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UNITING FOR SPORT AND ART

Sport and art, often viewed as disparate realms, share a profound capacity to unite people across various divides. Both domains transcend linguistic and cultural barriers, creating a universal language understood by diverse audiences.

Sports, through their inherent competitiveness and collaborative spirit, foster a sense of community and shared identity. Spectators and participants alike experience collective joy, sorrow, and exhilaration, forming bonds that surpass individual differences. As this is a year of Olympic Games, I hope their unifying power will draw people together from all corners of the globe in a celebration of human potential and mutual respect.

In this issue, we bring you several articles that show the powerful link between art and sport. This includes several inputs from children, where you can uncover their insights about sports, as future game-changers. I hope you will enjoy the articles in this feature.

Don't miss the articles on self-care and why we should talk about obesity to better understand what progress we made in improving health and well-being on the planet. And of course, we have many other articles for you to enjoy. We would like to hear from our readers as we work on future issues of the magazine this year, so I want to invite you to send me comments, ideas and suggestions for the magazine.

I hope you enjoy this issue. //

S'UNIR POUR LE SPORT ET L'ART

Le sport et l'art, souvent considérés comme des domaines disparates, partagent une profonde capacité à unir les gens au-delà de diverses divisions. Les deux domaines transcendent les barrières linguistiques et culturelles, créant un langage universel compris par des publics divers.

Les sports, par leur compétitivité inhérente et leur esprit de collaboration, favorisent un sentiment de communauté et d'identité partagée. Les spectateurs et les participants font l'expérience de la joie, de la tristesse et de l'exaltation collectives, formant des liens qui dépassent les différences individuelles. En cette année de Jeux Olympiques, j'espère que leur pouvoir unificateur rassemblera des personnes de tous les coins du monde dans une célébration du potentiel humain et du respect mutuel.

Dans ce numéro, nous vous proposons plusieurs articles qui vous montrent le lien puissant entre l'art et le sport. Vous y trouverez notamment des contributions d'enfants, qui vous permettront de découvrir leur vision du sport, en tant que futurs acteurs de changement. J'espère que vous apprécierez les articles de ce dossier.

Ne manquez pas les articles sur les soins personnelles et sur les raisons pour lesquelles nous devrions parler de l'obésité afin de mieux comprendre les progrès accomplis dans l'amélioration de la santé et du bien-être sur la planète. Et bien sûr, nous avons de nombreux autres articles dont vous pourrez profiter. Nous aimerions entendre de nos lecteurs alors que nous travaillons sur les prochains numéros du magazine cette année, je souhaite donc vous inviter à m'envoyer des commentaires, idées et suggestions pour le magazine.

J'espère que vous apprécierez ce numéro. //

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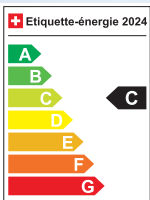
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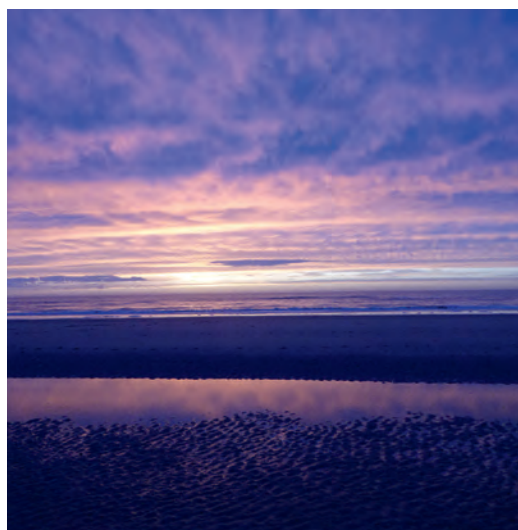


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Discover the Olympic Spirit

EXPLORE EXCITING EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS THAT CELEBRATE THE ESSENCE OF SPORT, CULTURE, AND COMMUNITY

The Olympic Museum has an exciting immersive programme of events dedicated to the Paris Games. There will even be a fan zone where the Games can be watched live.

The Olympic Museum in Lausanne is poised to welcome visitors to a new era of exploration and inspiration with its cutting-edge exhibitions and game-changing projects. Modernized and equipped with state-of-the-art technologies, the Museum stands as a beacon among 21st-century art establishments, upholding a commitment to respecting the legacy, upholding sustainability, and giving wings to artistic freedom and innovation.

“The Olympic Museum’s vocation is to let people discover the Olympic Movement, witnessing its essential contribution to society, and to transmit the Olympic values beyond the celebration of the Games and competitions”, emphasizes Yasmin Meichtry, the Olympic Museum Associate Director.

Through its captivating exhibits, the Museum aims to ignite curiosity and celebrate the diverse facets of the Olympic Movement.

“Sport is, of course, the main element of a visit to the Olympic Museum. However, history, culture, design, technology, and sociology are also some of

the themes addressed within this new museography, which reflects the richness and diversity of Olympism”, says Angelita Teo, the Olympic Museum Director.

Visitors are in for a unique journey, immersed in the rich fabric of Olympic history, from the thrill of great sporting moments to the creative genius behind host cities. *“The museum views art as a tool to convey historical contexts, emotions, and Olympic values, embracing collaborations with artists to engage diverse audiences”,* reflects Teo. Highlights include the first-ever Olympic flag from the 1920 Antwerp Games, as well as medals, torches, and equipment used by legendary athletes like Jesse Owens and Nadia Comaneci.

The Museum is a platform where information, reflection, and emotion converge, offering a 3,000m² canvas to relive Olympic triumphs and connect with the values that define the Games. In Teo’s view, the Museum excels at balancing historical preservation with modern engagement *“through responsible collection curation, digitization for accessibility, and collaborations to share stories that spark curiosity and dialogue.”*

TEXT YULIA LEMENEZ
PHOTO THE OLYMPIC MUSEUM





Meichtry agrees that this is indeed a delicate balance. *“We honor the Olympic legacy by upholding its core values of excellence, friendship, and respect. At the same time, we celebrate the rich diversity of host cities by incorporating local traditions, art, and customs into our exhibitions and programs. This fusion of global and local elements ensures that each edition of the Games is a true reflection of its host culture while staying true to the Olympic spirit.”*

Surrounding the museum, an outdoor sculpture park features artworks celebrating Olympic ideals. *“The Discobolus”* sculpture is a modern interpretation of the ancient Greek athlete. The Olympic Truce Wall is adorned with messages promoting peace and solidarity. The wall serves as a reminder of the ancient tradition of the Olympic Truce, a period of peace declared during the ancient Games to facilitate safe travel for athletes and spectators. A curated trail featuring sculptures that honor athletes’ dedication and perseverance encircles the Museum. Each artwork tells a unique story of athletic achievement and the transformative power of sports.

“What is the most unusual or funny donation you have received?” we ask Stephanie Knecht, the Museum’s archivist and manager of collections. *“We*

were donated items like Barbie dolls and products that reflect the cultural elements of each Olympic host country. Sometimes, the items are unexpectedly amusing, like the London 2012 mascot souvenirs that showcase British humor”, Knecht says.

During the 2024 Paris Olympics, the Museum will serve as a hub of activity, offering visitors an immersive experience that celebrates the Olympic spirit. The Museum offers a hands-on experience for visitors of all ages. Test your skills in virtual sports simulations, explore the science behind athletic performance, or try your hand at Olympic trivia challenges. With a diverse program of exhibitions, events, and interactive displays, guests are invited to explore the inspiring power of Olympism.

Join us this summer at the Olympic Museum for an unparalleled experience, where sport meets culture, and history meets innovation. During the Paris Games, the Museum invites you for a marathon of emotions, where you can relive great Olympic moments, partake in champions’ thrills, and time travel across host cities, traditions, and inspirations. Share with us a unique platform to experience the adventure of the Games and celebrate the universal values of sport. See you at the Olympic Museum! //

Beyond Borders

SPORTS AS A BRIDGE

The remarkable resilience and determination of refugee and migrant athletes like Cindy Ngamba and Yusra Mardini illuminate the healing impact of sports. Harnessing the inspiration of these and other refugee Olympians, the Olympic Refugee Foundation (ORF) leverages sports as a global catalyst for positive change.

On 2 May, Cindy Ngamba, a 26-year-old boxer from Cameroon, qualified for the Olympic Refugee Team. A homosexual outcast in her home country, she is the first refugee athlete to qualify for boxing. She is also part of the largest ever team of 36 refugee athletes from 11 countries, who will compete in Paris across 12 sports and represent over 100 million displaced people around the world.

Beyond strength and resilience, Cindy's journey shows the remarkable ability of sports to offer instant relief and connection. Their healing, inclusive, and integration properties provide a safe and easily accessible space for those suffering from trauma, mental health concerns and life challenges to find solace, empowerment, and a sense of belonging.

"Sport offers a unique platform for community engagement and empowerment", says Jojo Ferris, the Head of the Olympic Refugee Foundation. Under Ferris's leadership, the ORF has strategically leveraged sports to address displacement and specific challenges faced by refugee communities worldwide. *"Through structured programs, we promote teamwork, leadership, and mental well-being",* Ferris notes.

This approach is particularly crucial in regions like Bangladesh, where climate displacement poses significant risks, especially for women and girls. *"In Bangladesh, we have seen remarkable transformations where sport has become a vehicle for hope and solidarity. Women and girls, in particular, have gained confidence and agency through participation in our programs, challenging societal norms and fostering aspirations for a brighter future. Similarly, in Burkina Faso, the re-integration efforts have led to improved community acceptance and support for returnees, bridging divides and promoting social inclusion."*

Yusra Mardini, a Syrian refugee who represented the Refugee Olympic Team in the 2016 Rio Olympics, inspires millions of women and girls around the world with her resilience and determination. Mardini's journey from fleeing war-torn Syria to competing in the world's top swimming competitions symbolize a sense of purpose, hope and strength.

The story of the Afghan Women's National Cycling Team is another powerful example of how sports can break down barriers and empower the marginalized and the vulnerable. Despite facing cultural and societal challenges, these women have used cycling as a means of self-expression, independence, and resilience, challenging gender norms and inspiring a new generation of female athletes.

Fast forward to Paris 2024, there is another first for Ngamba and her Team. The unique emblem, a unifying symbol of a heart, giving the Team its own unique identity. *"The Refugee Olympic Team, symbolized by a unique emblem of a heart, represents diversity, inclusion, and the healing power of sports",* Ferris emphasizes. *"This identity is about representation, resilience, and hope, transcending borders and challenging stereotypes."*

The unique emblem is one of many changes that the ORF has undergone under Ferris' leadership, reflecting its growing impact and reach. Ferris highlights these transformations: *"We have seen significant growth in our athlete support programs, with an increase from managing the Refugee Olympic Team during Rio to now supporting 74 athletes globally through scholarship programs."*

The ORF's evolution over the past year reflects its commitment to innovation and impact. Ferris highlights the Foundation's strategic initiatives, including expanded athlete support programs and partnerships with diverse stakeholders. *"We have amplified our engagement with refugee communities,"* Ferris explains. *"By embedding sports into humanitarian responses, we can enhance outcomes and promote social inclusion. Recently, we have seen sports included in response plans for Ukrainian refugees and in Sudan."*



Anatoliy Kamarali, himself a Ukrainian refugee and coach of the U4U Badminton Club in Lausanne, exemplifies the impact of such engagements. His journey from displacement to leadership demonstrates how sports not only provide solace but also empower individuals to contribute positively to their communities.

The Club, which is run by refugees for refugees and locals in the heart of the Olympic Capital, is an immediate real-life testament that sports like badminton serve as a catalyst for healing and connection. A familiar sport accessible to all generations, walks of life and athletic levels, badminton has physical, mental, and emotional benefits that are key to recovery and community building.

“For women refugees and migrants, engaging in sports like badminton provides an accessible and happy link to the host community,” Kamarali notes. *“We are overwhelmed with demand by women and girls to expand the Club to intergenerational teams. A familiar group sport, badminton provides a platform for self-expression and integration, creating a sense of belonging.”*

Integration through sports is the motto of another social initiative, FLAG21 in Geneva. Its name reflects the multicultural ethos, fostering social connections and empowering migrants through various sports activities.

Ferris’s perspective extends beyond the confines of any single organization, however, highlighting a broader understanding of how sports serve as a universal language of hope and healing. *“Across diverse communities and cultures, sports have the power to unite people,”* she explains. *“Whether it is through the Olympics, grassroots programs, or community initiatives, athletics create pathways for dialogue, understanding, and transformation.”*

As the ORF continues to expand its reach, Ferris envisions a future where sports serve as a catalyst for positive change globally. *“Our aim is to strengthen partnerships and promote sustainable solutions to pressing humanitarian challenges,”* she shares. *“Ultimately, we envision a world where sports inspire and empower individuals and communities to overcome adversity and thrive.”*

As we celebrate the achievements of athletes and communities in Paris 2024, Ferris calls for continued support and investment in sports-based programs. *“Let us recognize and amplify the healing, therapeutic, and peace-building power of sports,”* she urges. *“Together, we can build bridges towards a brighter and more inclusive future for all.”*

Together, let us continue to pave the way for a more inclusive and compassionate world, where sports serve as a universal language of hope and resilience. //

Cindy Mgamba is the first transgender refugee athlete to qualify for boxing in the 2024 Paris Games.

Nailed It: The Olympic History of Manicures, Nail Art and Sport

HOW ATHLETES MAKE A STATEMENT THROUGH NAIL ART

In 1988, United States track star Florence “Flo-Jo” Griffith Joyner set the world of sport on fire at the Seoul Summer Olympics. Not only did her lightning fast 100-meter and 200-meter world records shock and delight fans, but she achieved those records in a particularly unique style that would change the world of sport forever.

And it all had to do with her nails. While Griffith Joyner had worn four-inch nails during the 1984 Los Angeles Games that had sparked conversation in the media, her Seoul nails were a statement piece. Griffith Joyner ran her events wearing flamboyantly colorful and long nails measuring over six-inches long. Having worked part-time in a nail salon during her training, she decorated them herself, imbuing meaning into her most dazzling accessories. She painted eight of her nails red, white, and blue, to represent the American flag. The remaining two nails, she painted gold, signifying her hope to bring home the top medals in her sport.

The combination of Griffith Joyner’s undeniable style and athletic skill made her an overnight sensation during the ‘88 Games. She ended up winning three gold medals, a silver medal, and the hearts of millions. By the time she left the Games, she was not only a medaling Olympian, she was a worldwide fashion and sport icon.

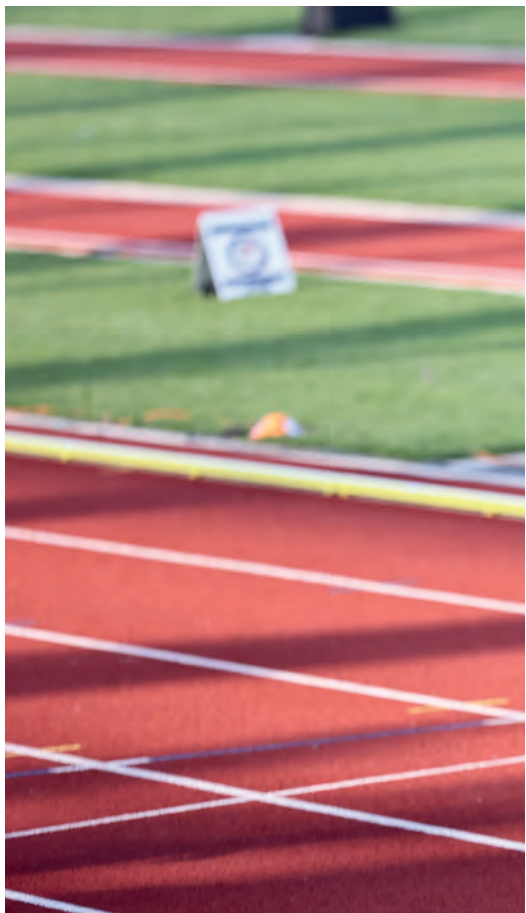
In the following decade, Griffith Joyner’s acrylic nails were featured in a display at New York City’s Guggenheim Museum. Again, in 2015, another New York City museum, Studio Museum, showcased Griffith Joyner’s nails as an exploration of the intersection of art, sport, and feminism. Her style has inspired artists, like Pamela Council, an African-American sculptor who painstakingly recreated sets of Griffith Joyner’s famous 1988 nails to create *“Flo Jo World Record Nails.”*

Griffith Joyner ushered in – and normalized – a new way for women athletes to express themselves as they compete at the highest levels the world has to offer. Fellow Team USA track star Gail Devers, wore claw nails during her Olympic appearances during the ‘90s. It was her personal way to feel in control of Graves’ Disease, a diagnosis that momentarily sidelined her from competition. In the nearly 40 years since Griffith-Joyner unveiled her nails, countless others have followed suit – both paying homage to one of the greats and using her creativity as a springboard for their own.

