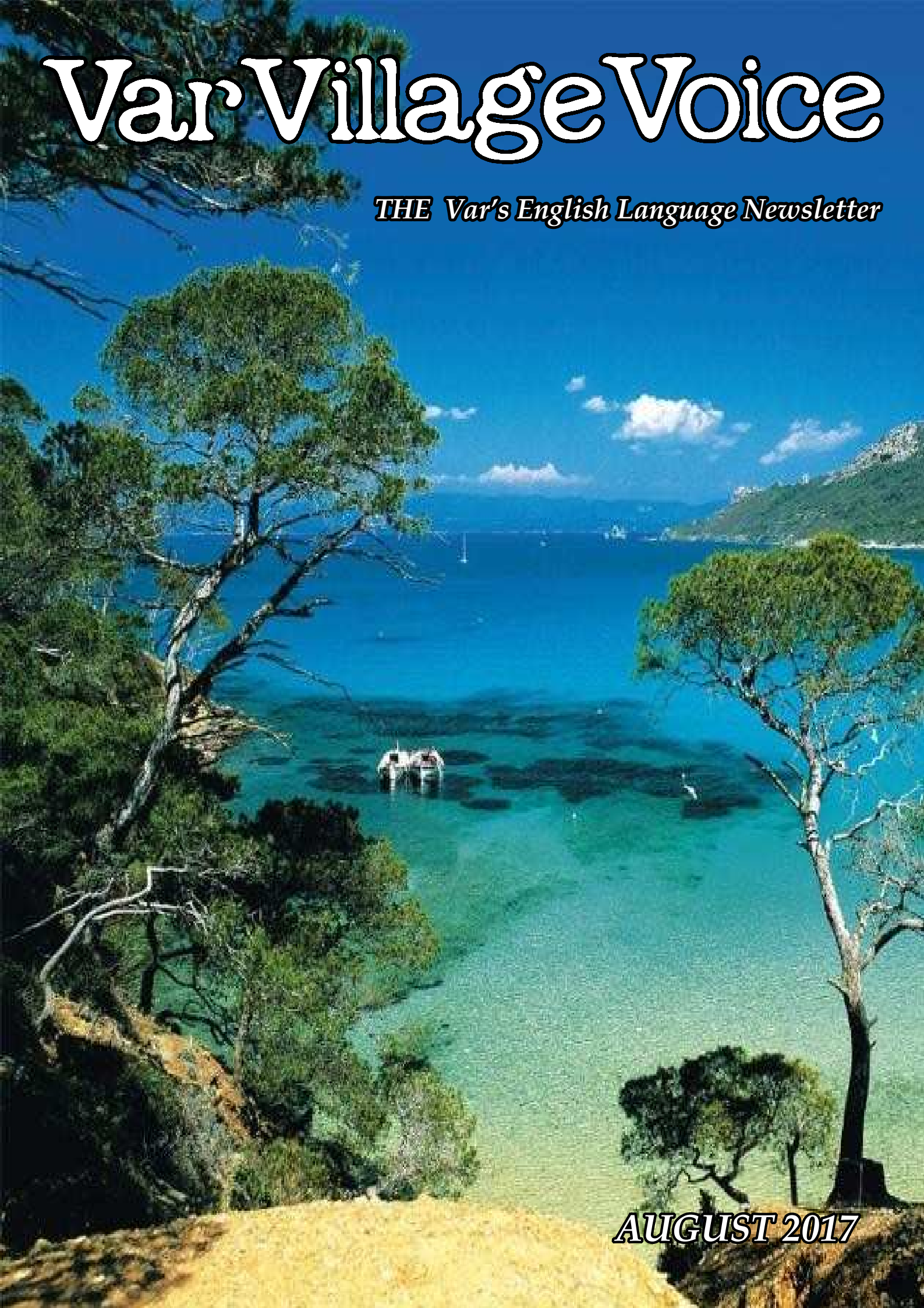


Var Village Voice

THE Var's English Language Newsletter



AUGUST 2017



MUSIQUE CORDIALE, PAYS DE FAYENCE – 1 – 12 AUGUST

Tuesday 1 August – Concert du Midi – Free. Seillans, Chapelle N.D. de L'Ormeau – 12h15

19h00 – Concert Musique de Chambre, Mozart, Schumann – Seillans, Eglise St. Leger

Wednesday 2 August – Concert Orchestre, Vive la France – Ravel, Berlioz, Faure – Bargemon, Eglise St. Etienne – 19h00

Thursday 3 August – Concert du Midi – Free – St.Paul en Foret, Eglise St. Paul – 12h15

19h00 – Concert les Cordes sublimes de l'Académie,

Friday 4 August – Concert du Midi Free – Seillans Chapelle N.D. de l'Ormeau – 12h15

19h00 – Concert Orchestre et Académie – Vaughan Williams, Wagner, Prokofiev – Seillans, Eglise St. Leger

Saturday 5 August – Concert en Palin Air – Seillans, Place du Valat – 21h

Sunday 6 August – Concert Baroque – Bach, Haendel – Claviers, Eglise St. Sylvestre – 19h00

Monday 7 August – Concert du Midi, Free – Callkian, Chapelle des Penitents – 12h15

Tuesday 8 August – Concert du Midi Free – Montauroux, Chapelle St. barthelemy 12h15

21h00 – La Magie de l'Opera – Fayence, Theatre de Verduze,

Wednesday 9 August – Diner Musical – Seillans, Restaurant La Gloire de Mon Père, 20h00 – €60 only on Res.

