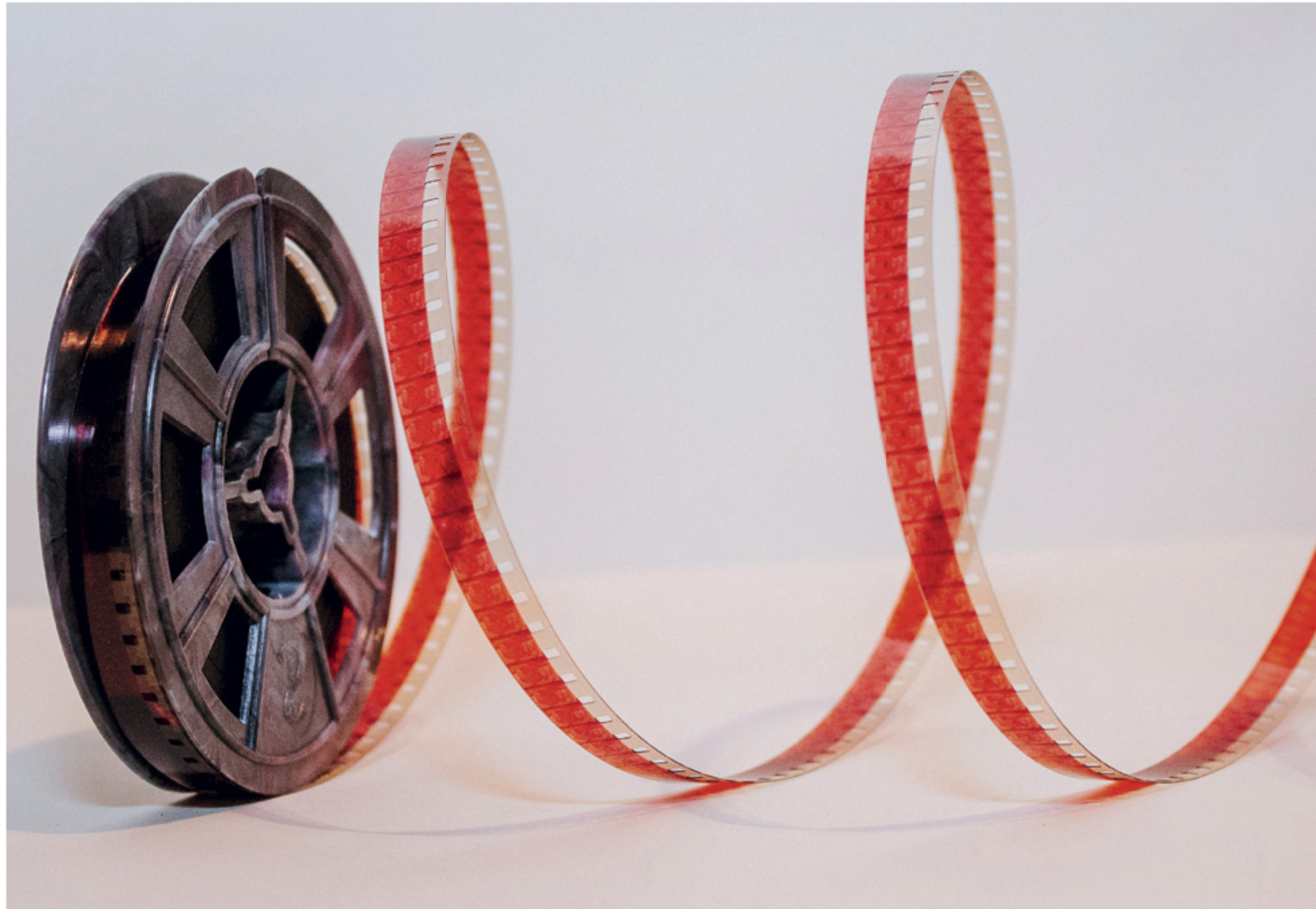


Photo: Denise Jans

Originally planned for the upcoming Berlinale, Italy will now be the “Country in Focus” in 2022 at the European Film Market (EFM) of the 72nd Berlin International Film Festival. The EFM programme “Country in Focus” began in 2017 with the goal of comprehensively presenting a country’s cinematic industry and film work and providing it with a special platform. Following

Mexico, Canada, Norway and Chile, Italy is the second European country to take center stage in the European Film Market’s “Country in Focus” programme.

The cooperation contracts were already completed at Gropius Bau during the 2020 Berlinale, attended by Monika Grütters, the German Minister of State for Culture and the Media, and her Italian colleague Dario Franceschini. Due to the organisational and infrastructural Covid-19 restrictions applied in recent months, the “Italia in Focus” programme will be postponed for one year. In 2022, the EFM will spotlight and present the various aspects of the lively and multifaceted film world of Italy with “Italia in Focus”.

The thematic focus will provide numerous opportunities to network with Italian producers, distributors, investors and creatives, as well as to get to know Italian productions. “Italia in Focus” is supported by the Italian Ministero per i beni e le attività culturali e per il turismo (MiBACT) and the producers’ association ANICA.

“Since 2017, the EFM has been promoting international exchange within the film industry with the ‘Country in Focus’ programmes. We’re pleased to be able to develop a special presentation for Italy as a film-producing country and to deepen our close and beneficial relationship with ‘Italia in Focus’ in 2022,” comments Mariette Rissenbeek, Executive Director of the Berlinale. “I’m happy to know that, after receiving ample international recognition in recent years, Italian cinema will have a special spotlight at the EFM, providing the industry with an opportunity to discover its many facets,” adds Carlo Chatrian, Artistic Director of the Berlinale.