While Olympic nail art may have begun with a member of Team USA, elite athletes around the world have embraced the art form during their competition. Becoming a mainstream trend among Olympic athletes during the 2012 London Games, nail art has seen a surge in popularity with competitors’ style choices including wraps, foils, acrylics, and press-ons. In fact, manicures and nail art are so popular among athletes that some planners incorporate nail salons into the Olympic Village, including at the most recent Summer Olympics in Tokyo.

Not all athletes who choose to sport a manicure during the Games wear theirs as long or as colorfully as Griffith Joyner’s. Gymnasts, for example, must wear toned-down colors per sport regulations. Some athletes – like those in archery – might choose shorter nails for dexterity and to enhance performance, depending on their event.

Athletes use their manicures to share subtle messages with themselves, their teammates, and their worldwide audience. Many nail art designs center – perhaps unsurprisingly – around the athlete’s pride and patriotism in competing for their country: from miniature, carefully rendered Brazilian flags to the colorblocked red, white, and green of the Bulgarian flag. Other



designs hold personal meaning for the wearer, like Japan's Yukie Nakayama whose Tokyo manicure featured her daughter's name. Some nail art signals the wearer's respect for the host country and their culture, like the U.K.'s Dina Asher-Smith, whose intricate manicure turned heads when it was discovered they depicted Hokusai's "The Great Wave off Kanagawa." And still other manicures display the hopes and dreams of the athlete with Olympic rings and sparkling, gold tips.

While she was ultimately suspended from competing in the Tokyo Olympics, Sha'Carri Richardson's nails were a topic of conversation during the 2021 United States Olympic Trials. Perhaps not since Griffith Joyner's debut of her nails in Seoul, have another track star's nails gotten so much attention. Also a competitor in the 100-meter and 200-meter races, Richardson has attributed her long, colorful nails to Griffith Joyner's groundbreaking style.

Kelly Phan, a manicure artist in Ocoee, Florida, has been painting Richardson's nails for the last four years. As a student of fashion design in her home country of the Philippines, Phan began working at her parents' nail salon to save money and continue her career aspirations in the United States. As Phan worked, she realized that she found her passion outside the classroom and off the runway: "I realized nail art is

expressive. I have always loved making art. I think I found my niche where I can express my creativity [through] the art of nail designs."

In 2020, Richardson contacted Phan through an Instagram direct message, asking for a salon appointment. This was just before Richardson skyrocketed to international fame in the world of sport. Eventually, one of Phan's customer's recognized her, alerting Phan to her famous client. Phan "learned about [Richardson's] accomplishments in track and field" and was "very surprised [by] how humble she was and has been."

When it comes to her customers, Phan offers a bespoke experience, incorporating their interests and ideas into the final piece. "I try to come up with a design reflecting [their] personality and emotions," said Phan. "This is my passion; this is my career, and it's not just a job."

Now that Richardson has secured a place on Team USA's track roster, fashionistas around the world will be carefully watching her as she competes in Paris. "I constantly challenge myself to experiment [with] new ideas, new designs, and new techniques [and] trends," Phan said. "I want to make each nail a tiny masterpiece of self-expression and creativity."

It's clear that Richardson's manicure—and the future of Olympic nail art—are in good hands. //

Richardson is known for her athleticism, as well as her nails.

Nurturing the wellbeing of Olympian athletes

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT AND THE POWER OF ART

The Olympic Games symbolize the epitome of human achievement, showcasing the zenith of athletic ability worldwide. However, beneath the surface lies a complex realm of mental health challenges, especially for Olympians. The pursuit of excellence often exacts a heavy toll on their mental well-being, with studies revealing alarmingly high rates of depression, anxiety, and other psychological disorders among elite athletes. For example, 33% of elite athletes experience depression and eating disorders prevalence is higher than in non-athletes.

Kristy Burrows, Head of the Safe Sport Unit at the International Olympic Committee (IOC) commented, *“Empowering individuals to articulate their boundaries and advocate for their well-being lies at the heart of athlete development. By prioritizing the child or young athlete as a person first, we center their holistic well-being within their environment. We’re committed to safeguarding the mental well-being of athletes worldwide, providing a beacon of support as they navigate the highs and lows of their sporting journeys.”* This approach is part of the IOC consensus statement on the mental health and wellbeing of elite athletes which aims to inform clinical practice, guide individual and systemic interventions and improve mental health among athletes.

Empowering athletes to articulate their boundaries and advocate for their well-being is central to athlete development. *“It’s really about holistic athlete development,”* explains Burrows. *“We center their well-being as individuals in their environment”,* starting from childhood and youth.

Originating in Beijing during the height of COVID-19 uncertainty, the mentally fit helpline service offers a vital connection to licensed counselors via voice, video, or messaging who speak their language, ensuring accessibility and confidentiality. *“Through this service, athletes have a lifeline to support and guidance during the most challenging times”,* continue Burrows. *“As the Olympics draw to a close, many will lean on this resource also during the post-Games period, particularly those grappling with the transition to re-*

tirement or unmet performance expectations.” At the Paris Olympic Games this year, athletes will be able to access additional mental health support resources, including expanded welfare offices and a continued focus on athlete well-being throughout the games.

Amidst the tumult of competition and the offering of psychological and mental health support on the spot, a less implemented yet powerful tool is worth to be mentioned as longer-term wellbeing and therapeutical path for athletes. Art itself provides a sanctuary for Olympians to confront their inner troubles and find solace. Through mindfulness and art therapy techniques like painting, writing, music, or dance, athletes navigate their emotional landscapes, forging a path towards healing and self-discovery.

Many Olympians have turned to art in moments of crisis, finding strength and empowerment through creative expression. Michael Phelps, for instance, credits painting with saving his life during his battle with depression, while Simone Biles found comfort in poetry amidst the pressure of competition.

Despite its undeniable benefits, art therapy remains underutilized in the world of sports. It is crucial to challenge the stigma surrounding mental health and embrace the healing potential also through art therapy approached for Olympians and athletes worldwide. By fostering a culture of openness and support, we can create a more resilient sporting community where athletes prioritize their mental well-being without fear of judgment.

As we celebrate Olympians’ triumphs on the world stage, let us also honor their resilience and recognize that the integration of mental health support into athlete wellness programs represents a crucial step towards fostering a compassionate and resilient sporting community. //

TEXT SAMANTHA PEGORARO, WHO
PHOTO JANE PALASH – UNSPLASH



Ensuring comprehensive mental health support in Olympic sports while advocating for the integration of innovative solutions like art therapy to prioritize athlete well-being and resilience.

KidsView

KIDS EXPLORE THE OLYMPICS BY TESTING THE EXPERTISE OF THE “OLYMPIC FAMILY” IN LAUSANNE

PART I WHAT KIDS WANT TO KNOW ABOUT THE OLYMPIC GAMES

Developing this section was incredibly rewarding. All kids inquired eagerly, with a thirst for understanding the world, a yearning to grow up and fulfil their dreams. I saw reflections of all of us in these curious minds - the adults who reminisced about their own dreams growing up, and even myself as a listener, hailing from a country struggling to find its place in the world after the fall of the Iron Curtain.

As a child, watching the Olympic Games, I believed I could achieve anything, even become a superhero like those on the screen. Now as an adult, I deeply admire the incredibly hard work, resilience, and talent. The Olympics have always a global celebration - from the grandeur of the opening ceremony to the intensity of the competitions and the emotion of the medal ceremonies.

When I collected their questions, I asked them about their aspirations for the future, knowing that one day they may be the ones competing, organising, or writing about these very events. In the eyes of these children, brimming with curiosity and ambition, lies the promise of a future where the Olympic spirit continues to inspire, unite, and propel us forward.

Throughout this issue, the KidsView kindly challenge the Olympic “grownups” through live interviews.

KidsView thank the Olympic Museum for a wonderful immersive plunge into the Olympics. We highly recommend it for any and every age!

Christian Klaue, Director of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs, IOC, invited us to ask freely anything about the Olympics. We collected over 100 questions from children all over the world. A group of international children, as well as Ukrainian kids, visited the IOC to “grill” Christian and his team. This is a short sample of the most popular questions.

[How many countries are in the Olympics?](#) Oskar, 5, United States

There are athletes from the territories of the 206 National Olympic Committees, more than the number of countries.

[Why aren't there more sports at the Olympics?](#) Hugo, 12, Switzerland

The main reason is the time limit and logistics. The Olympic Games last only 17 days, bring together 10.500 athletes and their entourage, and there are 329 medal events during this short time period. That means at least one medal per hour on average! There are also 18.000 journalists and production staff from the media, fans and tourists.

[Why is parkour not an Olympic sport?](#) James, 10, Ireland

Sports are governed and organised by International Sport Federations. One federation needs to make the proposal to the IOC to add a sport. In order to do so, the space needs to be created as the number of athletes and events cannot be simply increased. Parkour as an Olympic sport must be a universal sport, to be as widely practised around the world.

[Why do only horses compete in the Olympics? My dog Mishka would win all the running and jumping competitions!](#) Masha, 11, France and Russia

That's a great question! Horses are part of the Olympics because equestrian sports have a long history and are enjoyed by people around the world. They have universal appeal and require special skills that both humans and horses can showcase together. For cats and dogs, while they are wonderful companions and talented athletes, the Olympic sports are typically focused on activities that humans participate in and can compete against each other fairly.

[What is the Olympic truce?](#) Maël, 10, Ireland & Switzerland

The roots of the modern Olympic Games come from ancient Greece, where countries were at war with each other all the time. When the Olympic Games started, it was agreed to ensure the safe passage of the competitors and spectators. They were given enough time to travel

there, compete, and return home safely. This was called the Olympic Truce. Based on the same principle, today the Olympic Games promote building bridges between countries and support peace. The United Nations adopt an Olympic Truce Resolution before every edition of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

PART II **WHAT KIDS WANT TO KNOW** **ABOUT THE OLYMPIC “GROWNUP”** **FAMILY IN LAUSANNE**

Who did you dream of becoming when you were small? Izaak, 9, United States

Kirsty Burros, Head of Safe Sport Unit, International Olympic Committee (IOC): As a child, I didn't have a specific person in mind that I dreamt of becoming. Instead, I was encouraged to seek my own path and was fortunate to have the encouragement of family. We used to say our mom gave us roots, while our dad encouraged us to find our wings, urging us to explore all opportunities life presents to you. My passion for sports began unexpectedly when I met the national football team coach in Singapore and landed a job with the team at a young age. This experience showed me how sports can transcend boundaries and bring people together, especially during challenging times. It inspired me to pursue a career in the sports industry. If you're interested in sports too, feel free to reach out for advice or guidance anytime!

What advice would you give your teenage self? Adele, 14, Sweden

Angelita TEO, Director of the Olympic Foundation for Culture and Heritage: Stay open-minded and don't be afraid of things that seem unfamiliar. Embrace new experiences and trust that you'll learn and grow from them. Also, remember that it's okay to relax and not be too uptight — life is about enjoying the moment and being open to what comes your way.

How do you explain what you do to your baby son? Melody, 8, Argentina

Kirsty Burrows, Head of Safe Sport Unit, IOC: I say that I work to make sure that sports are safe and fun for kids like you to play. I want you and all children to learn important things like teamwork and being kind to each other.

Could you share a memorable "behind the scenes" moment or experience during your involvement with the Olympics that many people might not know about? Leo, 12, Germany
Christophe Dubi, Olympic Games Executive Director, IOC: One particularly rewarding moment was when my son, at a young age, began to understand and appreciate the significance of my work with the Olympics, realising the impact it had on others' lives. This brought a new level of meaning to my role within the organisation.

What was it like growing up in the Olympic Capital? Christophe, 9, South Africa

Benjamin Cohen, Director of the International Testing Agency: Growing up in Lausanne was so special because it's where the heart of the Olympic Movement is. This means we have many international sports events and organisations here that put our city on the map. This makes people proud to be from Lausanne.

PART III **WHAT KIDS WANT TO KNOW** **ABOUT OLYMPIC ATHLETES**

What is doping and what happens if someone is caught doping? Aiden, 15, Australia and Switzerland

Benjamin Cohen, Director of the International Testing Agency: Doping is a form of cheating. It is taking a medicine-like substance that makes you better, for instance stronger or faster. There are tests for doping while you train and during your competitions. If you are caught doping, you will face a ban from competing for several years.

What happens if someone else or another team spikes my drink? Hugo, 13, Switzerland

Christian Klaue: Your body is your responsibility. You must take care of it. If you think someone put something bad in your food or drink and a test shows doping, you must prove it to avoid years long ban. You must have some concrete evidence like a video footage of someone else sneaking something in your drink or food.

How and where do you house all the athletes? Leoni, 11, France

Christian Klaue: During the Games the athletes live in the Olympic Village, which is a safe and comfortable place for them. There are quiet bedrooms and even shops, a huge restaurant with food from all over the world, a hairdresser, a post office and even a policlinic, in case you get injured.

What advice would you give to teenagers aspiring to work in sports? Diana, 16, Ukraine
 Christophe Dubi, Olympic Games Executive Director, IOC: Embrace the inclusive philosophy of sport, be passionate about what you do, and explore everything that aligns with your interests. Sport offers diverse career opportunities beyond traditional roles, so find what drives you and connect with visionaries in that field.

PART IV WHAT KIDS WANT TO KNOW ABOUT PARIS 2024

Which sports are new this year at the Olympics? Yaroslav, 14, Ukraine
 Christian Klaue, Director of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs: Breaking (Urban style dance) is added for the first time in the history of the summer Games. Skateboarding, surfing and sport climbing are also added sports, which were first seen at the Tokyo Games 2020.

Did you have to build a skate park in Paris for the Olympics? Amalya, 10, Israel
 Christian Klaue: Breaking, skateboarding, BMX freestyle and Basketball 3x3 will be hosted in an urban park, a temporary facility which is being setup at the Place de la Concorde. I am sure the atmosphere there will be electric.

What sets the Paris Games apart from the previous Olympic Games? Maël, 10, Ireland and Switzerland
 Christian Klaue: Paris' iconic landmarks are being transformed into sporting arenas to offer spectators an unparalleled experience and provide an outstanding backdrop for the sporting events.

Are there any steps made toward sustainability and environmental safekeeping at the upcoming Paris Games? Lola, 17, United States
 Christian Klaue: A simple but great example is athletes bringing their water bottles and making use of water fountains. The use of existing venues instead of building new ones was a big focus also. Engaging local communities, involving local and disadvantaged groups through sport is another one. Leading up to the Olympics, school children in Paris are doing a minimum of 30 minutes additional physical exercise a day, not including recess, so about 5 minutes of movement during every class.

How is the Olympic fire lit and carried to Paris? Maël, 10, Ireland and Switzerland
 Christian Klaue: The flame is lit at Olympia in Greece, by the sun with the help of a parabolic mirror months before the Games start. The flame is then used to light the Olympic torch, which starts the Olympic Torch Relay that formally ends at lighting of the cauldron in the opening ceremony. The flame is only extinguished at the closing ceremony. This year the flame travelled on a boat from Greece to Marseille, where it began its long journey to Paris.

PART V WHAT KIDS WANT TO KNOW ABOUT KIDS IN THE OLYMPICS

When can I play in the games? Madelyn, 6, United States
 Christian Klaue, Director of Corporate Communications and Public Affairs, IOC: Some sports have a minimum age limit, and some do. Momiji Nishia won a gold medal in skateboarding when she was only 13 years old. Krisztina Egerszegi was only 14 years and 6 days old when she won her gold in backstroke swimming. Oscar Swahn was 64 years old when he won a gold medal in sport shooting back at the Olympic Games Stockholm 1912 and 72 years old when he became the oldest Olympian in history at the Olympic Games Antwerp 1920.

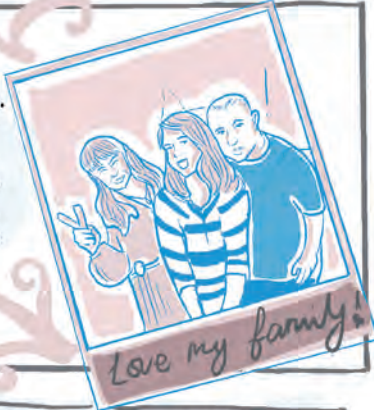
Why aren't there Games for children? Sasha, 9, Russia
 Christian Klaue: Firstly, for the safety of the children. Athletes have to train vigorously, and such extreme training can be dangerous for children. How often do you practise sports? Usually 2-3 times a week right? Olympic athletes usually train multiple times a day. They go to specialised schools also. There is however the Youth Olympics for athletes ages between 14-18. In some cases, there are Olympians who are younger than that. And there are some exceptions also: the youngest skateboarder is only 12 years old.

Why should I come to the Olympic Museum? Museums are boring. Masha, 11, France and Russia
 Angelita TEO, Director of the Olympic Museum: Imagine visiting the Olympic Museum where you can see how athletes turn sports into amazing art! There are interactive exhibits and cool visuals that you can share on TikTok or Instagram. It's a chance to explore something fun and different! //

A GYMNAST'S DREAM

The story of Diana Zaichko

My name is Diana. I am 16 years old. I came from Ukraine. I am an aspiring gymnast. Gymnastics has always been part of my life, our life in Ukraine.