Thursday 10 August – Les Vepres de Monteverdi, with choir, orchestra & soloists – Callas, elgise N.D. de l'Assomption 19h00

Friday 11 August – Concert du Midi Free, Fayence, Chapelle N.D. des Cypres, 12h15

19h00 – Concert orchestra vive la France, - Ravel. Faure, Berlioz, Seillans, Eglise St., Leger

Saturday 12 August – Les Vepres de Monteverdi, with choir, orchestra, & soloists – Fayence, Eglise St. Jean Baptiste – 19h00
Tickets €15, €25 & €30

Info@musique-cordiale.com & 07 87 46 99 27 & www.musique-cordiale.com



FESTIVAL GLORIANA – 1 – 11 AUGUST

1 August – Place Clinchard, les Arcs – Tango Amor, with Virginia Galvan – 21h

2 August – Theatre du Rocher, Cotignac – Sara Lazarus, 21h30

7 August – Château St. Roseline, Les Arcs – Les plus grands musiques de films, with Eric Courreges, Dimitis Saroglou – 19h

8 August – Château St. Roseline, Le Arcs – Salon Rossini, with Karine Deshayes & Dominique Plancade

9 August – Theatre du Rocher, Cotignac – Les Grands Melodie de Chopin & Michel Legrand with Erik Berchot – 21h30

11 August Château Bormes les Mimosas – du Classiques au Jazz with Quatuor Fantasia Mediterranee – 21h30

Info : Festivalgloriana@aol.com - <http://festivalgloriana.fr/les-festivals/festival-gloriana-programme.html>



FESTIVAL SANARY SUR MER – 1 – 26 AUGUST

Tuesday 1 – Yves Pujol - Humour - Site de l'Esplanade

Thursday 3 -Tribute Rock avec Peace and Love vs Rock - Musique - Site de l'Esplanade

Samedi 5 -Revue dansante Evasion - Cabaret - Site de l'Esplanade

Sunday 6 - Disque D'or * - 1^{er} éliminatoire - Musique - Site de l'Esplanade

Tuesday 8 - Disque D'or * - 2^{ème} éliminatoire - Musique - Site de l'Esplanade

Thursday 10 - Orchestre AD HOC - Musique - Site de l'Esplanade

Saturday 12 - Les Stentors - *Musique* - Site de l'Esplanade

Mardi 15

Finale Disque D'or * - *Musique* - Site de l'Esplanade

Thursday 17 - Christophe Millois - *Musique* - Chapelle Notre Dame de Pitié

Friday 18 - Sud Hammond septet - *Jazz* - Chapelle Notre Dame de Pitié

Saturday 19 - Collectif Fractales - Parvis de l'Eglise Saint-Nazaire à 18h et Parvis Chapelle Notre Dame de Pitié à 21h - *Classique*

Sunday 20 & Monday 21 - Jean-François Zygel - 18h - *Classique* - Eglise Saint-Nazaire

En collaboration avec le Collectif Fractales

Les portraits musicaux de Jean-François Zygel

Wednesday 23 - Bal avec Nathalie Fabre & ses Gentlemen, Feu d'artifice / parade des pointus - Kiosque à musique et port

Thursday 24 Dixie Devils - *Jazz* - Kiosque à musique

Saturday 26 - Old Dreamers Jazz Band - *Jazz* - Kiosque à musique



PIANO DANS LE CIEL - TOURTOUR

2 & 4 August

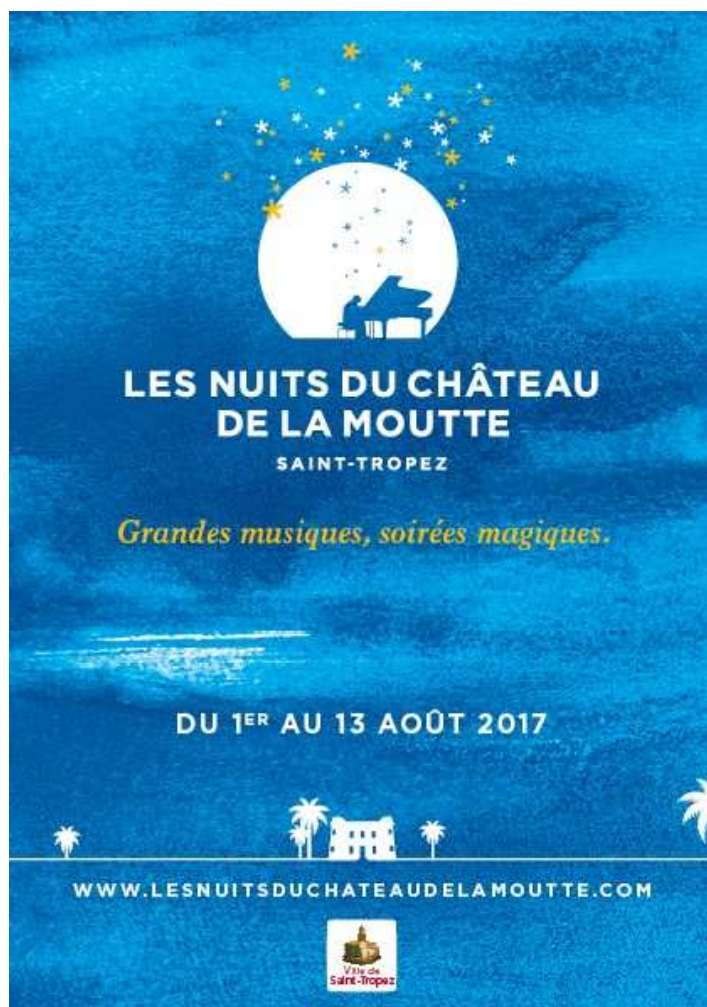
Wednesday 2 - 21 h - Eglise Saint-Denis, Haendel, Gluck, Verdi, Mozart, Bizet., Françoise VIATOUR, mezzo-soprano
Luc BAIWIR, piano