“Italy’s participation at the EFM and other industry initiatives at the Berlinale has grown consistently over



The Impressive Gropius Bau, the EFM’s Main Location

the years and the creativity of Italian cinema is incontestable. We’re looking forward to developing a diverse and sustainable programme with our Italian partners. Italian film has a lot to offer,” says Dennis Ruh, the new director of the EFM.

Luigi Mattiolo, Italian Ambassador to Germany, comments: “I am grateful that, in response to the current pandemic and in collaboration with the European Film Market, we have reached an agreement to postpone our presence as ‘Country in Focus’ for one year. Italy is glad to participate in the 2021 market with a robust presence and will be more ready than ever to be a great ‘Country in Focus’ in 2022. Our presence as ‘Country in Focus’ will not only result in increased business ties, but also in a greater knowledge of Italy’s iconic role as an unforgettable film location, as well as its buoyant co-production market. I hope that many producers from Germany and around the world will seize this opportunity to get to know our assets and locations better.”

The Head of International Department at ANICA, Roberto Stabile, adds: “I would like to thank the Berlinale and the European Film Market for the unique opportunity of becoming ‘Country in Focus’. We are happy to postpone ‘Italia in Focus’ to 2022. In this way we will leave this complicated moment behind us and will celebrate the resurgence of our film and audio-visual industries stronger and more determined than before.”





# 12-MONTH SUBSCRIPTION TO RUSSIAN MIND MAGAZINE

United Kingdom – 38 GBP ● European Union – 65 EUR ● The rest of the world – 80 EUR

**ANNUAL Digital Subscription on our website [www.russianmind.com](http://www.russianmind.com) - 25 GBP**

## TO SUBSCRIBE YOU CAN DO THE FOLLOWING:

### 1. Bank transfer for GBP currency

International Publishing Group Limited, HSBC Bank 18 Curzon Street, Mayfair, London, W1J 7LA, Sort Code: 40-05-22, Account No: 61391968, IBAN: GB59 HBUK 400522 61391968, BIC: HBUKGB4107K

### 2. Bank transfer for EUR currency

International Publishing Group Limited, Payee address: Mayfair 18A Curzon Street London W1J 7LA, Sort Code: 401276, Account number: 57123898, Bank Identifier Code: HBUKGB4B, Bank account : GB11HBUK 40127657123898, Bank: HSBC Bank, SWIFTCode: HBUKGB4B, Branch: Mayfair

### 3. Subscribe via Pay Pal on our website

[www.russianmind.com/payment/](http://www.russianmind.com/payment/)

### IMPORTANT

Please make sure that you provide the confirmation of your payment and contact details (home address, phone number and email address). You can contact us at [rmoffice@russianmind.com](mailto:rmoffice@russianmind.com)

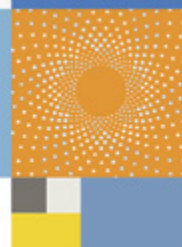


Knowledge grows

# Yara - эксперт в области снижения выбросов NOx

Компания Yara предлагает инновационные решения  
по снижению выбросов оксидов азота NOx

[www.yara.ru](http://www.yara.ru)



## EDUCATION

# LEARNING FOR ADULTS: TIME TO PRIORITISE IT IS NOW

At least two-thirds of adults in every EU Member State agree that their government should prioritise investment in adult learning, a new survey says.

According to the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, across the EU, people believe that adult learning and training will become more important to career progression over the next 10 years, an argument strengthened by the 88% of adults who said that their job requires them to keep their skills constantly up to date.

The survey also shows that EU citizens have a positive image of adult learning and training. People agree that learning brings them real benefits for their work and personal development. Across the EU around 90% of adults agree that continuing to learn is important to finding a job, to career progression and to getting a pay rise. Adult learning and training are seen by at least two-thirds of adults in every Member State as important as school or university. In many Member States, including Germany, France and Spain, at least 75% see adult learning and training as a way of obtaining the equivalent of a university degree.

Member States already have a wide range of opportunities for adults to

learn. Across the EU, 72% agree that there are many learning and training opportunities in their country, but this varies, for example from 90% in Austria and 87% in Germany to 56% in France and 54% in Italy. On average in the EU, 69% think that

and guidance. However, opinions differ between northern and southern Europe over expanding them. Countries such as Greece, Spain, Cyprus, Malta, Portugal and Romania think that increasing these measures will encourage more adults to learn;

Belgium, Germany, France, Austria, the Netherlands and Finland are more sceptical.

Despite the strong positive image people have of learning and training, in 22 out of the 30 countries surveyed, the main reason adults give for not participating in learning or training is that they have no need; this is despite the demands of their jobs or the need to find work. Romania and France are different; there the most common reason adults give is that they feel too old. The EU has been trying to increase adult participation in learning and training for more than 20 years, but it remains below the desired range in many Member States. However,

lack of participation is not because adults are negative about learning. The positive image of adult learning and training, shown by a survey of more than 40,000 people across the EU, Norway and Iceland, provides a strong basis for Member States to consider if learning for adults should be an investment priority and how to encourage more adults to learn.



Siora Photography

the quality of adult learning in their country is good; only in Italy do more people say the quality is bad (48%) rather than good (43%).

Member States also have popular measures in place to encourage more adults to participate in work-related learning and training such as flexible working hours, support with finances or childcare and better information