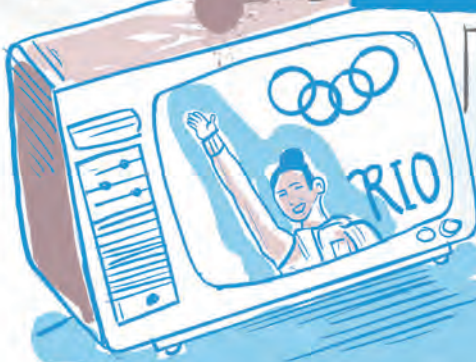
Two years ago, a war erupted in Ukraine. Thousands of people were injured and died but I was lucky.

Gymnastics saved my life but I had to leave the country with my mom and leave everything behind.

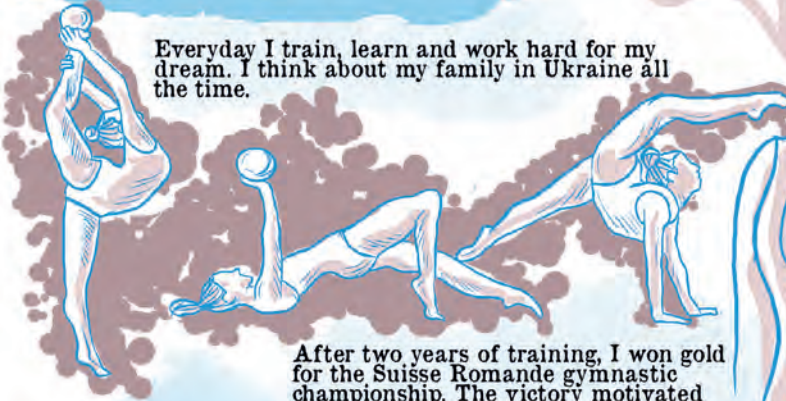
In an act of solidarity, a local gymnastics club in Switzerland offered me refuge, thanks to the Ukrainian Gymnastics Federation's effort. I left home with my most valuable thing; 20 pairs of half shoes.



The first time I saw the Olympics on the TV was in 2016. Our pride, Anna Rizatdinova won a bronze medal in gymnastics for Ukraine. Since then, she became my hero. Her achievement in the Olympics inspired me to compete in the Games for my country too, one day. It is with this spirit and dream, that I started my new life in Switzerland.



Everyday I train, learn and work hard for my dream. I think about my family in Ukraine all the time.

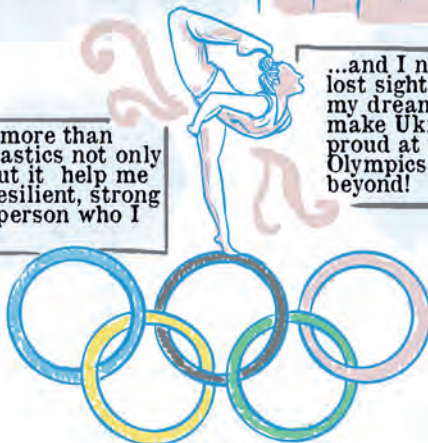


After two years of training, I won gold for the Suisse Romande gymnastic championship. The victory motivated me to keep going!



I realised now, more than ever that gymnastics not only saved my life but it help me grow into the resilient, strong and dedicated person who I am today...

...and I never lost sight of my dream to make Ukraine proud at the Olympics and beyond!



Double Team: Olympian Athletes, Olympian Artists

COMPETING IN THE OLYMPICS IS AN UNATTAINABLE DREAM FOR MOST PEOPLE. BUT HEADING TO A SECOND OLYMPICS? INCREDIBLE

The Olympian Artists Programme, a collaboration between the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Olympic Museum, will display the artistic talents of Olympic and Paralympic athletes at the 2024 Games through commissioned works focusing on community engagement.

This group is heading back to the Olympics. This time, as Olympian Artists.

BROOKLYN MCDUGALL

"My whole life ended up kind of becoming speed skating... I had to give it my all."

The post-Beijing blues pushed McDougall to paint again after realizing she had neglected her art while training for Team Canada. "I had a huge crash," she said, referring to the anxiety and depression that followed amidst the COVID-19 pandemic.

She sought a way to cope. "That's when I started to really dive into art... and [when] I stopped neglecting that side of me then I started to feel a lot like the weight had been lifted off my shoulders from the monster that is the Olympics."

The precision McDougall demanded of herself in training was also the reason she embraced painting. As an artist, she gave herself permission to make mistakes. "I started to realize my potential in art. And it became a metaphor for skating for sure, where I realized I was kind of in my own way in skating, because I had that perfectionist mindset," McDougall said.

Art connected McDougall to her late grandfather and artist, Wayne McDougall. McDougall imagined what he would say if he knew she had been commissioned to exhibit her artwork in Paris. "My art is going to the Olympics and I think he would just be so proud and so happy that I continued to take on that dream."

GRACE LATZ

"I didn't make the Olympic team because I had some great athletic prowess or I was a physiological freak of nature," said Grace Latz, an American who competed in the Women's Quadruple Sculls event in 2016 Rio de Janeiro.

Latz credits her success with her ability to pull a group of people together, a skill she translated to her Olympic Artist project.

Latz partnered with a Parisian senior community to sew a tapestry using reclaimed textiles. "Sometimes I joke that it's not always just my hand who's making it, it's the combined effort with other people and that's what makes the process interesting."

Latz describes American quilting as intergenerational and collaborative. "When the idea for this project came to me, I knew immediately that I wanted to engage senior citizens... The global focus of the Games can so often be fixated with the vigor of youth - bigger, faster, stronger! - but we only advance through the efforts and energy of those who came before us who coached, mentored, and supported our dreams."

The fabric was heavy and she was up for the challenge, which sometimes meant getting down on the ground, being elbows-deep in recycled fabrics, and transporting the rolled-up tapestry via the Paris metro between the senior center and the sewing studio.

"I found the process very similar to my sport experience: you have a dream, you have a vision. And you figure out through your practice and your experience what a good plan would be to get from A to B," said Latz.

"Sometimes, [the women I worked with might have thought], oh, this is just some crazy artist with this vision. We have no idea what the end result will be," said Latz. Seeing their reactions of delight the moment the tapestry was unveiled surprised Latz. "Similar to my experience of making

TEXT BECKY GULDIN, INDEPENDENT WRITER
PHOTOS DAVE HOLLAND, GRACE LATZ, PETE SPURRIER,
FLORIAN HAGENA / REDBULL CONTENT POOL & STUART HANNAGAN

Brooklyn McDougall



Grace Latz



Annabel Eyres



Egile Ulijas



Clementine Stoney Maconachie



the Olympic squad, sometimes when you're in the thick of the process and you're so focused on the details, it's difficult to see the bigger picture. But success comes to those who can keep things in perspective and bring others along that journey with trust, respect, and cooperation."

ANNABEL EYRES

"I've always been an artist," said Annabel Eyres, a rower who competed for Great Britain in the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympics.

"I remember from a young age feeling I wasn't good enough to be an artist, a professional artist," said Eyres. She was mistakenly comparing her self-described childish work to that of adults. "Of course, there's this massive transition period between the age of 10 and 20, where you progress so much."

Although her grandfather, a rower and rugby hero in her family, died when she was a baby, Eyres felt his influence. *"I found out about him playing rugby for England at a young age and that sort of became my aim, to do some form of sport on an international level,"* said Eyres.

At 19, Eyres attended the Ruskin School at Oxford and focused her studies on Fine Art, despite quickly finding that her enthusiasm for sports was seen as a lack of dedication to academics. *"The tutors I had were very much, 'Right, you're an artist, you must be totally devoted to your art. There's no room for anything else.'"*

Eyres' love of rowing informed her art and vice versa. *"I'm very lucky in that not only am I an athlete, but I'm also visually so interested in the way bodies move and actually depicting the body." She sees her reference material while she is doing sport herself.*

Eyres' work has gone through multiple transitions, but one thing remains constant, which is displayed in her Instagram bio: Sport + Art = ❤️. Currently, she is *"doing a lot with paper cutting,"* and has worked in painting and printmaking.

Reconciling her love of sport and art has been a “constant irritation,” albeit one that is soothed by her newest project. “*The pieces I’ve done for Paris... I’ve used old antique maps from France,*” said Eyres of the collages she’ll exhibit this summer.

Returning to the Olympics has special meaning to Eyres. “*I’ve had a few people saying, wow, you know, you’re a double Olympian - Olympian artist, Olympian athlete, and that’s really amazing. I’ve... [been] bowled over by that and I really want to build on that.*”

EGLE ULJAS

Twenty years after running for Estonia in 2004, Eagle Uljas will take up residence at the Paris Regional Conservatory, performing piano music inspired by the Games.

“I wanted to be an Olympian and then I wanted to be the best pianist in the world, which was just too much... I think there has to be a perfect balance to be able to do those things,” said Uljas.

Her music explores the pressures of competition and mental health, a tension with which she is intimately familiar. The demands of performing both music and sport at a high level meant Uljas wasn’t sleeping. “*It actually became a hazard to me.*”

As her music teachers demanded excellence in her lessons, they motivated her in athletics. “*It’s funny to say, but they made me run faster,*” said Uljas.

On the other side of the finish line as the assistant distance coach at the University of Arizona, she knows the athletes she coaches have professional help to navigate academics and sport. “*Being a student-athlete is nothing less than challenging. You need to balance school, your sport, the competition schedule, recovery, team activities, et cetera.*”

Returning to the Olympics as a musician creates balance for Egle. “*I always like to try to find ways to connect sports and music.*”

CLEMENTINE STONEY MACONACHIE

“I think it’s like such a nice full-circle moment,” said Clementine Stoney Maconachie, who swam for Australia in 2000.

A chance to bring her artwork to Paris is a chance to revise her Olympic experience on her terms. “*My career ended really suddenly, and I never felt finished, like I was just getting started,*” she said.

Falling ill after the Sydney games, Maconachie stepped away from swimming. “*... I haven’t really felt like I could give back in a meaningful way through traditional methods like coaching ...[so it’s nice to] do something in my current field and give back to the program in that way,*” said Maconachie.

Maconachie’s artwork evokes motion. “*For me, a large part of my practice is about movement, the movement of the material and also the movement of my body as a tool in making the pieces. I think it all comes back to movement and line and form and shape.*”

Her art moves “*between fluidity, balance and contrast... I very much like to make heavy materials look light.*”

Maconachie will send multiple pieces for exhibition, including totems that are inspired by the Olympic pictograms and great artists like Henri Matisse, Jean Arp, and Barbra Hepworth.

If she could, she would tell her past self who dealt with a difficult end to her athletic career, “*You’ve learned all the skills you’ll ever need to do whatever you want. The motivation, the willingness to turn up and have a go.*”

“Put yourself out there and do not be afraid to fail. Just go for it.” //



CHF 940'000.-

CHANCY (GE)

SUPERBE 3.5 P DANS CADRE BUCOLIQUE
81 m² habitables / Exposition sud / Généreux et lumineux volumes avec magnifique terrasse-véranda de 50 m² / Jardin en copropriété / 1 chambre avec SDB en suite et 1 toilette visiteurs / 1 cave en sous-sol, 1 parking intérieur et 1 parking extérieur.

Réf. 84564326



CHF 1'395'000.-

CHANCY (GE)

CHARMANTE MAISON MITOYENNE 6 P
Prestations de qualité / 165 m² habitables environ sur 3 niveaux / Grande pièce de vie avec cuisine ouverte / Accès à la terrasse et au jardin avec une piscine hors-sol / 3 chambres avec placards intégrés / 1 SDB avec baignoire d'angle / 1 pièce polyvalente en combles / 1 SDD avec wc / Sous-sol complet / 1 parking sous couvert + 1 parking intérieur.

Réf. 84858401



CHF 1'560'000.-

AÏRE (GE)

RÉSIDENCE RÉCENTE - SUPERBE 5 P
Dans quartier résidentiel / 1^{er} étage d'un petit immeuble aux normes HPE / 117 m² habitables et une vaste terrasse de 49 m² / Joli hall d'entrée avec armoires intégrées / Séjour / Cuisine ouverte avec coin salle à manger / 1 chambre à coucher parentale et sa SDB privative / 2 chambres / 1 SDB et 1 corridor / 2 places de parking et 1 cave en sous-sol.

Réf. 39447



CHF 1'750'000.-

COLLEX-BOSSY (GE)

MAISON DE VILLAGE HPE
Entièrement rénovée à neuf en 2023 / 135 m² habitables / Grandes baies vitrées / Magnifique terrasse orientée sud de 20 m² / Spacieux salon ouvert sur cuisine et salle à manger / Toilettes visiteurs / 3 chambres à coucher dont suite parentale avec SDD privative / 1 SDD indépendante / 2 places de parking extérieures.

Réf. 38459



CHF 2'050'000.-

COLLEX-BOSSY (GE)

MAGNIFIQUE MAISON DE VILLAGE
225 m² habitables / 8 pièces dont 5 chambres / Entièrement rénovée en 2020 / Beau jardin avec piscine chauffée / Un jacuzzi et une terrasse complètent ce bien.

Réf. 36112



CHF 2'250'000.-

BERNEX (GE)

SPACIEUX DUPLEX EN ATTIQUE
Au calme absolu / Style loft / Généreux volumes / Rénové avec des matériaux de qualité / Vaste séjour de plus de 57 m² agrémenté d'une cuisine ouverte / Loggia / Belle master bedroom avec spacieux dressing et SDD en suite / 2 chambres / Grande mezzanine sous combles / 1 chambre / 1 SDD / 1 buanderie / 1 cave et un grand box de 45 m² / 1 parking extérieur.

Réf. 39460



DÈS CHF 2'690'000.-

LE GRAND-SACONNEX (GE)

VILLAS TERROUX - 6 PIÈCES - 150 M²
Proche des Organisations Internationales / 4 villas jumelles THPE / Architecture moderne / Ensoleillement maximal / Toitures plates / Panneaux solaires / PAC Individuelle / Terrain de 380 m² à 448 m².

Réf. 240523ASN

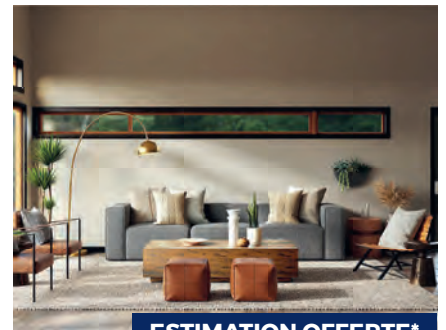


CHF 5'500'000.-

LE GRAND-SACONNEX (GE)

MAGNIFIQUE TOWNHOUSE AU CALME
Au cœur du quartier des Organisations Internationales / Généreux townhouse de 11 pièces d'environ 370 m² / Parcelle arborée de 900 m² / 3 niveaux dont un sous-sol / Bel ensoleillement / 6 chambres / 4 SDB / À découvrir.

Réf. 35817



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Forging a Healthier Tomorrow

WHO'S FIVE KEY CONTRIBUTIONS TO GLOBAL HEALTH

World Health Organization's impact on global health since its inception in 1948 underscores its enduring commitment to enhancing health outcomes globally.

In the aftermath of World War II's global upheaval, the international community recognized an undeniable truth: enduring peace and security are inextricably linked to the health of the world's populations. This profound realization gave birth to the World Health Organization (WHO), a testament to the shared belief that health is a fundamental human right deserving of a coordinated, universal effort.

With its constitution officially coming into effect on April 7, 1948, WHO became the United Nations agency to lead global efforts to improve health. Headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, and extending its reach through six regional offices and 150 field offices worldwide it brings together 194 member states and global partners towards finding solutions for the global health issues.

This article explores examples of WHO's work, showcasing significant contributions that are part of its broader efforts to enhance global health.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC): Emerging from the "Health for All" vision championed by the WHO since the 1970s, UHC is a critical movement in the journey toward global health equity. It seeks to ensure that all people have access to the full range of quality health services they need, when and where they need them, without financial hardship. Despite significant progress, the world is currently off track to meet Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) target 3.8 for UHC by 2030. With about 2 billion people facing financial hardship due to health expenses, and the essential health services still recovering from the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, the urgency for tangible action has never been clearer.

In navigating this challenge, WHO advocates for reorienting health systems toward a Primary

Health Care (PHC) approach. This strategy, serving as the bedrock for UHC, is capable of delivering 90% of health interventions that people need and is instrumental in potentially saving 60 million lives by 2030. PHC transcends the traditional focus on disease, advocating for a comprehensive model that addresses the wider determinants of health and ensures care is provided as close to people's everyday environment as possible.