Friday 4 - 20 h - Lac de Saint-Pierre de Tourtour, CONCERT LUC BAIWIR, piano, synthétiseurs, avec projections, Françoise VIATOUR, mezzo-soprano, Lucie DEHLI, vocal

LES GRIMALDINES – GRIMAUD – Street concerts 19H Concerts Chateau 1 & 8 – August

August 1st: Flavia Coelho

August 8th: Ben l'Oncle Soul



LES NUITS DU CHATEAU DE LA MOUTTE – SAINT TROPEZ 1 -13 AUGUST

Tuesday 1 August, 21h – Soiree Romantique, with Francois-Rene Duchable,, piano, Sandrine Sutter, mezzo. Cours du Chateau

Thursday 3 August 21h – le Concert Sans Retour, Quintette a Capella, Cours du Château

Saturday 5 August 21h – 2 pianos sur l'eau, Khatia Buniatishvili – Piano, Gvantsa Buniatishvili – Piano – Plage des Canabiers

Mardi 8 August 21h - Soiree Cubaine, Richard Bona & mandekan, Cours du Chateau

Thursday 10 August 18h – La Lecon de Musique, Nicolas Dufetel, . Palmeraie du Chateau

Thursday 10 August 21h – Soiree de Prestige, Nelson Freire, piano, Cour du Château

Sunday 13 August 21h – Jazz all Stars - Jacky Terrasson - Piano Lionel Belmondo – Saxophone, Stéphane Belmondo - Bugle & trompette. Thomas Bramerie – Contrebasse, Lukmil Perez - Percussions

www.lesnuitsduchateaudelamoutte.com & 04 94 96 96 94

Office du Tourisme de Saint-Tropez* : 08 92 68 48 28

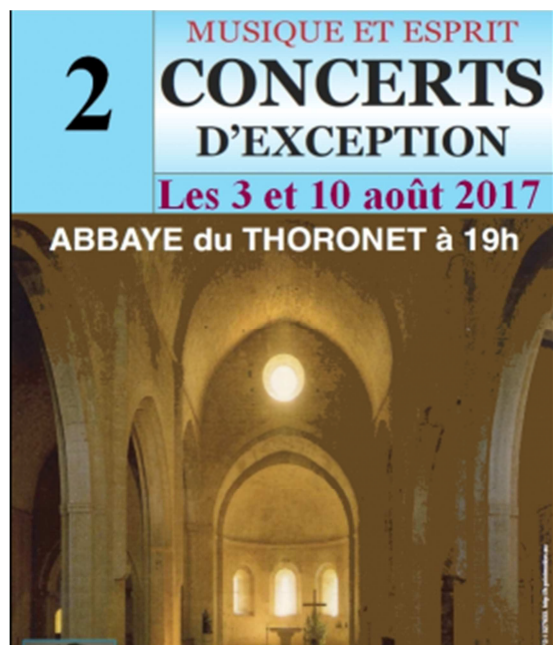
Tickets **Concerts / plein tarif** : 50€ ou 60€ selon les concerts

Concerts / tarif réduit : 25€ ou 30€ selon les concerts

AUPS – LA COLLEGIALE - CONCERT
2 AUGUST - Faure's Requiem 21h
 Tickets €10 Res : 06 85 70 01 84

CHATEAU DE MENTONE – ST ANTONIN – JAZZ APERO – FERME AUBERGE 3 August Jazz Apero
 18h30 to 20h30.

3 August, Les Dealers of Swing, 7 September, le Duo MO, and 5 October, Lizzie Gayle, guitar trio. www.chateaumentone.com



MUSIQUE & ESPRIT – CONCERTS – ABBAYE DU THORONET – 3 & 10 August

Thursday 3 August – 19h – Ensemble de St. Petersburg
 Thursday 10 August – 19h – Ensembler Energieiz, chan sacre de la renaissance, Palestrin, Victoria
 Tickets 23
 Office de tourisme du Thoronet
 04.94.60.10.94.



GUITAR FESTIVAL – MONTAUROUX 3 – 6 AUGUST FREE

Thursday 3 August - 20h30 - Mel Bouvey - Hommage à Elvis Presley - Estérêts du lac

Friday 4 August - 18h – Zanella Trio (jazz) - Chapelle St Barthélemy

20h – Gaucho de Hollywood (tango argentin)- Place du Clos

22h – Mysteretrio Quartet (jazz manouche)- Place du Clos

Saturday 5 August -18h – Vincent Inchingolo (musique irlandaise et nord américaine) - Chapelle St Barthélemy

20h – Jason and Co (Rock and Roll) - Place du Clos

22h – Michael JONES (blues celtic pop) guitariste de Goldman et des enfoirés - Place du Clos

Sunday 6 August 18h – Valérie Duchateau (guitare classique) - Chapelle St Barthélemy

20h – Dead pirates (Rock alternatif) - Place du Clos

22h – Basta Paï Paï (Rock, musique des balkans et manouche) - Place du Clos



FESTIVAL SOIREES MUSICALES DE L'ABBAYE DE LA CELLE – BRIGNOLES 2 - 6 AUGUST

2 August – Cloître de L'abbaye – Invitation au Reve, with Magali Pyka de Coster, harp, & Philippe Depetris, flute, bach, Rossini, gluck – 21h15

4 August – Cloître de L'abbaye – Voyages aux Ameriques aux racines du jazz, with saxophone quartet, Gershwin, Joplin, Duke Ellington, Bernstein, Jobim, 21h15

6 August – Cloître de L'abbaye – Musique & Polyphonies de la Corse with ensemble Ava Corsiac. 21h15

Tickets : €25. Menu & Concert €93 from 19h

Res : 04 98 05 14 14 contact@abbaye-celle.com

LES NUITS MUSICALES DE MAZAUGUES 6 – 12 AUGUST

Sunday 06 Comédien récitant avec piano – 21 heures / Théâtre de Verduze - Hugues Leclère (Piano), Francis Huster (Comédien récitant) (*La Mort de l'Aigle : Napoléon, de la Gloire à l'Exil – Texte du Général Bertrand [Cahier de Ste-Hélène] – Musique de Beethoven*)
Saturday 12 – Soirée Lyrique – 21 heures / Théâtre de Verduze
 Alex Aldren (Ténor) & Friends,
 (Brahms – Bellini – Rossini – Puccini)

Info, Tickets : 04 94 86 90 67 - 04 94 72 04 21



CONCERTS DOMAINE DU RAYOL CANADEL 7 & 14 Augusts

7 August – Tanguy de Willencourt

14 August – Lula Pena, guitar

<http://www.domainedurayol.org/evenements/concerts/>

CHATEAU DE BERNE – LORGUES

10, 17 & 24 August – jazz
concerts 21h30

10 August Webele Sisters

Hommage to the Andrews Sisters, best
swing numbers of the 40's

17 August: Muzsikus Swing

interprets standards Django Reinhardt

24 August : So Walt Jazz – Jazz via Bossa Nova of Jobim and
Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, Sarah Vaughan, Louis
Armstrong...

Tickets €30 per person, including 1 free glass of wine, offers for
passes for two events, at €48 , and for 3 events, at €63 . info and
reservations: www.chateauberne.com 04 94 60 43 64

CONCERT – LES ARCS – PLACE DU PERE CLINCHARD, PARAGE

Sunday 6 August, 18h L'orchestre «
L'Indépendante » Buvette

Information : 06 76 01 78 79 / 04 94 50 68 10

jones.sue@wanadoo.fr



MUSIQUE DANS LES VIGNES

8 August, St. Julien D'Aille, Vidauban –

17 August, Château Roubine – Lorgues

19 August Château la Tour de Léveque,
Pierrefeu

19h Degustation , concert 20h, finishes 21h30

Tuesday 8 August, Château St Julien D'Aille, Vidauban, Jazz
Manouche, with accordeon, guitar, Swing du Sud with Michel
Pellegrino clarinet.

Thursday 17 August – Chateau Roubine, Lorgues – jazz
manouche, accordeon, guitar, Swing du Sud with Michel
Pellegrino, clarinet

Saturday 19 August – Chateau la Tour de L'Eveque, Pierrefeu –
Jazz manouche, accordéon, guitar, Swing du Sud with Michel
Pellegrino.

Tickets €25, including assiette gourmand, and wine tasting.

Information: 06 60 30 32 90 & lesmusicales83@gmail.com



CONCERT DU JAZZ – DOMAINE GRAND JAS - WEDNESDAY 9 AUGUST

21h TRAD JAZZ – ENTRECASTEAUX –

Tickets 20 € on the night. Glass of
complimentary wine.



OPERATION DRAGOON – 73RD ANNIVERSARY OF ALLIED LANDINGS 1944 – 15 AUGUST

The 15 August many towns and villages in this part of France will celebrate - very seriously, honoring the dead - of the Allied landings that happened in 1944. Operation Dragoon as it was called, has tended to fall by the wayside in history, obscured by D Day of 6th June, but it was just as important. The troops marched through Southern France to join up with D Day forces and collaborate in the Battle of Colmar, and the push into Germany.



The villages of Le Muy and La Motte were the first to be liberated, followed shortly by Vidauban, after thousands of British, American and Canadian troops had parachuted into the vineyards behind La Motte. As many veterans told their stories later, most of them as they descended were alarmed to see a huge mist obscuring totally the landscape below them, terrified, many of them thought, "God, the pilots have got the landing site screwed up! We shall be landing in the sea!" Little did they know that the 15 August nearly always heralds the first rains of autumn, and the rain had come as usual and combined with previous heat had created this huge mist. Luckily their parachutes broke through the mist, and found themselves in the vineyards as planned, the vast majority landed safely, one division scouting off the secure the bridge over the Argens at Le Muy for the invading sea force which was by now landing all along the coast, from Cavalaire, Rayol Canadel, St. Tropez to St. Raphael, and were starting to march inland. Now this year, the 73rd Anniversary, will see very few Veterans returning, many, many of them have done so over the years,

many to salute their fallen comrades, who never made it, but this year might yet just see a few, who will be celebrated, welcomed and feted by the local french villages and the military authorities. There are plaques marking the landings all along the coast, and wreaths will be laid.

The main events are as follows;

LA MOTTE

Monday 14 August – 11 am, Ceremony at the plaque, Hameau du Miton, by the ferme Lavagne.