The fight for UHC hinges on ensuring everyone has access to essential health services, and immunization stands as a cornerstone of this global endeavor. Here's where the WHO's Expanded Programme on Immunization enters the picture with its focus on ensuring universal access to all relevant vaccines for all populations across the life course.

Launched in 1974, the WHO's Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI), now known as the Essential Programme on Immunization, is one of the most effective public health interventions in history. Over the past 50 years, the EPI has dramatically expanded its scope from targeting six key childhood illnesses to administering 13 universally recommended vaccines, along with 17 others for specific contexts. Since its inception, it has saved an estimated 154 million lives—equating to six lives every minute over the last five decades. Celebrating its golden jubilee, the EPI commemorates the impact of vaccines on global health with the launch of the "Humanly Possible" campaign. This initiative, unveiled during World Immunization Week 2024 by WHO, UNICEF, Gavi, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, aims to mobilize world leaders and health organizations to ensure universal access to life-saving vaccines, reinforcing our global commitment to a healthier future.

Communicable disease eradication: Vaccines stand as the forefront of public health, transforming the battle against deadly diseases. The eradication of smallpox in 1980 marked a historic milestone, boosting global efforts to eradicate diseases such as polio, which has seen a

decline of over 99% in cases since 1988 through widespread immunization. Similarly, dracunculiasis, a parasitic infection transmitted through contaminated water, is on the brink of eradication, with just a handful of cases reported annually, thanks to successful public health interventions that include education, water filtration programs, and treatment. Yaws, a chronic bacterial infection of the skin, bones, and cartilage, has also been targeted for eradication with renewed strategies and the distribution of antibiotics, offering hope for getting rid of this disease primarily affecting children in tropical regions.

In the broader quest for a healthier future, diseases such as lymphatic filariasis, measles, rubella, and leprosy are also in the crosshairs for elimination. These initiatives emphasize a commitment to using medicines, vaccines, and public health strategies to not just control but eradicate the global burden of infectious diseases.

The International Health Regulations (IHR) is a key legal framework, facilitated by WHO, for strengthening global public health security. These regulations aim to prevent, detect, and respond to Public Health Emergencies of International Concern (PHEIC). The IHR plays a key role in supporting global efforts towards polio eradication and helped coordinating the response to the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting its importance in marshalling international collaboration against health emergencies.

To adapt to evolving health threats and address shortcomings exposed during COVID-19, the WHO and its member states are actively working on updating the IHR. This update focuses on enhancing the global Health Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Resilience (HEPR). Specific amendments aim to address contem-

porary challenges, technological advancements, and critical gaps in management of PHEICs. These revisions will be considered by the 77th World Health Assembly in 2024. In parallel, efforts are underway to develop a new Pandemic Treaty that could further strengthen global cooperation for future health crises, potentially complementing the IHR's focus on preparedness and response.

Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC): The FCTC is another legally binding instrument, a treaty, facilitated by the WHO to protect global public health from the tobacco epidemic. Since coming into force in 2005, the FCTC has garnered support from 183 parties, representing over 90% of the global population. It is one of the most rapidly and widely embraced treaties in the history of the United Nations.

The FCTC targets the devastating impact of tobacco use, which is linked to approximately 8 million deaths annually of which 1.2 million are attributable to secondhand smoke exposure, harming smokers, and nonsmokers alike. The treaty's broad adoption signifies a global commitment to combating the health, social, environmental, and economic consequences of tobacco use.

These initiatives, from UHC to FCTC, are a glimpse into the WHO's extensive portfolio aimed at ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all. They exemplify strategic efforts to ensure that an ever-greater number of individuals, everywhere, attain the highest possible level of health. This enduring commitment underscores the importance of sustained, inclusive action and international solidarity in the ongoing journey towards a healthier world. //

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How self-care is having an impact in healthcare

PROGRESS SINCE WHO PUBLISHED THE GLOBAL GUIDELINE FOR SELF-CARE INTERVENTIONS FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING FIVE YEARS AGO

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WHO
guideline



The Self-Care
Wheel



People have been practicing self-care for millennia, using a variety of ways and traditional methods to prevent disease, promote and maintain their health, and cope with illness. In more recent years, the practice of self-care has been enhanced by the introduction of self-care interventions - evidence-based tools that can support self-care. Self-care interventions include drugs, devices, diagnostic and digital technologies.

Globally, a staggering 4.5 billion people - around half the world's population - lack access to essential health services, and innovative ways to increase access and deliver healthcare safely and effectively are urgently needed. Self-care interventions are one of those innovations.

Self-care interventions are not about replacing health systems or health and care workers, instead they complement them. They can give people greater autonomy, options and accessibility and offer improved confidentiality and privacy. Health and care workers play an important role in the success of self-care interventions by increasing awareness of them and introducing them.

FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

This month marks the fifth anniversary of WHO publishing the first consolidated global Guideline on self-care interventions for health and well-being. The Guideline, which initially focussed on sexual and reproductive health (SRH), advocates for a people-centred, holistic approach to healthcare across the course of one's life, centred on human rights, gender equality, inclusivity and equity. The release of the Guideline was a paradigm shift in WHO guidance, paving the way to link communities, primary care and health systems.

Then came COVID-19. The pandemic shone a spotlight on the importance that self-care plays in people's health and well-being. It also highlighted the important role people play in man-

aging their health and accelerated the use and uptake of a range of self-care options and ways to access them, including through digital technologies. In 2022, the Guideline was further expanded and updated to include new recommendations including making emergency contraceptive pills available over-the-counter and self-monitoring of glucose during pregnancy.

FROM GLOBAL GUIDANCE TO GREATER CHOICE FOR INDIVIDUALS

Over the past five years interest in self-care interventions has grown tremendously. Around 50 countries have so far taken steps to adapt the Guideline for use nationally and introduce or change policies to support self-care and the use of self-care interventions, including the examples below from Morocco, Nigeria and India.

Within two months of the Guideline's publication, Morocco had adapted and launched it, making it the first country to do so. Later, Morocco also integrated self-care interventions into the national SRH strategy to promote access and uptake. The Ministry of Health working with WHO and other partners has introduced the self-administered contraceptive injection to expand the contraceptive options available for women and reduce the risks associated with unwanted pregnancies, including unsafe abortion.

Shortly afterwards, Nigeria adapted and launched the Guideline. In collaboration with the government and others, the WHO Nigeria Country Office has been helping to ensure community level roll out of self-care interventions through engaging with key stakeholders, including the media and community representatives at a state-level. By the end of 2023, 21 of Nigeria's 36 states had committed to implementing the Guideline and expanding access to self-care interventions for SRH - from building awareness of healthy behaviours to increasing the availability of self-administered injectable contraception, HIV self-testing and human papillomavirus (HPV) self-sampling for increased cervical cancer screening with dissemination



taking place in 19 states. For women like Anifa, who lives in an Internally Displaced Person camp in Damagaza, Abuja the roll-out of the self-administered injectable contraception has been a very welcome development. It gives her and other women in the country more contraceptive choice as well as privacy, something Anifa is very grateful for in an IDP camp where there is often very little privacy.

In India, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has launched 'self-care SRH kits', which contain condoms, emergency contraceptive pills and pregnancy tests. The kits, which were launched during the 2023 second G20 Health Working Group Meeting in Goa, were developed with technical support from the WHO Country Office for India. They are designed to help give people direct access to contraception and pregnancy testing, bypassing the stigma and fear that many, particularly adolescents and young people, experience when trying to access SRH health services. The kits are also QR-code enabled to quickly help people to access evidence-based information about different self-use contraceptive methods via their mobile phone. Initially being rolled out to the 150,000 primary care Health and Wellness Centers across India, the self-care kits will eventually be made available at all health facilities nationwide.

THE SELF-CARE WHEEL

Another initiative has been the Self-Care Wheel, which won the WHO Director-General's internal Excellence Award for Innovation 2023. The Wheel is now set to help demystify self-care and increase understanding of WHO's recommended self-care interventions. Aimed at both the general public and health and care workers, the Self-Care Wheel is a combined paper and digital tool that illustrates the evidence-based recommendations in the WHO Guideline in a straightforward and an easy-to-understand way. It promotes a shared language on self-care for health and care workers and clients, and also helps to strengthen links with the health system by using a simple colour-coded "traffic light" system to show which interventions can be accessed without the support of a health and care worker and those that need their support. Having gone through initial testing in Bangladesh, Morocco, India and Nigeria the wheel is now going through more extensive testing in several countries.

These are just a few examples of the progress made and there are many more from countries ranging from Uruguay and Senegal through to Japan and Pakistan. Progress has been good, but there is still much to be done to ensure people have greater access to healthcare and make Health for All a reality. //

A health worker in Islamabad, Pakistan who has championed sexual and reproductive health and rights in her community for many years on her way to visit a pregnant client to discuss her care.

Why talk obesity?

TALKING ABOUT OBESITY GALVANIZES PEOPLE AND LEADS TO ACTION,
EVERY SINGLE CHANGE IS IMPORTANT

One good reason could be that 4 March is celebrated every year as World Obesity Day. In 2024, the theme of the Day was “challenging misconceptions”. Beyond that one day, however, obesity is an issue of daily concern, global concern and of concern for all ages. While concern about obesity as an issue was first taken up by civil society, it has now been embraced by others, including the World Health Organization (WHO). The obesity epidemic has been declared as a major public health challenge for nearly every country in the world by WHO. In 2022, there were already 1 billion people with obesity. This is especially serious since obesity is a major contributor to noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) like diabetes, cancers, cardiovascular diseases, chronic respiratory diseases, and neurological and digestive disorders.

The accelerating global public health crisis driven by rapid rises in obesity presents one of the greatest health policy conundrums of our time. The problem is universally recognized. The causes are known and understood. Many interventions needed to contain the crisis are well evidenced, available and are not necessarily resource intensive. Yet, as the crisis escalates, the concerted action needed to control the epidemic remains elusive.

There are several reasons why this is the case. The impact of obesity is not immediate or headline grabbing - at either the individual or societal level. The health and economic consequences play out over time and in complex collusion with a myriad of factors. Many of the preventive actions involve market intervention at a scale that is unpalatable for free-market democracies and unattractive for the elites in other countries. The opportunities for recruiting populations into adopting obesity-preventing lifestyles are limited by the choice constraining circumstances (economic, commercial, environmental and cultural) in which people live.

THE FIRST PORT OF CALL

Dr Francesco Branca, Director of Nutrition and Food Safety at WHO. As well as being a medical

doctor, he studied nutrition early in his career, obtaining a Master's and a Ph.D. degree. Starting from his early days when working in Somalia and witnessing extreme malnutrition first hand, he expressed the challenge of his life as being to convince people, especially policymakers, on the importance of nutrition - including both undernutrition and obesity. His efforts have paid off and some progress has been made in this regard, as evidenced by the United Nations General Assembly declaring 2015-2025 as a United Nations Decade for Action on Nutrition. While some countries have established policies on nutrition, much more needs to be done. Apart from the impact of obesity on morbidity and mortality, we are also currently facing the economic consequences of the disease - global costs are predicted to reach three trillion US dollars per year by 2030.

GETTING TO KNOW THE ACCELERATION PLAN TO STOP OBESITY

Dr Francesca Celletti, who leads the WHO Acceleration Plan to Stop Obesity, and attributes the obesity pandemic to:

- obesogenic environments - with limited availability of healthy sustainable food at locally affordable prices, lack of opportunities for safe and easy physical activity in people's daily lives and absence of adequate legal and regulatory frameworks; and
- lack of an effective health system response, with a focus on both prevention and management of obesity.

Many countries have acknowledged that accelerated global action is needed to address the pervasive and corrosive problem of the double burden of malnutrition (whereby overweight/obesity coexist alongside undernutrition). A significant breakthrough came at the 75th World Health Assembly in 2022, when Member States demanded and adopted new recommendations for the prevention and management of obesity and endorsed the WHO Acceleration Plan to Stop Obesity. Currently, 32 frontrunner countries are putting the Acceleration Plan into action and finally address this issue. Big steps, indeed.

TEXT FRANCESCA CELLETTI, WHO
RENU CHAHIL-GRAF, RENUWRITES.COM
PHOTO RENU CHAHIL-GRAF



Chef Fred during a busy lunch time.

THE WHO CAFETERIA, A GOLD STANDARD?

Do WHO headquarters staff in Geneva know how fortunate they are in terms of the quality of food provided in the cafeteria? The manager, Bertrand Schefzick, and the chef, Fred Borro, explain that only seasonal ingredients are used in the WHO cafeteria cuisine, unhealthy oils (e.g., palm oil) are never used and – the cherry on the cake – sauces are made from scratch. This means no high-salt commercial bouillon, flavors, pastes or thickeners. While preparation time may be longer, the cost is not higher. Furthermore, dispelling another myth, using organic vegetables is not more expensive than non-organic produce. The cafeteria gets a delivery of 250 kg of fresh, local and organic veggies every week from a farm in Geneva. Locally-produced and delivered! Around 550 lunches are prepared per day, and it turns out that the more expensive options are more sought after than the cheaper options. Hmm, people appreciate a good thing when they see it and taste it, so they are ready to pay the price.

WHO'S HUNGRY?

Capturing a few individuals with their food choices on cafeteria trays, the feedback was reassuring. Paramjit Singh, from India and working in Human Resources, and hosting a colleague from Indonesia, with a smile on his face, said he loved the variety and quality of the food. Mar-

tin Widstam, Minister Counselor from the European Delegation, looked satisfied while waiting to check out but thought that it was maybe a bit pricey – well worth the cost, he'll discover! Niloo, from Canada and working in the Immunisation Department, while filling her bowl with healthy options, said she loved to come to the cafeteria because *"the food's pretty good"*, but also for the opportunity to bump into colleagues face to face.

AND THE GOOD NEWS IS...

Samantha Bell-Shiers, Head, Staff Health Insurance (SHI), provides some examples of obesity-related treatments that are reimbursable under the SHI Rules. For example, reimbursement of the cost of six sessions per year with a dietitian is possible when a participant's BMI is greater than 30 and they have a prescription. In addition, reimbursement of bariatric surgery (after obtaining prior approval from SHI) is also possible. Psychiatric and psychological treatment, which can be helpful in relation to obesity issues, are also reimbursable (see SHI Rules, Part B Benefits Table for details). Samantha encourages participants to contact the SHI Medical Adviser if they have any doubts regarding related SHI benefits. SHI closely follows the introduction of new validated treatments and preventive measures with a view to recommending the addition of new benefits to the SHI Rules in the interest of all its participants. Well done!

A SUPER-ENGAGED MEDICAL ADVISER

On top of his impressive knowledge, the empathy of Dr Eric Reymond, the WHO SHI Medical Adviser, is remarkable. Someone who really loves his job – wherever in the world it takes him. In his seven years in the organization he has had valuable experience, including working with Ministers of Health, WHO Regional Offices, country staff and local health care providers. He has found it especially motivating to work within the One UN Medevac Framework for COVID-19. While 70% of his work involves advising SHI participants worldwide, this is especially important for obesity-related issues. SHI seeks to provide access to the best care for the best cost. This can be challenging since some SHI participants may, once they present with overweight or obesity, want to immediately receive medicines or opt for surgery. But Eric emphasizes that there are many options before going for such interventions, which may not necessarily be in the best interests of the patient. There



SION SOUS LES ÉTOILES

16 – 20.07.24

Plaine de Tourbillon, Sion



GUIGNOL

6.10.24

Métropole, Lausanne



ELENA NAGAPETYAN

19.10.24

Métropole, Lausanne



LE SOLDAT ROSE

27.10.24

Léman, Genève



ALEX RAMIRES

15.11.24

Métropole, Lausanne



SCH

29.11.24

Arena, Genève



WALY DIA

7 & 8.12.24

BFM, Genève
Métropole, Lausanne



DISNEY CONCERT

21.12.24

Arena, Genève



MALIK BENTALHA

5.02.25

Arena, Genève



ARNAUD DEMANCHE

1.03.25

Uptown, Genève



DANY BOON

11.03.25

Arena, Genève



ANNE ROUMANOFF

10.04.25

Métropole, Lausanne



MIREILLE MATHIEU

16.11.25

Métropole, Lausanne



RENAUD

27 & 28.09.24

Theater 11, Zurich
Musical Theater, Bâle



SALVATORE ADAMO

11.10.24

Léman, Genève



BÉJART BALLET LAUSANNE

24 – 27.10.24

BFM, Genève



YOTAM OTTOLENGHI

9.11.24

Métropole, Lausanne



PATRICK BRUEL

17.11.24

Vaudoise Arena, Lausanne



STARMUSICAL

30.11.24

Arena, Genève



PHILIPPE LELLOUCHE

15.12.24

Métropole, Lausanne



ARTUS

16.01 & 9.03.25

Métropole, Lausanne
Arena, Genève



GIMS

7.02.25

Arena, Genève



ELODIE POUX

8.03.25

Arena, Genève



GLADIATOR LIVE

22.03.25

Arena, Genève



LA HAINE

9 & 10.05.25

Arena, Genève



LARA FABIAN

28.11.25

Arena, Genève



STARMANIA

2 – 6.10.24

Arena, Genève



ANTHONY KAVANAGH

18.10 & 28.11.24

Métropole, Lausanne
BFM, Genève



INÈS REG

26-27.10.24 & 23.01.25

Métropole, Lausanne
Arena, Genève



GUIHOME

15 & 16.11.24

BFM, Genève
Métropole, Lausanne



TONY CARREIRA

23.11.24

Arena, Genève



LES 10 COMMANDEMENTS

7.12.24

Arena, Genève



ALAIN SOUCHON

16 & 17.12.24

Métropole, Lausanne



DISNEY SUR GLACE

29.01 – 2.02.25

Arena, Genève



LA TOURNÉE DU TRIO

27-28.02 & 12.03.25

Métropole, Lausanne
Arena, Genève



D'PENDANSE

9.03.25

Métropole, Lausanne



GAD ELMALEH

8.04.25

Arena, Genève



FESTIVAL MONDIAL DE LA MAGIE

7-9.11.25

Métropole, Lausanne



SOPRANO

29.11.25

Vaudoise Arena, Lausanne

has, for example, been an increase in provision of medications – sometimes without proper, long-term follow-up by skilled health professionals – and in bariatric surgery. Since obesity is a chronic disease, it is important for the patient to understand that it's a long journey, emphasizes Eric. Not only does this journey relate to food habits and physical activity, it also requires a sound long-term therapeutic approach around the person's individual needs. He is also concerned about “*weight stigma*” and encourages staff members to participate in workshops on staff health and well-being, with an overall broader perspective of sharing information with their colleagues, families and partners. This requires Eric to work closely with mental health colleagues. The Medical Adviser is available for any discussion and any advice. He gives it sincerely, without prejudice and with a complete understanding of the complexity of the issues. Thanks Eric, we hear you!