14h30 – animations in the village

18h – Commemorations by the Military authorities, wreath laying at the Memorial du Miton, Route de Bagnols en Foret. (best to arrive early!)

21h – Bal in the village



Meantime all day there will be a parade of military vehicles of the period, no doubt well supported by the local Re-Enactors, who dress up in military uniforms, and costumes of the period. Echoes of Glen Miller, and the Andrews sisters will fill the air, at the evening Dance.

LE MUY

Tuesday 15 August – 9.45 Commemorations with Veteran British and Americans, civil and Military authorities at the Memorial lod the Debarquement, at the east end of the village, Route de Frejuz.

21h – Concert classique, Breakdown Quarter, at the eglise St.

Joseph

Wednesday 16 August – 11h – Military parade with bagpipes of the Claymor Clan, with parade of military vehicles of the period – from the round point de General Frederick.

12h30 – Military vehicle show, Parking du Roucas

21h30 – Concert jazz band, Denis Gautier, parking du Roucas

22h. – Fireworks – parking du Roucas



DRAGUIGNAN

Wednesday 16 August – 9h Ceremony at the Rhone Alpes American Cemetery,

21h Bal Concert

VIDAUBAN

Wednesday 16 August – 16h parade of Military vehicles
17h – Expo of vehicles, distribution of flags etc.
18h.30 Ceremonies with fanfare, square Eisenhower, Monument aux Morts, & Square Jean Moulin
21h30 – Bal de la Liberation, with orchestra, Place de la Mairie.
SALERNES

Thursday 17 August – 17h – Parade of Shermans – Cours Bouge
18h – Ceremony at the Plaque
22h – Bal – Cours Bouge.

So do turn out and support the many events. The Ceremony at the American Military Cemetery in Draguignan is particularly touching, housing as it does so many young men who died in those landings. Each year, in tribute, the Draguignan Municipality has paid for the relatives, descendants of one of those young American soldiers to come to Draguignan for this Ceremony.



FESTIVAL DE JAZZ DE RAMATUELLE 16 – 20 AUGUST 21h

**Théâtre de Verdure Ramatuelle &
Jardins du Théâtre**

Wednesday 16 – Lisa Simone
Thursday 17 – Rene Urtregor Quintet
Friday 18 – Michael Wollny Trio
Saturday 19 – Lou Tavano Sextet
Sunday 20 – Taron Herman Trio
Jazz every night in Jardins du Theatre, 18h30 & 23h
<http://jazzaramatuelle.com>

35^e Festival Entrecasteaux

Musique de chambre du 17 au 26 août 2017

Organisé par : Arts Musique Entrecasteaux
Direction artistique : Olivia Hughes

ENTRECASTEAUX 17-20-26
SALERNES 19
PONTEVÈS 22
SILLANS LA CASCADE 24

19h 30

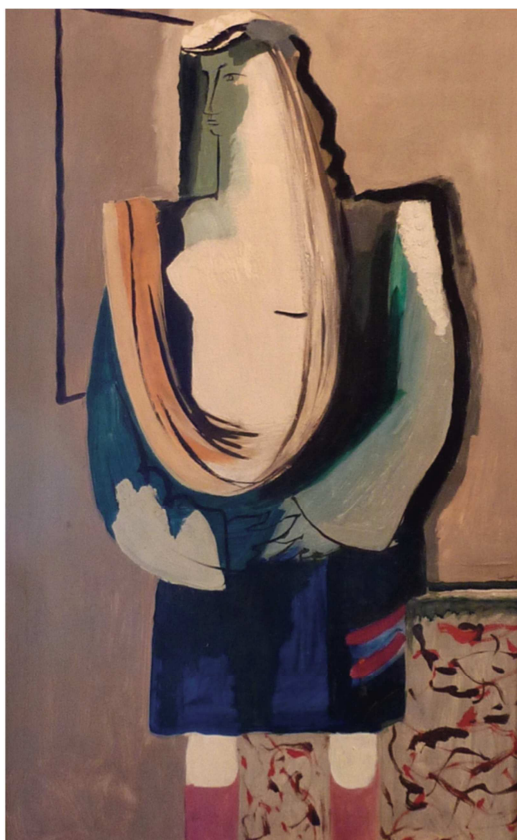
Renseignements et réservations :
(+33) 04 94 72 91 62
info@festivalentrecasteaux.fr
www.festivalentrecasteaux.fr
f /FestivalEntrecasteaux

TARIFS	Général	22 €	Pass :
Adhérents AME	17 €	3 concerts	60 €
12-25 ans	14 €	6 concerts	110 €
<12 ans	Gratuit		

CHAMBER MUSIC FESTIVAL ENTRECASTEAUX

17 – 26 AUGUST - 19h30

Saturday 12 – Eglise de Verignon Opening Concert, with piano cello recital, Beethoven, Piazzola
17 – Concert Entrecasteaux, Espace culturel Rene-Mrcl – Mozart with Alain Meunier – cello
19 – Concert Salernes - Salle des Plantiers, Quatuor Bela, - Krasa, Beethoven
20 - Concert – Entrecasteaux – Espace culturel Rene-Marcel – Quatuor Bela – Schulhof, Schubert, Haas
22 – Concert Ponteves – Eglise, Quatuor Bela – leigeti, Zemlinski
24 – Concert Sillans La Cascade – le Bastidon, Schubert, Brahms - with Marianne Croux, soprano, Anne le Bozec, piano, & Pierre Genisson, clarinet
26 - Concert Entrecasteaux – Espace culturel Rene-Marcel – Brahms,
info@festivalentrecasteaux.fr, and 04 94 72 91 62 also from Entrecasteaux Tourist Office
Tickets €22, pass 3 concerts €60, 4 €110

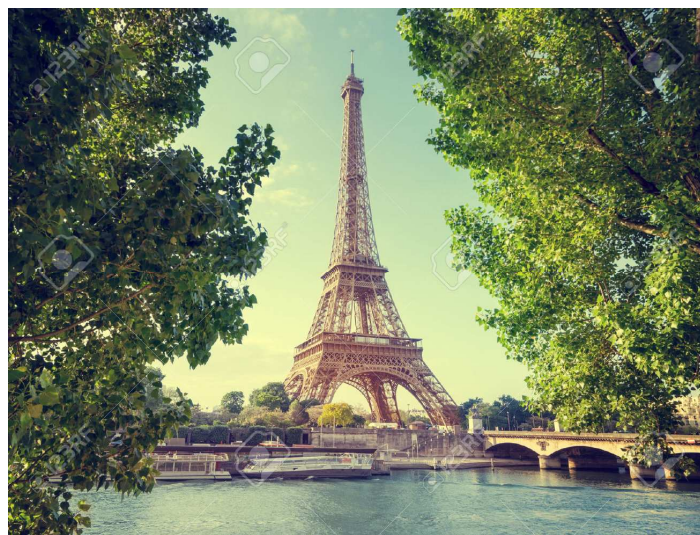


SUMMER ART EXHIBITION
GALERIE AALDERS - LA GARDE
FREINET - 1 – 26 August
15 rue Nationale, la Garde Freinet
Tel: 04 94 55 23 47 Mob: 06 14 71 45 85



FILMS IN VO – LORGUES

Sunday 6 August – 19h – Everything, Everything – with Amanda Stenberg, Nick Robinson
 Wednesday 9 August – 18h30 – Valerian – with cra Delegigne, Clive Owen
 Sunday 20 August – 19h – My Cousin rachel with Rachel Weisz, Sam Claflin, Iain Glen
 Sunday 27 August – 19h – Song to Song – with Ryan Gosling, Rooney Mara, Michael Fassbender
 Sunday 3 December – 19h – Dunkirk – with Damien Bonnard, Fiona Whitehead.



Mistake

BY TRENCHERMAN

It has long been an accepted truth that a Parisian gentleman, who hated the Eiffel Tower so much that every day he took his lunch there at the Jules Verne restaurant on the second floor, I assume that the cuisine was good, but his reason was that it was the only place in Paris from where you could not see the *monstrosity!*

I have, in common with M. Macron and 'The Donald', eaten there several times and always found it to be good, if a trifle expensive.

A pleasant view or lack of a displeasing view, can certainly enhance a dining experience, which is why at this time of year, when one is drawn to St Paul de Vence, by visiting friends, who of course want to go to the Colomb d'Or, I have a plan B.

Apart from the fact that the ancient watering hole and Mecca for A list personalities, can be difficult to get into at short notice, the menu has not changed in 40 years and because I normally order the Hors d'Oeuvres, a meal in themselves, I need to be really hungry to go there.

So plan B is to eat Michelin starred food on a delightful terrace with a view across the valley to St Paul which is the best way to see it, unless you revel in bad art and ice creams.

The terrace I refer to is at Alain Llorca Hotel and restaurant at La Colle Sur Loup. A one star Michelin restaurant which deserves all the accolades one can cast upon it.

Lunch there, taking the 42€ menu, is something that everyone should try.

The food is seasonal and local and cooked and served with great respect. The kind of menu that will not leave you hungry but some how you wish it would go on for longer: in fact, with amuses bouches and gourmandises, it seems to. The desserts are lovingly prepared by Jean-Michel Llorca, and lovingly devoured by one and all.

The wine list is extensive and can take you from reasonable delight to Coronation quality rarities.

Should you not want the total experience, you could try the Bistro Llorca in the old town of Nice or the Café Llorca in Vallauris, which boasts a Bib Gourmand Michelin, a sure sign of quality at a pocket pleasing price, so no excuses.

I bring you sad news, those of you who have been holding your breath to test Pamela Anderson's raw carrot of a mere 200€, are

to be disappointed. The restaurant closed its doors after 8 days! Longer than many had thought it would last.

What promised to be another high spot of this summer was the remark made by a good friend who was seated at our lunch table; he said "Have you tried Indie Beach? The best food on the beach!"

Well I had not heard of Indie Beach, but am always up for the best food on the beach. So when a few days later I was invited to join friends there for a 'great' lunch. I was quick to reply in the affirmative, and they were driving.

It is at the Cap camera end of the beach and as we drove up I realised that I had been here many times when it was called Les Bronzes, a real sand between the toes beach for those who like that sort of thing. Sand has never been high on my list but good food always has.

The menu is well thought out. They have wood burning cooking which is great for the Barbie boys, and good fish as fresh as it gets down here. A little Asian influence with four small nems for 16€, a hamburger for 23€ and steaks to meet any hungry Goucho's appetite, like the cote de boeuf, of around 1kg for 110€.

I went for an Argentine Sirloin for a much more modest 27€ and after a serious struggle with the sinews, had to give up, but possibly my mistake.

My mind kept watering back to 42€ set lunch at Llorca and no sand.

Pip, pip.