COURAGEOUSLY ADVOCATING FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH OBESITY

Vicki Mooney, Executive Director of the European Coalition for People living with Obesity (ECPO), has been involved with the World Obesity Day campaign since 2016, when activities started in Europe. Over time, ECPO has expanded the narrative theme to Addressing Obesity Together, broadening stakeholder involvement. Vicki has been actively involved in bringing the “*lived experience*” of people living with obesity to the World Health Assembly. She has encouraged a focus on – in her words – the “*biggest public health issue, obesity*”. While she is fortunate not to have faced stigma in the workplace, she and fellow advocates face weight bias, stigma and discrimination. Vicki considers it essential that obesity is recognized as a complex, chronic and treatable disease, with recognition that weight bias, stigma and discrimination impact and influence the daily lives of affected people. “*Let's shift the focus from this 'lifestyle narrative' and 'weight loss' to a focus on a person's health and responsible medical treatment and management for obesity*”, stresses Vicki. //

USEFUL RESOURCES

- 1 Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2004 (<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9241592222>).
- 2 Global Nutrition Targets 2025 Policy Brief Series. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2014 (<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-NMH-NHD-14.2>).

- 3 NCD Global Monitoring Framework. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2011 (<https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/ncd-surveillance-global-monitoring-framework>).
- 4 World Health Assembly. Seventy-fifth World Health Assembly: Geneva, 22-28 May 2022: resolutions and decisions, annexes. World Health Organization (<https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/365610>).

THE 2024 STOP OBESITY CAMPAIGN

Using the opportunity of World Obesity Day, WHO organized a week-long campaign, from 4-8 March 2024, to address obesity prevention and management for the global WHO workforce and family members.

Key messages

- Need to adopt prevention measures starting at early stages of life.
- Breastfeed as long possible.
- Encourage children to play outdoors, limit screen time, eat healthy snacks and sleep long nights.
- Physical activity and healthy eating are important health protective behaviours.
- Adopt a personalized health journey.
- Let's talk about holistic obesity management and not merely weight loss.
- When living with obesity, let's adopt a comprehensive multi-modal therapy that includes lifestyle changes and – when and if indicated – associated pharmacological treatment.
- Let us all avoid stigma and discrimination.

Events

- Global webinar for all staff across the six WHO regional offices and the country offices addressing the causes, challenges, prevention and management of obesity; associated stigma and discrimination; and WHO interventions for its employees, such as workplace programmes and health insurance reimbursements for obesity and obesity-related issues.
- Information booth with physical activity, dietary counselling, patient education, information about staff health benefits and mental health support.
- Partnerships with the University Hospital of Geneva and the WHO Collaborating Centre offering videos and workshops.

Podcasts

THE GLOBAL HEALTH MATTERS PODCAST PROVIDES A FORUM FOR DISCUSSING THE MOST IMPORTANT GLOBAL HEALTH TOPICS OF THE DAY



GLOBAL HEALTH MATTERS the podcast

DIALOGUES

A conversation with **KINARI WEBB**

and your host, **GARRY ASLANYAN**

GLOBAL HEALTH MATTERS the podcast

DIALOGUES

A conversation with **OLUSOJI ADEYI**

and your host, **GARRY ASLANYAN**

GLOBAL HEALTH MATTERS the podcast

BRINGING HEALTH STORIES TO THE FRONT PAGE

with your host, **GARRY ASLANYAN**

FEATURING:

PAUL ADEPOJU
Freelance Journalist and Community Manager, International Center for Journalists

STEPHANIE NOLEN
Global Health Reporter, The New York Times

GLOBAL HEALTH MATTERS the podcast

Bonus episode: WHAT'S BEHIND YOUR FAVOURITE PODCAST

FEATURING FEATURING FEATURING FEATURING FEATURING

Garry Aslanyan
Executive Producer and Host of GHM

Lindi van Niekerk
Senior Producer of GHM

Accelerating universal access to health products

WHO-UNICEF-UNFPA FORUM
WITH MANUFACTURERS AND SUPPLIERS



TEXT MARIO MUSONDA, SARAH SHEPPARD & ROGERIO GASPAR, WHO
PHOTO WHO-UNICEF-UNFPA

The United Nations' 2030 agenda encompasses 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with SDG 3 specifically targeting healthy lives and well-being for all ages. A number of factors at national, regional and global levels influence access to quality-assured, safe, effective and affordable health products. These include research and development, pricing, reimbursement models, manufacturing, supply chains and regulatory procedures which involve multiple stakeholders. An important forum to bring those stakeholders together is the annual WHO/UNICEF/UNFPA meeting with manufacturers and suppliers; a week-long event that the three agencies have been jointly hosting for 20 years. Its goal of is to provide an opportunity for the three UN agencies and key stakeholders in the prequalification programme (PQP) and procurement of health products to meet and discuss their work.

Each year, the event attracts about 400 participants from national regulatory authorities, manufacturers, suppliers, research organizations, development partners, and academic institutions in the areas of medicines, vaccines, in vitro diagnostics, and vector control products. The quality, safety, and effectiveness of health products are promoted through the scientific assessments of the PQP. Timely and equitable access is promoted through procurement and supply chain management infrastructures from each of the three UN agencies. Presentations and discussion include how innovative health products can undergo PQP and international procurement mechanisms, updates on PQP and procurement, collection of feedback from stakeholders and understanding key priorities that need addressing.

Meeting with these important stakeholders annually has contributed to their continued interest in the PQP with over 1500 prequalified health products and recommended for procurement. The event has been an example of strong coordination, partnership, and collaboration among

UN agencies focusing on accelerating access to quality-assured and affordable health products for all. It remains a key advocacy platform for the three Organizations as engagement with key stakeholders is critical for the success of the PQP and to support the procurement processes. The collaborative nature of the event fosters strong and important relationship building plus it significantly reduces the carbon footprint by reducing the number of logistical movements by people. This is one of the critical climate sensitivities of the event, besides it being completely paperless and more recently adding the online/virtual attendance possibility.

This year's event will be held at the UN City in Copenhagen, Denmark, from 2 to 6 December 2024. Those within the areas of interest are invited to attend and participate. For more information and details on how to participate, visit the WHO website: <https://extranet.who.int/prequal/events>. //

Assistant Director-General for Access to Medicines and Health Products, Dr Yukiko Nakatani opens the 2023 WHO-UNICEF-UNFPA manufacturers meeting.



Origins of Life and Beyond

LOUISE AGERSNAP'S MASTERPIECES
AT WHO ART GALLERY

“WHO ART GALLERY” The endeavor that started as a fun idea discussed among colleagues over coffee has evolved to be an integral part of the World Health Organization (WHO), winning the WHO LEAD innovation challenge in 2023. With an endeavor to promote health and well-being by celebrating the artistic creativity of the WHO workforce and an attempt to showcase it both in-person and via the virtual gallery, to everyone working in WHO and beyond throughout the world.

One of the artists Ms Louise Agersnap, has been involved with WHO ART GALLERY since its inception. This article provides a glimpse into the background of the artist Louise, some of her artworks in the WHO Art Gallery and her reflections behind them.

A LEGACY OF CREATIVITY

Louise Agersnap, Head of the innovation hub at the World Health Organization and a Political Scientist, seamlessly blends her roles as a mother of two and an artist with her dedicated home-based art studio in France. While her artistic career blossomed during university, the roots of creativity were deeply embedded in her childhood in Denmark. Louise's lifelong connection to visual arts began at home influenced by her multitalented father, Peder Agersnap (a painter, art teacher, ceramist, musician, and playwright), and inspired by artworks from her maternal great-grandfathers, renowned Danish painters Jacob Agersnap (1888-1958) and Hans Agersnap (1857-1925). Raised in an environment promoting creativity and lifelong learning (the concept of “dannelse” or “Bildung”), her upbringing in Denmark's højskole'-movement shapes her belief in limitless learning and collaboration, influencing both her artistic and innovation endeavors today.

In Copenhagen, during university, she ventured into abstract art encouraged by her artist friend Gerry Dinnage. Assisting him in his conservation studio, Gerry generously supplied leftover oil paint materials, igniting her artistic journey. Initially employing oil paints on canvas, health considerations prompted a shift to the more

practical acrylics. This not only prioritized her well-being but also allowed for experimentation with diverse techniques and the incorporation of mixed media, like images and poetry, enriching the depth and texture of her creations.

ORIGINS OF LIFE

When asked what drives her artwork, Louise says: “I've always had a fascination with science and with the notion of ‘perspectives’. The prism through which we view any phenomenon will determine what we see.” To that effect, in the realm of art, where brushstrokes transform blank canvases into visual narratives, her series of artworks in the WHO Art Gallery “Origins of Life” unfolds as a compelling exploration into the diverse interpretations of life's origins. With six distinct paintings, each focusing differently on the multifaceted perspectives that surround the age-old question: where does life come from?

ADAM AND EVE, CULTURE OF RELIGION

The first stroke on the canvas whispers the narrative of Adam and Eve, invoking religious imagery of paradise as all life began from the first two humans. Here, the artist invites us to ponder the traditional narrative of the genesis of humanity, a story entrenched in centuries of cultural and religious significance.

DNA STRING, THREADS OF EXISTENCE

As the brush weaves through the canvas, the DNA string emerges, connecting the audience to the scientific discourse surrounding life's origins. The intricate helix symbolizes the complex tapestry of genetic information that forms the blueprint of our existence.

CHEMISTRY, ELEMENTS OF CREATION

The artist's fascination extends to the realm of chemistry, where elements fuse and interact to give rise to life. Through vibrant hues and dynamic compositions, this painting explores the intricate dance of molecules that contribute to the grand symphony of creation.



Adam & Eve
by Louise Agersnap
(Part of the Origins of Life series).

BEACH AND SEA FOAM, BIRTH IN DREAMS

In the psychology of dreams, beach and sea foam symbolize birth, and the canvas unveils a dreamscape where life emerges from the ethereal depths. This painting serves as a testament to the artist's exploration of alternative interpretations, delving into the subconscious realms where life's origins are shrouded in symbolism.

RIVER DELTA, A CRADLE OF CIVILIZATION

A bird's eye view of a river delta brings forth the concept that civilizations and life itself flourished around rivers. The painting pays homage to the historical significance of waterways, linking the canvas to the interconnectedness of life and the birth of cultures.

TABULA RASA, THE CLEAN SLATE

In Latin "*Tabula Rasa*" means clean slate. This painting prompts contemplation on whether life begins as an "*unwritten canvas*" or carries with it pre-existing imprints. Though titled clean slate the canvas is not pristine but adorned with a faint pencil writing, symbolizing the indelible marks we may, or may not, bring into the world. The text itself is a poem by the remarkable Danish poet, Michael Strunge (19 June 1958 - 9 March 1986).

The "*Origins of Life*" series is a visual journey through the myriad interpretations of life's origins, capturing the essence of diverse perspectives. From religious narratives to scientific theories, the artist's brush navigates through



Tabula Rasa
by Louise Agersnap
(Part of the Origins of Life series).

symbolism, poetry, and dreams to convey the rich tapestry of existence. This collection invites viewers to reflect on the profound question of our origin and the countless ways it can be painted onto the canvas of our understanding.

PERSPECTIVES, PRISMS AND TRUTHS

The fascination with science and the play with different prisms are weaved through many of Louise's paintings featured in the WHO Art Gallery. Such as in "*Archipelago*", which blends the universal patterns found in archipelagos, coral reefs, microbiology, and aboriginal, native art across the globe; or "*Relativity*" (sold), which mixes mind-blowing excerpts from Albert Einstein's lectures with a striking portrait of the scientist, or "*Photosynthesis*", which combines the beauty of plants' growth with the chemical formula behind it.

Other than nudging the thoughts of the viewers about life, Louise also expressed her desire to challenge and expand the limitations of conventional thinking.

In the evolving narrative of art and science with innovation, Louise shares a vision and invites all of us to embrace the value of diverse perspectives and challenge conventional thinking while collaborating to work together to shape our collective future. //

Art works of Louise Agersnap have been featured at the Van Gogh Art Gallery in Madrid, Spain, and the Luxembourg International Contemporary Art Fair.

L'AUTRE REGARD SUR LA SCÈNE CULTURELLE

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L'AUTRE REGARD SUR LA SCÈNE
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de Marie Robert

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DE DINGUE PENDANT
TOUTES CES ANNÉES...»

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No time to lose

TO PROTECT EARTH,
WE MUST REVIVE LANDS FOR A BETTER FUTURE



Nature is suffering with some ecosystems on the brink of irreversible damage due to the triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste.

As we mark World Environment Day on 5 June, there can be no doubt that Earth is in crisis.

Record-breaking temperatures caused by human-driven greenhouse gas emissions are scorching the planet. Drought has increased in number and duration by almost a third in the last two decades. It has become an existential threat to many smaller communities at the sharp end of climate change.

Up to 40 per cent¹ of the world's land, equivalent to more than 2 billion hectares², is already degraded - mostly due to unsustainable land management. Forests have been cleared, wetlands and peatlands drained, mountains eroded, and farmlands and grasslands over-exploited.

Around the world, farmers are grappling with declining soil quality due to water loss, higher temperatures, and the overuse of fertilizers that seep into the environment. Some ecosystems are in danger of passing a tipping point where they can no longer be restored.

Desertification negatively impacts an estimated 3.2 billion people worldwide today. Food security, livelihoods and health are at risk, especially for the world's most vulnerable people. Future projections are no less concerning: at current rates, more than three-quarters of the world's population is expected to be affected by droughts by 2050.

With so much at stake, it is more urgent than ever to revive degraded land and restore vital ecosystems, on which all life depends, back to health.

To raise awareness and influence environmental action, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and World Environment Day 2024 host, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, unveiled a new campaign on April 28 under the slogan, *"Our land. Our Future. We are #GenerationRestoration"*³. Launched ahead of World Environment Day⁴ on 5 June, the biggest international day for the environment, the campaign focuses on restoring land, halting desertification and building resilience against drought.

The campaign is calling on governments and multilateral organizations to fulfil their commitments to restore degraded land. And for civil society groups, businesses and individuals to play their role in promoting harmony with nature.

This is how.

REMINDE GOVERNMENTS OF THEIR COMMITMENTS

In 1994, countries adopted the UN Convention to Combat Desertification⁵ to protect and restore land degraded by drought and stop desertification to avert consequences such as crop failure, migration and conflict.

The UN Convention to Combat Desertification is the only legally binding framework to address

Saudi Arabia, 2024 World Environment Day host country, has reared and released native species like oryx into the wild as part of efforts to restore ecosystems and protect land at home and in the region.



TEXT ARNOLD KREILHUBER, UNEP
PHOTO KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA



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TEXTILE FIBERS
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LEATHER FURNITURE
RENOVATION & COLORING



desertification and the effects of drought. Along with the UN Convention on Climate Change⁶ and UN Convention on Biodiversity⁷ often referred to as the Rio Conventions⁸, the three conventions work closely together to find cross-cutting global solutions, most notably, nature-based solutions.

Recognizing the importance of ecosystems to life on Earth, the UN General Assembly came together in 2019 to adopt a resolution declaring 2021-2030 the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration⁹. Led by UNEP and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, the decade aims to ramp up restoration and put the world on track for a sustainable future.