OPERA NEWS

By ROBERT TURNBULL

For its new Carmen this year the Festival d'Aix-en-Provence opted to give the job of director to Dmitri Tcherniakov. That surprised some given that the Russian 'enfant terrible' stated from the outset he is unconvinced by what is possibly the most popular opera ever written. Bizet's masterpiece, for Tcherniakov is operatic tourism - a succession of post cards of old Seville, a

mélange of matadors, smugglers and gypsies with castanets and habaneras, and headed by a cast of principals that give stereotypes a bad name.

To make the opera more 'contemporary', Tcherniakov has gone for nothing as obvious as updating but what you could call a radical workout. He is fixated, not so much on Carmen but on her jealous lover Don Jose, with all his Catholicism-induced insecurities and (what the director feels are) modern day delusions. As everything supposedly happens for his benefit, he remains on stage throughout the performance.

Don Jose, according to Tcherniakov, needs serious psychological help and for that he has designed a cunning plan. Dispensing with Bizet's usual narrative while sticking to original score (although with constant interruptions) the production takes the form of an elaborate role-play therapy session: Jose is having marital problems with Micaela. It opens therefore with the couple anxiously waiting in what looks like a hotel lobby to sign a contract for a 'cure', and presumably a waiver of responsibility.

The full company of performers launch wholeheartedly into the therapeutic version of the opera in which Jose has reluctantly agreed to participate. He starts sulkily: he doesn't think he needs help. Gradually, however, he gets drawn in by Carmen's allure (even if he knows she is only acting; she forgets her lines to prove the point) and as the femme fatale challenges his ego and sexuality, his aggression begins to appear.

Is the cure working? It hardly seems so, as by act 2 Carmen has had enough of his obsessive behavior and wants to quit; but the therapy isn't over and she is firmly told to stay in character - to be professional! In Act 3, as happens, she is murdered, but then it's only play-acting, right? She and Jose drag themselves off the floor and are cheerfully applauded by the company as having done a good job.

But Jose seems crushed. Has the therapy worked for him? Throughout the opera suited men appear with clipboards to pronounce its success, but the one character who might have a view on this, his wife Micaela, is by this stage no longer in Bizet's opera. For Tcherniakov she remains on stage, but as a bit part in a reality TV show but with no-one there to ask her what the experience was like for her.

Tcherniakov's is a fun idea, but sadly directors who try to put round pegs into square holes usually come a cropper and it is curious to see how strenuously he flogs this doomed horse. The problem, as always with overambitious directors, is that the music suffers. Whatever you think of Bizet's opera-comique, the score is pretty taught and not conducive to added texts and ominous silences. Thankfully, the singing was generally excellent especially Elsa Dreisig as Micaëla and Stéphanie d'Oustrac in the title role. Michael Fabiano, who takes the role of Jose, has to act more than he has to sing and does both pretty well. It's a monochrome voice but thrilling in the high register. Pablo Heras-Casado conducts the Orchestra de Paris as best as he can, given the circumstances.



“Oh Lord, won't you buy me a Mercedes Benz?”

Janis Joplin

“The dishonest Germans”

“Europe’s Teutonic moralizers might want to look at what’s happening at home.”

By **PAUL TAYLOR** (www.politico.eu)

The following article concerning recent German business activities in connection with Russia are from the Politico website and magazine.

In addition just recently the German magazine DER SPIEGEL spilt the beans on what appears to be wholesale cartel collusion on automotive development, not just “diesel gate” – but a great deal more! For owners of the brand cars named below, I do urge you read the whole article which is really too long to include. It makes for fascinating reading. As I, a totally idiot observer, have constantly remarked, in the EU, there are rules for some, but not for others!

However, Readers - particularly owners of Audi, BMW, Daimler, Volkswagen, and Porsche cars might find the following two articles of great interest! Line up now for class action suits.

“The next time a German minister lectures another member of the European Union about the need to obey the rules, the target of the criticism might be forgiven for turning the tables.

The country that loves to [hector others](#) on the evils of moral hazard, to demand strict enforcement of EU fiscal rules and to depict Southern European countries as endemically corrupt, is mired in a cesspit. Scandal has struck Germany’s vaunted automobile industry, its largest engineering giant and its biggest bank — and there’s more than a suspicion that Berlin has long turned a blind eye.

Germany may be no cleaner or dirtier than other European countries. But it’s certainly more self-righteous. And so it’s hard to avoid a shiver of *Schadenfreude* at the mounting reports of unsavory — and possibly illegal — behavior by some of its biggest business brands.

The latest affair to tarnish the reputation of Deutschland AG — Germany Inc. — as the cozy relationship between business and

politics is often called, involves more than two decades of reported collusion among the top five German automobile companies, revealed by Der Spiegel magazine.

German and EU cartel authorities are investigating whether Mercedes-Benz owner Daimler, Volkswagen, BMW, Porsche and Audi held regular secret meetings to discuss technical standards, suppliers and pricing, to the detriment of foreign competitors. According to the report, it was Volkswagen, desperate to clean up its act and avoid further legal damage after being caught systematically cheating on pollution emissions tests in the United States, that blew the whistle to the German Federal Cartel Office. Since then, reports have said Daimler beat VW to the whistleblowing punch.

It’s not just Germany’s vaunted automobile industry that’s been looking shady lately.

The probe into suspected anti-competitive behavior was hushed up for a year until Der Spiegel published its scoop. BMW denied illegal behavior. The other manufacturers have not commented, and industry association VDA said it was not involved.

Companies found guilty of violating EU cartel rules face fines of up to 10 percent of their worldwide turnover. However, the first participant to denounce an illicit anti-competitive conspiracy is exempted from paying a penalty.