World Environment Day presents a golden opportunity to accelerate progress on these commitments. It is also a chance for people to engage with their leaders. By writing letters, organizing meetings and arranging political debates, they can encourage governments to fulfil their existing commitment to restore 1 billion hectares¹⁰ – an area larger than China – by 2030 and limit global warming to 1.5°C. Also, challenge them to be even more ambitious by making similar commitments for marine and coastal areas.

It is also worth reminding governments that every dollar invested in ecosystem restoration creates US\$30 in economic benefits.¹¹

END COMPULSIVE OVER-CONSUMPTION

Land degradation, drought and desertification are inextricably woven into the triple planetary crisis of climate change¹², nature and biodiversity loss¹³ and pollution and waste.¹⁴

This crisis is being fuelled by human activity, and unsustainable consumption and production habits. We cannot continue to extract and exploit our natural resources, while expecting our fragile ecosystems to remain intact.

Consumers can buy less and use their purchasing power to demand that companies embed sustainability in their business models. Companies in turn can embrace life-cycle principles which protect human and environmental health.

By restoring land and productive systems, humanity can secure a nature-positive, net-zero future, safeguarding a healthy planet and achieving sustainable development.¹⁵

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN AND SPREAD THE WORD

Everyone is welcome to take part in UNEP's campaign. Simply register on the website www.worldenvironmentday.global/ and get involved in restoration activities, events or actions between April and June. Highlight your activity on the World Environment Day Activity Map and receive a registration card.

Use the hashtags #GenerationRestoration and #WorldEnvironmentDay to spread the word and inspire others to help revive land. Visit the campaign's website (www.worldenvironmentday.global/) to access resources, latest updates, stories, news and tips, and get involved in land and soil restoration work using UNEP's practical guide. Invite others to register and join, too.

PARTNER WITH UNEP

We can achieve a stable climate, healthy nature and pollution-free planet if we work together. Team up with UNEP and create powerful collaborations to ignite transformative action, for people and the planet.

The planet can heal. If you give nature half the chance, it will bounce back. //

Arnold Kreilhuber is the regional director and representative of UNEP Regional Office for Europe, unep-europe-director@un.org

LEARN +

World Environment Day



United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)



- 1 *United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Drought in Numbers 2022: Restoration for readiness and resilience (2022)*
- 2 *Minnemeyer, S. et al. 2011. A World of Opportunity. World Resources Institute: Washington, DC.*
- 3 <https://www.worldenvironmentday.global/>
- 4 <https://www.worldenvironmentday.global/>
- 5 <https://www.unccd.int/>
- 6 <https://unfccc.int/>
- 7 <https://www.cbd.int/>
- 8 <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-rio-conventions>
- 9 *United Nations Environment Programme, www.decadeonrestoration.org/about-un-decade*
- 10 *United Nations Environment Programme, [Becoming #GenerationRestoration: Ecosystem Restoration for People, Nature and Climate \(2021\)](https://www.unep.org/press-releases/2021/05/11/unep-launches-generation-restoration-campaign)*
- 11 *United Nations Environment Programme, [Becoming #GenerationRestoration: Ecosystem Restoration for People, Nature and Climate \(2021\)](https://www.unep.org/press-releases/2021/05/11/unep-launches-generation-restoration-campaign)*
- 12 <https://www.unep.org/topics/climate-action>
- 13 <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/ecosystems-and-biodiversity>
- 14 <https://www.unep.org/topics/chemicals-and-pollution-action>
- 15 <https://www.unep.org/explore-topics/sustainable-development-goals>

The Art of Sport? Or the Sport of Art?*

“WHAT’S IN A NAME? THAT WHICH WE CALL A ROSE
BY ANY OTHER NAME WOULD SMELL AS SWEET.”

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, ROMEO AND JULIET, ACT II, SCENE II

“O Sport, you are Beauty!... There can be no beauty without balance and proportion, and you are the peerless master of both, for you create harmony, you give movements rhythm, you make strength graceful and you endow suppleness with power.” hus spoke **“Georges Hohrod and M. Eschbach,”** better known to the world as the founder of the modern Olympic Games Pierre de Coubertin, in a poem **“Ode to Sport”** that won the gold medal in the 1912 Stockholm Games.

True to his vision, Coubertin supported inclusion of art as a competitive event in the Olympic Games in five categories: architecture, literature, music, painting, and sculpture. Coubertin believed that the Olympic movement could reach a wider audience and promote not only physical excellence but also cultural and artistic expression.

The formal presence of arts in the early Olympic Games was met with equally vocal enthusiasm and skepticism. Supporters like Albert Ayat, a French fencer and Olympic champion, believed that art and sport shared common values, as both require discipline, creativity, and a pursuit of excellence. The likes of Igor Stravinsky were among the first Olympic art jurors. Jean Jacoby won two gold medals for his amateur paintings, becoming the most successful Olympic artist ever. German gymnast Erich Kastner, who competed in the 1928 and 1936 Olympics, was also a renowned writer and poet.

But critical voices were overpowering and non-compromising.

The controversies surrounding art in the early Games underscored the complex relationship between artistic expression and athletic competition. Art disciplines were all but cancelled at the 1912 Stockholm Games, highlighting the challenges of applying amateurism rules to artistic disciplines. Only 35 artworks were submitted to the jury.

Political tensions engulfed the 1936 Berlin Olympics, which took place in the heart of the Hitler regime. The Nazis sought to use art as a propaganda tool to promote their ideology of Aryan supremacy. This led to clashes between artists of different backgrounds and ideologies, and the judging of the competition was marred by the claims of bias and prejudice.

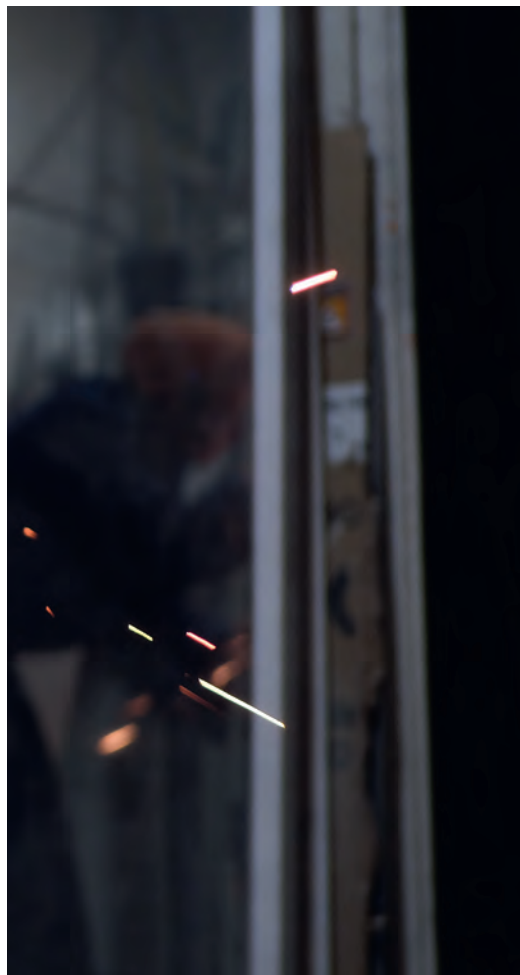
Despite the formal removal of art competitions from the Olympics in 1948, the concept of art as a sport has continued to evolve, culminating in a beautiful, undeniable symbiosis between creativity and athleticism today.

Creators like Frank Gehry, Jean-Michel Basquiat, Matthew Barney and Ai Weiwei have emphasized the physical and mental challenges inherent in creative processes, likening them to athleticism. Salvador Dali’s surreal interpretation of sports and athleticism added a touch of magic and mystery to the Olympic narrative.

Yoko Ono famously declared that *“Art is a battlefield.”* Performance artists such as Marina Abramovic and Ai Weiwei have pushed the boundaries of physical endurance and mental strength in their work, blurring the lines between art and sport. JR, the renowned French street artist, has created large-scale projects at the tangible intersection between the physical and creative worlds.

Throughout modern Olympic history, celebrated athletes have enriched the cultural landscape of the Games. Russian gymnast Alexei Nemov, a multiple Olympic medalist, is also an accomplished painter and illustrator. Canadian sprinter Donovan Bailey, a two-time Olympic champion, is a talented musician. Ethiopian long-distance runner Haile Gebrselassie is not only a two-time Olympic gold medalist but also a passionate photographer.

Seamless symbiosis and inseparable flow, art and sport are becoming one and the same. Complementing, encircling, and enriching. The yin



and yang of the Olympic body and soul. When asked to separate the two, Algerian jumper Kader Klouchi could not. *“They were two different forms of expression I really needed for myself. Sport nourished my body, while art nourished my soul,”* he said. *“They both express the human spirit,”* noted Roald Bradstock, a British artist and two-time Olympic track and field athlete.

British athlete Neil Eckersley acknowledged the powerful blend of artistic and athletic methods. *“As a judo athlete, I had a reputation for being open, free-thinking, and creative,”* he said. *“But I was also disciplined, professional, and totally dedicated.”*

Gregory Burns, an internationally recognized abstract painter, set four world records in swimming during three Paralympic Games. Crediting the athletic and creative fusion for his triumphs, he said that *“painting the human form while engaged in dynamic sporting activities is how I express the power of the human spirit.”*

Tom Daley, the British diver, does not only believe that *“sport is a form of art”* but he embodies and en-souls it. As he stands on the edge of the platform, he becomes a living sculpture, defying gravity and creating beauty in motion. But Daley is known not only for his athlet-

ic achievements. His colorful knitting, a form of art healing through the soothing rhythm of yarn and needles during sporting events, shows a delightful blend of creativity and athleticism.

The enriching symbiosis between art and sport is recognized and celebrated through the Olympic Artists programme founded by the Olympic family in Lausanne in 2018.

Just three years later, at the 2020 Tokyo Games, the intersection of athleticism, artistry and activism took centerstage.

Captivated by athletic excellence, we saw the vibrant and rebellious culture of skateboarding making an artistic debut.

We were awed by the tapestry of uniforms of the Refugee Team inspired by the traditional patterns and motifs of their home countries.

We were deeply moved by Naomi Osaka’s face masks, bearing the names of victims of police brutality and racism, Raven Saunders’ “X” symbol of solidarity with the oppressed, and many artistic depictions of rainbow symbolizing equality.

We admired the calligraphy of a Japanese gymnast Kohei Uchimura, the music of American

Clementine Stoney Maconachie, a former Olympic swimmer, is working on a sculpture in her studio in Sydney.

FRANCIS & MARIE-FRANCE
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Hommage
au centenaire de
**CHARLES
AZNAVOUR**

KHATIA BUNIATISHVILI

RÉCITAL PIANO

9 OCTOBRE 2024, 19:30

Victoria Hall SCÈNE
CULTURELLE
DE LA VILLE
DE GENEVE

LOCATION

Maison des arts du Grütli,
Victoria Hall 1h. avant le concert

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Rugby (1928)
 Amateur painter Jean Jacoby won 2 gold medals in the early Games,
 becoming the most successful Olympic artist in history.

swimmer Nathan Adrian, and the children's books of British rower Helen Glover.

We watched the transition of the Olympic pedestal into an empowering artwork. For the first time, the Olympic medals were created using recycled electronic devices, and each medal featured a unique design inspired by the concept of "unity in diversity."

A powerful visual reminder of the values of inclusion and collaboration.

As we approach the Paris 2024 Olympics, the convergence of athleticism and artistry is poised to up the game. Olympian artists like Annabel Eyres, Clementine Stoney Maconachie, Brooklyn McDougall, Egle Uljas and Grace Latz - whose backgrounds in sports influence their artistry - are ready to gracefully fuse creativity and resilience in their artworks that build upon the foundation of Olympic greatness.

Annabel Eyres, a former rower turned paper-cutting artist, finds parallels between her athletic background and creative process. "Sports and art share a common thread of discipline and visualization," she explains. "Rowing taught me the importance of movement and rhythm, which I now translate into my artwork, capturing the essence of athletic prowess through intricate paper designs."

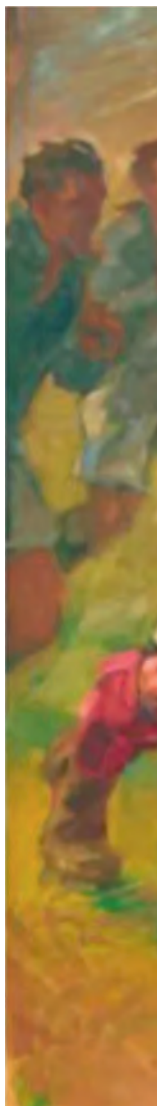
Clementine Stoney Maconachie, a former swimmer, channels her appreciation for the human body in motion into her sculptural work. "My sculptures aim to freeze moments of fluidity, mirroring the athleticism I once experienced in the water," she reflects.

Egle Uljas, a former track athlete making a comeback as a prolific pianist in Paris, shares a message for young athletes. "Pursuing both sports and the arts can be incredibly enriching. It teaches you discipline, time management, and the importance of creativity. It's about fostering a well-rounded approach to life and finding joy in different forms of expression."

Grace Latz, a former rower, weaves narratives of struggle and triumph into her quilts. "Rowing taught me the power of resilience and teamwork," she shares. "In my quilts, I stitch together stories that mirror the challenges and victories inherent in both sports and art."

Our return to the cradle of the modern Olympics in Paris invites us to revisit the ambitious union of art and sport envisioned by Pierre de Coubertin. Will this integration elevate sport to a higher cultural plane, or blur the lines between artistic expression and competitive achievement? I hope the answer is "both." After all, in 2024, the quilted patchwork of art and sport no longer has seams. //

* I am most grateful to The Olympic Museum and personally to Elizabeth Holtan, Anja Wodsak, Yasmin Meichtry, Stephanie Knecht, Isabelle Schupp and Angelita Teo for introducing our writing team to the beautiful universe of TOM and the Olympic Artists Programme.



Méroé : un empire sur le Nil

SOUDAN 4/4

TEXT & PHOTOS
CLAUDE MAILLARD

Inscrit sur la liste du patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO depuis 2003, le site archéologique de l'île de Méroé, paysage semi-désertique entre le Nil et la rivière Atbara, était le cœur du royaume de Koush composé de la cité royale des rois koushites, Méroé, ainsi que des sites religieux tout proches de Naga et de Musawwarat es-Sufra.

La nuit a été courte et c'est sous un ciel encore tout étoilé que nous quittons notre campement installé au pied d'une dune, à proximité de Méroé. Après avoir pu profiter de la féerie des couleurs sur les pyramides au soleil couchant (voir le *newSpecial* précédent), il était inconcevable de ne pas être présents sur le site au lever du jour. Seuls dans l'immensité du désert, nous savourons ce délicieux moment tout à fait exceptionnel lorsque les lumières du matin viennent illuminer ce lieu magique comme sorti de nulle part.

Enigmatique et majestueuse, l'antique civilisation de Méroé, héritière culturelle de l'Égypte pharaonique, est un exemple unique de multiculturalisme accompli. Capitale de la dernière phase du royaume de Koush du IV^e siècle av. J.-C. au IV^e siècle de notre ère, Méroé connaît son âge d'or au I^{er} siècle av. J.-C. Située au carrefour des principales routes commerciales, la ville était implantée au milieu d'un vaste territoire fait de prairies vallonnées et de champs fertiles. A son apogée, Méroé était un grand centre de fonte du fer, d'agriculture et de commerce. L'industrie du fer contribua largement à sa richesse car ses ferronniers étaient considérés comme des orfèvres exceptionnels et les outils et armes qu'ils produisaient étaient très recherchés. Grâce à l'éloignement de Méroé, les Koushites sont parvenus à préserver leur indépendance et ont pu laisser libre cours à leur pratique toute personnelle de la culture et de la religion égyptiennes.

MÉROÉ, PLUS DE 200 PYRAMIDES

Méroé fut conquise par les Aksoumites aux alentours de l'an 330 de notre ère. Cette date marque la mort de la langue écrite et parlée méroïtique. Une surexploitation des terres agricoles entraî-

nant la désertification et la déforestation massive provoquée par l'industrie du fer qui nécessitait d'énormes quantités de bois conduisirent au déclin rapide de Méroé. La ville fut finalement abandonnée au V^e siècle de notre ère et se transforma en un lieu fait de mystère et de légende. Aujourd'hui, Méroé est le site archéologique le plus étendu de la République du Soudan, et les fouilles n'ont dévoilé qu'une infime partie de ses richesses. De nombreux sanctuaires ont été dégagés et environ 200 pyramides ont été recensées. Construites au sommet de deux petites collines elles étaient encore quasi-intactes en 1834. Cette année-là, Giuseppe Ferlini, un aventurier italien, prend connaissance d'un trésor qui serait enfoui dans la sépulture de la reine Amanishakhéto. Pour pouvoir le récupérer, il ordonne le démantèlement de sa pyramide et, espérant en trouver davantage, endommage sérieusement les autres, cette fois-ci sans succès. Les trois sites distincts de Méroé, Naga et Musawwarat es-Sufra constituent l'île de Méroé, appelée ainsi car la contrée semble encerclée par les eaux avoisinantes. Ils abritent les vestiges les mieux préservés du royaume koushite, dans une large gamme de formes architecturales incluant des pyramides, temples et palais, témoignant de la richesse, de la puissance et de la splendeur de l'ancien royaume de Koush.

NAGA, LES PLUS VASTES RUINES AU SOUDAN

Avant la création de Khartoum, Shendi était une cité prospère grâce à son marché d'esclaves. Nous y déjeunerons avant de continuer notre route à travers la vallée d'Awatib en direction de Naga. La chaleur est étouffante et avant de rejoindre nos 4x4, nous allons trouver un peu de fraîcheur dans la maisonnette d'une famille qui confectionne des étoffes de laine. Hospitalité oblige, nous n'échapperons pas au rituel du thé et apprécierons ces bons moments partagés en toute convivialité.

La route qui mène à Naga et à Musawwarat es-Sufra a fait place à une piste sablonneuse qui slalome au travers d'épineux. Naga était une étape sur le chemin de l'Orient et avait

Site majestueux et magique, Musawwarat es-Sufra date du III^e siècle av. J.-C.



Ancienne capitale du royaume de Koush, Méroé a connu son âge d'or au I^{er} siècle av. J.-C.

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Altaï Travel



donc une importance stratégique. A une cinquantaine de kilomètres du Nil, la ville s'est développée autour d'un puits, toujours exploité par les nomades actuels. La ville antique, située à environ 170km au nord-est de Khartoum, a été l'un des centres du royaume de Méroé qui a servi de pont entre le monde méditerranéen et l'Afrique. Les ruines d'une agglomération urbaine et de plusieurs lieux de sépultures ont été mises au jour, ainsi que celles de plusieurs temples qui font de Naga l'un des plus grands sites de ruines du Soudan. Parmi les temples, les deux plus importants et encore bien conservés sont ceux d'Apédémak - d'inspiration égyptienne et également connu comme Temple du lion -, et d'Amon. Tout près, le Kiosque Romain est un petit temple aux fortes influences Hellenistiques qui était probablement consacré au culte d'Hathor, déesse de l'amour, de la beauté, de la musique, de la maternité et de la joie.

Nuit tombante, nous devons planter le bivouac au plus vite ; la découverte du site de Musawwarat es-Sufra se fera le lendemain. Au réveil, une ribambelle d'enfants, curieux et intrigués par notre présence, sont regroupés près de nos tentes. Ils viennent d'un village voisin, isolé en plein désert, qui vit essentiellement de l'élevage de chèvres.

SUR LA ROUTE DE KHARTOUM

Site mystérieux et magique, Musawwarat es-Sufra est édifié dans une grande plaine de sable fermée par un cirque rocheux. C'est un immense complexe de temples méroïtiques datant du III^e siècle av. J.-C. dont le Grand Enclos en est la structure principale. Couvrant une surface de 45000m², il se compose d'un dédale de cours reliées par des passages, des murs bas, une vingtaine de colonnes, des rampes d'accès, deux hafirs - bassins de captage d'eau - et trois temples. Résidence royale, les noces sacrées du roi et de la reine y étaient célébrées. A proximité, le temple dédié à Apédémak - dieu guerrier adoré en Nubie - se singularise par ses bas-reliefs représentant une procession d'éléphants. Les nombreuses représentations de pachydermes et la proximité d'un point d'eau font penser à la possible présence d'un centre sacré où l'on élevait les éléphants, aujourd'hui disparus de cette région.

Retour sur la grande route qui mène à Khartoum. La circulation y est anarchique, voire dangereuse. Nous devons slalomer entre les camions qui roulent à vive allure et les profonds nids de poule qui peuvent à tout moment endommager nos véhicules. Nos chauffeurs Moez et Walid font preuve de la plus grande dextéri-

té. Avant de rejoindre la capitale située à une cinquantaine de kilomètres, une ultime excursion sur le Nil est programmée. A l'approche du fleuve la végétation se fait plus luxuriante. Cultures de légumes, champs de maïs, rizières, palmeraies entourent de petits villages faits de maisonnettes en briques de terre. Très prisée durant le week-end par les habitants de Khartoum, la 6^e cataracte du Nil a ses abords aménagés pour pouvoir s'y délasser. A l'extrémité d'un magnifique canyon en granit, un coquet jardin ombragé y est idéalement installé pour savourer une pause-déjeuner. Une jetée permet également aux canots d'accoster pour emmener les aventuriers goûter aux joies de la navigation au milieu des turbulences provoquées par les formations rocheuses qui entravent le courant.

AU CONFLUENT DU NIL BLANC ET DU NIL BLEU

Capitale de la République du Soudan, Khartoum est située là où « s'embrassent » le Nil Blanc - venant du Soudan du Sud et le Nil Bleu - venant d'Éthiopie - pour ne faire plus qu'un. Fondée par les Égyptiens en 1823, la ville elle-même compte 2,7 millions d'habitants mais, avec les districts environnants d'Omdourman et Bahri, elle constitue une agglomération trois fois plus peuplée.

Le musée archéologique, avec ses superbes collections, permet de se faire une idée des principales étapes de la civilisation du Soudan. En plus, il aide à s'imaginer le titanesque travail fourni, avec l'appui de l'Unesco, pour sauver les antiquités nubiennes des inondations provoquées par le barrage d'Assouan.

Notre périple touche à sa fin et c'est au souk d'Omdourman que nous allons pouvoir nous envelopper une dernière fois de la ferveur qui anime le Soudan. Avec ses rues bordées de bazars, ses boutiques aux achalandages divers et son animation sans pareille, il est considéré comme le plus grand souk du pays.

Si la partie égyptienne de notre expédition a été relativement facile à organiser, il n'en a pas été de même pour le Soudan. Mais, grâce à notre guide soudanais Moez, nous avons pu obtenir les autorisations nécessaires et mettre en place toute la logistique indispensable à cette aventure hors du commun. Il n'existe aucune infrastructure consacrée au tourisme dans le pays et malheureusement les méfaits occasionnés par le conflit militaire ne vont pas faire progresser le Soudan qui n'est pas simplement un pays à visiter mais également un pays à vivre! //

The “blue hour”

NOORDWIJK AAN ZEE IN APRIL OF 2024 WAS MESMERIZING

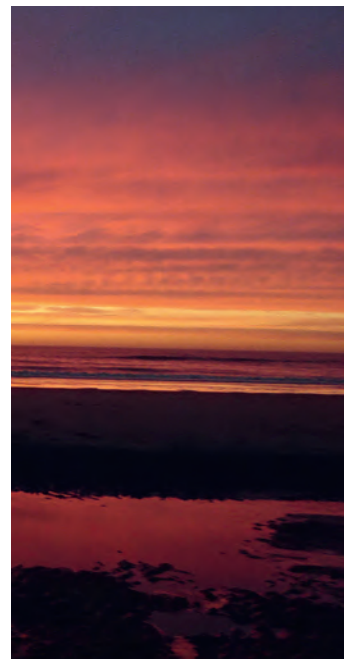
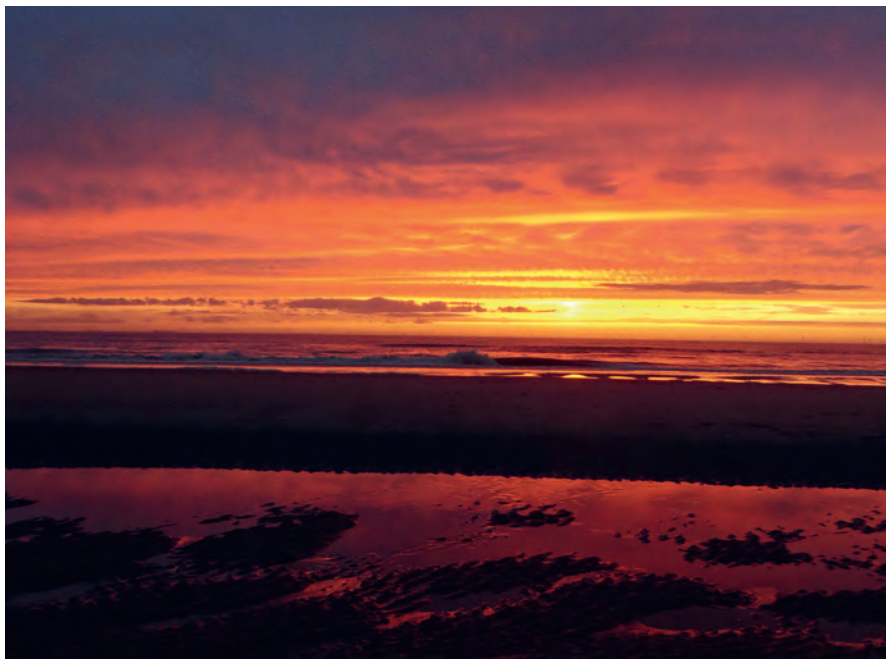
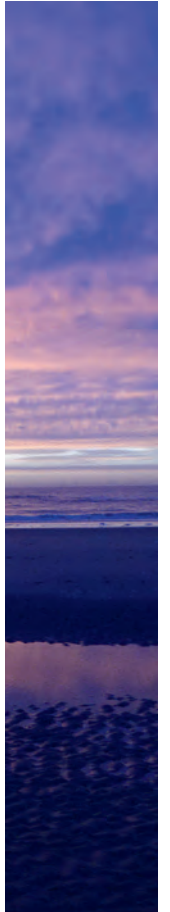
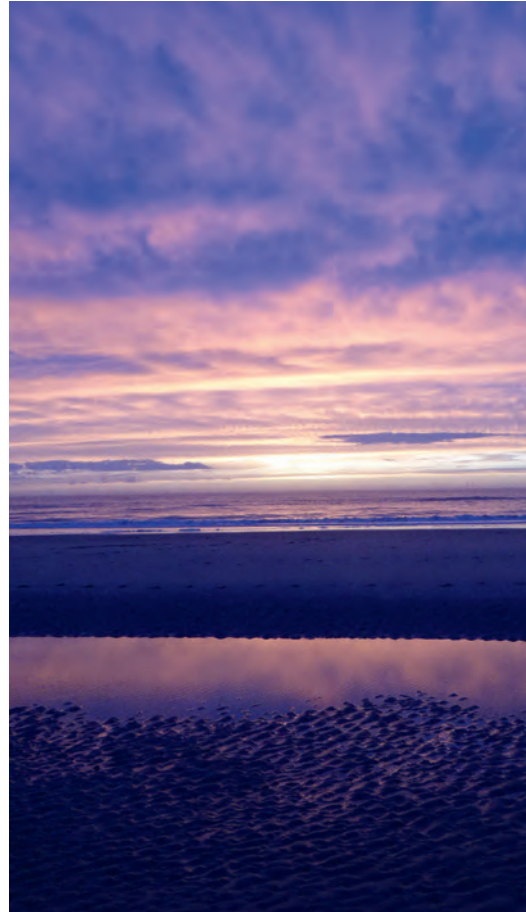


TEXT & PHOTOS
ALFRED DE ZAYAS, UN SOCIETY OF WRITERS

Sometimes around dawn or sunset there is a lot of blue in the sky. Our eyes (actually our brains) correct this, so that we often do not consciously perceive the intense blue colour and instead see primarily orange with a distinct blueish tint.

Artists and photographers value the quality of the soft light and the tranquil mood it sets, with the blue colour spectrum most prominent when the sun is between 4° and 8° below the horizon. By clear skies, the blue hour is quite a spectacle, with the indirect sunlight tinting the sky yellow, orange, red and blue. This effect is caused by the relative diffusibility of shorter wavelengths (blue rays) versus the longer wavelengths (redder rays) of visible light. The blue hour can last from 20 to 90 minutes, right after sunset or right before sunrise. The time of year, location and air quality all influence on the exact time and duration.

The Dutch call this phenomenon the “*het blauwe uurtje*” or “the blue hour”. The colour temperature of the light is then very low. Many compact cameras have a mode for photographing sunsets and such, and then adjustments are made by the camera. That clearly did not happen here. //



Blue sunset over the Noordwijk beach
on 7 April 2024 at 20:40.

Le col de l'Albula

COLS ROUTIERS DE SUISSE (12)

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Office
du tourisme



Musée
d'Albula



Parc Ela



Forteresse
Albula



Albula
Hospiz



Le col de l'Albula, situé à 2315 mètres d'altitude, forme le centre géographique du canton des Grisons. Il se trouve en parallèle à celui du Julier, mais contrairement à ce dernier, il est fermé entre décembre et mai, selon les conditions météorologiques.

En fait, en hiver la partie de la route entre Preda et Bergün se transforme en piste de luge très populaire! La piste passe au-dessous des viaducs du chemin de fer, sur lesquels des trains spéciaux transportent les enthousiastes de Bergün à Preda, pour commencer la descente. Ouverte également le soir, la plus longue piste de luge d'Europe offre 6 kilomètres de plaisir en descente régulière de 400 mètres de dénivelé. Une expérience inoubliable si vous aimez faire la luge!

Déjà utilisé aux temps préhistoriques, le col de l'Albula fut fréquenté à l'époque romaine par des marchands qui échangeaient du vin et du blé du sud contre du fromage et du miel du nord. Ce commerce a continué au Moyen Âge quand les évêques de Coire entretenaient et contrôlaient la route du col moyennant des taxes prélevés sur les muletiers. La route était très fréquentée et pour améliorer l'accès à Bergün, en 1695 un tunnel fut creusé dans les gorges de l'Albula avec de la poudre à canon, une première! Il fallut attendre 1864 pour que la route soit élargie à 4,20 mètres. À cette époque, un voyage en été de Coire à St. Moritz prenait 14 heures, ce qui était quand-même moins long que la route par le col du Julier. Un service postal était garanti même en hiver.

Avec l'ouverture du chemin de fer de l'Albula en 1903, la route du col perdit de l'importance, comme le transport était plus rapide et plus confortable en train. Le chemin de fer ne monte pas jusqu'au col mais entre dans un tunnel à 1800 mètres d'altitude. Ce tunnel long de 5865 mètres est le plus haut tunnel des Alpes d'une telle longueur. Inscrit au patrimoine mondial de l'UNESCO depuis juillet 2008, avec le chemin de fer de la Bernina, le tracé ferroviaire de 62 kilomètres entre Thusis et St. Moritz impressionne par sa traversée de la vallée d'Albula d'une beauté sauvage, passant au-dessus des gorges et au-milieu des forêts. Le chemin de fer brave un dénivelé de plus de 1000 mètres, sans roue dentée grâce aux viaducs et

aux tunnels en spirale entre Bergün et Preda. La plus spectaculaire des œuvres d'art est le viaduc Landwasser, entre Schmitten et Filisur, probablement le pont le plus photographié de Suisse. Ce viaduc, soutenu par 5 piliers en brique, mesure 142 mètres de long et 65 mètres de haut et mène la voie ferrée dans une courbe serrée au-dessus de la vallée sauvage de Landwasser et directement dans un tunnel. Quand on est dans le train, ça donne une sensation spectaculaire.

Au-dessous du viaduc, on trouve une buvette pendant la belle saison, d'où on a une belle vue sur l'ensemble. Depuis la gare de Filisur, un petit train routier vous y amène confortablement en 30 minutes. Nous y arrivons après avoir emprunté en voiture la route du col à partir de Tiefencastel, à 860 mètres d'altitude. La route monte en suivant la rivière l'Albula, qui prend sa source au col et se jette dans le Rhin près de Fürstenau, après avoir parcouru un peu plus de 40 kilomètres et une descente de 1385 mètres. Depuis le parking de Landwasser, à environ 8 kilomètres de Tiefencastel, nous suivons pendant une quinzaine de minutes le chemin pédestre qui longe la rivière Landwasser, un affluent de l'Albula. Si vous aimez les pierres, vous en trouvez dans plusieurs couleurs, merveilleusement polies par les eaux.

Au pied du célèbre viaduc du chemin de fer, nous faisons une halte pour admirer plusieurs trains qui passent au-dessus de nos têtes. Nul besoin d'attendre très longtemps avant qu'un train passe dans une direction ou dans l'autre, de longs et de courts trains, y compris des wagons transportant des marchandises. Plusieurs fois par jour passent les fameux Glacier et Bernina Express avec leurs élégants wagons rouges équipés des larges fenêtres.

Contents de cette expérience, nous rejoignons la voiture pour continuer en direction de Filisur et Bergün. C'est à Bergün que la route restera fermée pendant les mois hivernaux. À Bergün se trouve aussi le musée du chemin de fer de l'Albula, qui retrace l'histoire de cette ligne ferroviaire et montre des objets d'époque. Des amateurs de train trouveront leur bonheur en prenant place derrière le simulateur de conduite à bord de la mythique locomotive nommée Crocodile.



Nous continuons vers Preda et montons encore. A 1917 mètres, nous nous arrêtons pour contempler le magnifique lac de Palpuogna, qui se trouve dans le parc Ela, le plus grand parc naturel de Suisse. En juin 2007, le lac a été élu le plus bel endroit de Suisse par les spectateurs de la télévision suisse. Et que l'endroit est beau, c'est incontestable! Les mélèzes qui entourent le lac créent une ambiance très pittoresque, on dirait presque canadienne. Malheureusement, la baignade y est interdite, car le lac fonctionne aussi comme lac de barrage. Mais une balade autour du lac donne l'occasion de profiter pleinement de la tranquillité et de la beauté des lieux, et des barbecues invitent à faire un feu et passer un bon moment en contemplant les eaux turquoises. Du bois pour le feu est disponible sur place!

De retour sur la route, nous arrivons au col quelques virages et 400 mètres de montée plus loin. Là nous attend un autre lac, le lac d'Albula, pas aussi féérique. Le ruisseau Ova d'Alvra est le principal affluent de ce lac, et après avoir traversé le lac, il continue sa descente vers l'Engadine, où il joint la rivière Inn et plus tard la mer noire. Du côté nord du col, les ruisseaux rejoignent la rivière Albula, pour finir dans le Rhin et donc, bien des kilomètres plus loin, dans la mer du nord. Le paysage du col est austère, il y a du vent, et malgré un bon soleil, il fait froid. Il y a néanmoins des voitures cabriolets qui passent à grande vitesse pour montrer leur puissance, la route est populaire chez les amateurs de vitesse et des virages étroites. On a vu

des Ferrari, Lamborghini et des Porsche filer à vive allure dans les deux directions.

Au col se trouve aussi le fort d'Albula, une installation militaire qui date de la deuxième guerre mondiale, il s'agit de l'une de la quarantaine de fortifications du canton des Grisons qui devraient arrêter l'avance des troupes ennemis dans l'éventualité d'une invasion. Heureusement, on n'a jamais dû les utiliser, et maintenant il est possible de faire des visites guidées dans ces lieux bien cachés dans le paysage rocheux.

Un bâtiment plus paisible est l'hospice du col, construit en 1871 et entièrement rénové il y a quelques années. L'hospice, qui est ouvert pendant la période de l'ouverture de la route, offre huit chambres d'hôtel et un agréable restaurant avec une grande terrasse quand la météo le permet. En face de l'hospice part l'Albula trail, un trail VTT qui descend sur 8.6 kilomètres et 666 mètres de dénivelé vers la Punt-Chamues-ch. Nous continuons en voiture vers la même destination, où notre route rejoint la route principale entre Zuoz et St. Moritz. Depuis là, d'autres cols sont à découvrir: cette région de la Suisse est un paradis pour les amateurs de cols: à proximité se trouvent le col de la Bernina¹, le col du Julier², et le col de Maloja³, qui commencent tous dans la magnifique vallée de la Haute-Engadine. //

1 Voir l'article dans le New Special du mai 2024

2 Voir l'article dans le New Special du novembre 2023

3 Voir l'article dans le NewSpecial du mars 2024

The Battle of Loos, Searching for the Fallen

A PERSONAL JOURNEY TO TRY TO RECONSTRUCT HOW A SOLDIER OF THE GREAT WAR MAY HAVE MET HIS DEATH IN THE INTENSE FIGHTING OF THE BATTLE OF LOOS, IN NORTHERN FRANCE IN SEPTEMBER 1915

During the bleak September of 2020, to try to resolve a long-standing family mystery, I went in search of the likely last resting place of my great grandfather.

Private Alfred Crampton, service number L/7799, had signed up to do his part in the Great War in December 1914 at the age of 30, leaving behind his wife Flora and six children in Islington, London to join the 3rd Middlesex regiment (the Duke of Cambridge's Own) as a foot soldier.

Alfred would complete basic training outside the rural English town of Salisbury, before enshipping for Northern France and would be dead, missing in action, in less than a year. A telegram would eventually bring this tragic news back to Essex Rd, Islington and his name would end up alongside the other fallen with no known resting place in the small Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery of the Loos Memorial near the town of Lens.

Beyond the fact that he went missing in action and the name of the Battle of Loos in which he was involved, the family never knew much more about his fate, and it was this that I hoped to clarify, ultimately to identify where his remains are likely to lie. The September trip hadn't happened on a whim but was the end of a period of research which I hoped would shed light on how he met his end.

I worked top down, understanding the Battle of Loos and how it was the biggest British attack of 1915 and the first time that poison gas was used. The offensive was intended to relieve pressure on other sectors of the front line which at this date was already the labyrinth of trenches, dugouts and machine gun nests which typified World War 1. The gas was problematic and at the mercy of the wind, and in one incident during the Battle of Loos it blew back over the British army and affected the men there rather than the enemy.

Trench maps from the time are readily available online and it's fascinating to plot these across modern maps and visualise how the lines snaked across the landscape. Battalion diaries are also preserved in the British National Archive, and these are invariably digitised copies of the original handwritten books, scrawled in pencil and showing visible damage from water, mud or worse. For a small fee a PDF file extract can be downloaded, and these offer a wealth of information by giving a day-to-day account of troop movement and activities.

Based then on the date that Alfred Crampton went missing, I could begin to piece together the action in which he was involved, the orders that his company were following, and with the trench maps, imagine the physical route he would have taken towards his objective.

His unit had come into the Loos sector on 27th September 1915, they had marched overland and arrived at 1pm and then waited until 2am before they were ordered forward to the British front line. They proceeded along a trench known as Central Boyau (trenches were named for ease of navigation) and were positioned opposite a notorious enemy strong point called the Hohenzollern Redoubt.

This part of France is pancake flat, but it was also an area of coal mining, and the large slag heaps of excavated spoil (French terril) became strategic targets whose elevation could control the surrounding area. Behind the fortified Redoubt was one of these, a slag heap called "The Dump" and the orders were to support another army unit as they attempted to take this vantage point, but that meant attacking and proceeding through the Hohenzollern Redoubt.

An artillery bombardment at 09:30 preceded the attack and the offensive initially went well, although the troops had to cross the open no-man's land under machine gun fire before reaching the enemy trenches and engaging in hand-to-hand combat in the confined spaces. Fierce

TEXT KEVIN CRAMPTON, WHO
PHOTO STEVE CYMRO - SHUTTERSTOCK



Dud Corner Cemetery Loos view through the memorial to the main stone cross.

fighting meant that supplies of ammunition ran low during the day and the attackers could not consolidate and hold the land they had gained necessitating a retreat in which they were “*enfiladed on both sides by machine gun fire*” as they withdrew to the German front line trench. The battalion diary records the names of the officers who were lost but not the common foot soldiers (a standard practice).

On the second day (29th September 1915), a counterattack pushed the soldiers out of the area entirely and the trench lines were ultimately restored to what they had been at the start of the engagement. On the same day the battalion of which my great grandfather had been a part was pulled out of the front line and back to reserve areas to recuperate. All I knew for certain is that he went into those two days of fighting but was not present at roll call 48 hours later.

Walking the landscape today with the aid of the old trench maps is sobering and melancholy. It is an eerily sombre, wide, open flat farmland but still discoloured here and there by patches of lighter earth where subterranean bombs were detonated brining powdered chalk to the surface. Rusted artillery shells are often found beside the footpaths, the French farmers call this the Iron Harvest (French *récolte de fer*)

as the ground is still giving up artillery over a hundred years later as well as occasional human remains.

I could trace therefore the path across this open French farmland from the old British trench to the Hohenzollern Redoubt, land that my great grandfather must have crossed as he first went over the top. The Redoubt is now a low ridge of earth encompassing waste land but still giving the impression of how formidable a fortification this would have been.

If Alfred Crampton had survived the advance across no-man’s land, then it is in the trenches of this area that he would have engaged in brutal close fighting with orders to clear and hold the enemy position. He would then have died here either during the nightmare day of combat or the retreat under machine gun fire.

This small corner of Northeast France was therefore the certain resting place of his final remains. It was a complex network of trenches in 1915 and must still hold the bodies of many of the fallen given the intensity of combat in the area.

By coincidence, in 2005 a Canadian film company making a documentary called “*Finding the Fallen*” had commissioned archaeological digs at the site and the excavation pits opened did find remains with British and German clothing, weapons and artefacts. Dating is problematic as the large number of mines detonated in the area often threw up buried material or reburied it, confusing the stratification. Identification of human remains is also problematic, identity disks for British troops were red/brown vulcanised asbestos but were supposed to be removed and brought back as proof of a fallen comrade, so unless remains are found with personal effects, bones are reburied as another grave marked “*A Solider of the Great War*”.

It was sobering to walk that ground that is the likely resting place of so many undiscovered fallen. I took some photos of the area at the end of my trip to bring back to show the family and have since taken my Dad back to literally walk through the fruits of the research and explain our best guess as to how his Grandfather gave his life for his country in this quiet corner of France in 1915. //

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Exploring Georgia

GOD'S BACK GARDEN

Located in the south of the Caucasus Mountains lies Georgia, God's back garden. The nickname "God's back garden" comes from an old folklore. When God was distributing the land to different countries, the Georgians arrived late because of drinking and hangover, and there was no land left. When God asked why they were drinking, the Georgians told God that they were toasting for God, and God was so glad that he gave Georgians his own land.

In Georgia, the traces of human presence dated as far back as 100,000 years to the Stone Ages. Locating at the crossroads of Asia and Europe, Georgia's cultural tapestry has been woven with influences from Greek, Persian, Roman, Christian and Islamic. Despite this diverse heritage, Georgia declared independence in 1991, marking a new chapter in its storied history. With its rich history, and stunning landscape, the country offers a mixed of experiences for travelers seeking cultural immersion, and breathtaking landscapes.

My journey through Georgia began in its dynamic capital, Tbilisi. The name itself, meaning "warm" in Georgian, dated back to the ancient legend, that King Vakhtang Gorgasali of Kingdom of Iberia found this place with a lot of hot sulfurous waters in a hunting in 4th century. Hot springs that have drawn visitors for centuries, including Dumas and Alexander Pushkin.

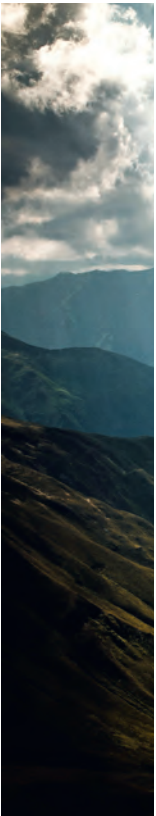
One of the city's most iconic landmarks is the Narikala Fortress, a symbol of Tbilisi's ancient past. The fortress offers panoramic views of the cityscape, particularly enchanting during the golden hues of sunset.

No visit to Georgia is complete without indulging in its rich culinary heritage. Renowned as the birthplace of wine, with a tradition dating back 8,000 years. Using qvevri, clay jars buried underground, the method is recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage. This ancient technique imparts a distinct flavor profile to Georgian wines, making each sip a journey through time and tradition. And it's not just about the wine - Georgian cuisine, with its aromatic spices and hearty dishes, is also one of the most popular dishes of the world.

Venturing beyond Tbilisi, I also joined on a scenic tour along the Georgian Military Highway, one of the most scenic mountain route of the world. The highway offers access to some of Georgia's most breathtaking destinations such as Gudauri, Ananuri, and the Gergeti Trinity Church. For skiing enthusiasts, the Gudauri ski resort near the Russian border is a must-visit destination. Whether you're carving through fresh powder or simply taking in the tranquil beauty of the Caucasus Mountains, Gudauri offers an unforgettable experience. Watching the sunset over snow covered mountains, golden silhouette of the peaks, is truly breathtaking.

My three days visit in Georgia was just a testament to the country's timeless charm. Though time constraints prevented me from visiting the other sites, from the culture relics, the traditional cuisine, to the natural landscape, Georgia left me with cherished memories. //

Atsunta Pass,
Georgia.



TEXT LING JIANG, WHO
PHOTO DOMINIK JIROVSKÝ - UNSPLASH

The Oasis of Well-Being L'oasis du Bien-Être

POÈME – POEM



TEXT ARLETTE OSSERE-OKOPOUE,
WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
PHOTO ORIENTO – UNSPLASH

Le poème intitulé « L'Oasis du Bien-Être » dépeint une expérience intérieure de tranquillité, incarnée par un simple moment de réconfort personnel symbolisé par une tasse de thé.

Il met en lumière la capacité de l'être humain à découvrir la paix intérieure même dans les moments les plus difficiles, illustrant ainsi la puissance de l'esprit humain à trouver du réconfort en lui-même à travers de petits moments de bonheur.

Dans la lueur tamisée
de ma tasse de thé du soir,
Un rayon bienveillant glisse
comme un murmure,
M'invitant à plonger
dans un océan intérieur,
Où les vagues du temps
dansent en harmonie.

Je me laisse porter
par cette eau parfumée,
Où chaque goutte révèle
un fragment de vérité,
Et mon âme, telle une fleur
à l'aube, s'épanouit,
Dans cet univers où seul règne
l'authenticité.

Ce rayon de bien-être
caresse mon être,
Mes pensées s'envolent,
légères comme des plumes,
Dans ce cocon de quiétude
où le tumulte s'efface,
Je respire, enfin libre,
dans cet instant suspendu.

Les soucis s'évanouissent,
les tensions se dissipent,
Dans ce sanctuaire où le silence
devient mélodie,
Je me laisse bercer par la douceur
de l'instant présent,
Savourant chaque effluve,
chaque sensation.

Rayon de bienveillance,
étoile dans la nuit,
Guide précieux sur le chemin
de l'existence,
Tu dances dans les rires,
chantes dans les murmures,
Apaisant les tourments
d'un simple souffle, d'une caresse.

Phare de douceur,
tu m'orientes avec tendresse,
Vers un havre où la paix se dévoile,
intouchée,
Un refuge au creux des tempêtes,
où mon cœur respire,
Trouvant équilibre et force
face à l'adversité.

Tel une oasis dans le désert
des jours troublés,
Tu m'offres l'abri, la chaleur,
la clarté,
Même au cœur des orages
les plus violents,
L'espoir demeure, lumière
dans l'obscurité.

Un rayon qui apaise,
qui illumine l'horizon,
Où les peines s'effacent,
où les ombres s'évanouissent,
Pour laisser place à ce précieux
instant de bonheur.

//

« L'oasis du bien-être »
Une tasse de thé.



“The Oasis of Well-Being”
A cup of tea.

The poem titled “The Oasis of Well-Being” depicts an inner experience of tranquility, embodied by a simple moment of personal comfort symbolized by a cup of tea.

It highlights the human ability to discover inner peace even in the most challenging moments, thus illustrating the power of the human spirit to find solace within oneself through small moments of happiness.

In the soft glow of
my evening cup of tea,
A benevolent beam glides
like a whisper,
Inviting me to dive into
an inner ocean,
Where the waves of time dance
in harmony.

I let myself be carried by
this fragrant water,
Where each drop reveals
a fragment of truth,
And my soul, like a flower at dawn,
blossoms,
In this universe where only
authenticity reigns.

This ray of well-being caresses my being,
My thoughts soar, light as feathers,
In this cocoon of tranquility
where tumult fades,
I breathe, finally free,
in this suspended moment.

Worries vanish, tensions dissipate,
In this sanctuary where silence
becomes melody,
I let myself be rocked by the sweetness
of the present moment,
Savoring every fragrance,
every sensation.

Ray of kindness, star in the night,
Precious guide on the path of existence,
You dance in laughter, sing in whispers,
Soothing the torments
with a simple breath, a caress.

Beacon of gentleness,
you guide me tenderly,
Towards a haven where peace
unveils, untouched,
A refuge in the midst of storms,
where my heart breathes,
Finding balance and strength
in adversity.

Like an oasis in the desert
of troubled days,
You offer me shelter,
warmth, clarity,
Even in the heart of the most
violent storms,
Hope remains, a light
in the darkness.

A ray that soothes,
that illuminates the horizon,
Where sorrows fade,
where shadows vanish,
To make way for this precious
moment of happiness.

//

Rédacteur en chef
Editor-in-Chief
 Garry Aslanyan, WHO

Comité de rédaction
Editorial Committee
 Marko Stanovic, UNCTAD
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 Phillippa Biggs, ITU
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 Eric Carlson, ILO
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Régie publicitaire
Advertising agency
 BuxumLunic SA
 +41 79 560 48 28
 v.mani@buxumlunic.ch

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Design
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Adressez vos commentaires à:
 Garry Aslanyan - newSpecial
 OMS, 20 av. Appia
 CH-1202 Genève
 Suisse
 info@newspecial.org

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Send your thoughts to:
 Garry Aslanyan - newSpecial
 WHO, 20, av Appia
 CH-1202 Geneva
 Switzerland
 info@newspecial.org

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