For example, the two big German truckmakers — MAN and Daimler — were among five companies involved in a price-fixing cartel on which the European Commission imposed €2.93 billion in fines last year. MAN was not fined because it revealed the existence of the cartel in 2011.

But it’s not just Germany’s vaunted automobile industry that’s been looking shady lately. Last year, Deutsche Bank reached a \$7.2 billion settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice over an investigation into misselling of mortgage-backed securities between 2005 and 2007, in which home loans to unqualified borrowers were repackaged as safe investments and sold on to others.

The collapse of residential-backed mortgage securities was a major factor in triggering the 2008 global financial crisis (which itself unleashed hordes of German moralizers). Deutsche Bank has also been fined over its U.K. subsidiary’s manipulation of LIBOR interest rates and for failing to prevent some \$10 billion of Russian money laundering.

Meanwhile, German engineering powerhouse Siemens stands accused of having supplied gas turbines for electricity generators that will enable Russia to open two power stations in occupied Crimea, ending the annexed peninsula’s dependence on energy from Ukraine, from which Moscow seized the region in 2014.

Providing power equipment for Crimea violates European Union sanctions, but Siemens says the turbines were diverted by its state-owned Russian client without its knowledge, in breach of contract and despite past warnings from the company.

Siemens initially denied a Reuters report this month that two of its turbines had been shipped to Crimea from adjoining southwestern Russia. Then it said it was investigating. Then it admitted the equipment had been moved “against our will” and said it would sue its Russian client, Technopromexport, and its own majority-owned Russian subsidiary, Siemens Gas Turbine Technologies. It now says it is halting the export of all power-generating technology to Russia.

The explanations sound naive at best. As reported by the Ukrainian investigative website Euromaidanpress, there was publicly available evidence Moscow was racing to build power stations in Crimea calibrated to use Siemens turbines. And plans for the electrical plant just across the Sea of Azov, for which the machines were officially destined, were still their infancy.

German manufacturers can charge a premium for their “ultimate driving machines” because of their reputation for what an ad once plastered across Europe trumpeted as “Deutsche Qualität.”

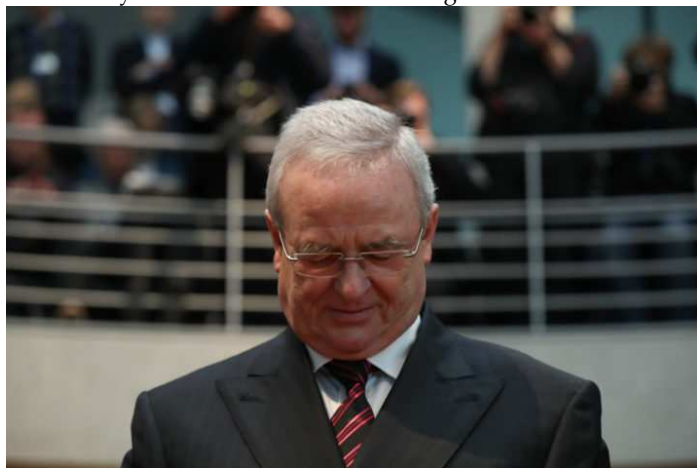
Taking a page out of the crisis communications playbook, the Munich-based conglomerate has depicted itself as a victim of Russian deception and loudly slammed the stable gate after the horses have bolted.

The affair is an embarrassment for Berlin, which took the diplomatic lead in pressing for EU sanctions against Russian companies and individuals involved in Moscow’s seizure of Crimea. Chancellor Angela Merkel even argued that the move has torn up the rules-based European legal order in force since the end of World War II.

A German government spokesperson said senior Russian officials had given assurances that the turbines would not be used in Crimea, and Berlin was studying the potential consequences of this “unacceptable” operation.

In a textbook model of buck-passing, the spokesperson said it was up to companies to make sure they did not violate the sanctions regime — but did not suggest Siemens would face any action over the affair.

One common thread among the raft of corporate scandals is that the German government has not been at the forefront of exposing or investigating them. On the contrary, it was regulators in the U.S. (and to a lesser extent, in Brussels) who unmasked bad behavior by Deutsche Bank and Volkswagen.



Martin Winterkorn, former Volkswagen AG CEO testifies at the Bundestag commission investigating the Volkswagen diesel emissions scandal | Sean Gallup/Getty Images

Volkswagen paid a \$2.8 billion criminal fine plus \$1.5 billion in civil penalties in the United States in April for rigging its diesel-powered vehicles with defeat software to cheat on government emissions tests. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency uncovered the violation in 2015.

VW had to recall 11 million vehicles, out of which about 8 million were sold in Europe. The scandal underscored the weakness of the EU’s fragmented regulatory regime and authorities’ lax enforcement of the rules. The German carmaker agreed to pay about €15 billion in compensation to U.S. drivers, but brushed

aside calls to compensate its European customers due to different consumer protection rules in the bloc.

German manufacturers can charge a premium for their “ultimate driving machines” because of their reputation for what an ad once plastered across Europe trumpeted as “Deutsche Qualität.” But what if the technological advance vaunted in slogans such as “Vorsprung durch Technik” turns out to have been “Vorsprung durch Cheating” — built on secret technical stitch-ups and price-fixing?

DER SPIEGEL Article:

Do Read:

<http://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/the-cartel-collusion-between-germany-s-biggest-carmakers-a-1159471.html>

An interesting quote from the DER SPIEGEL article above about the German automotive cartel is the following, not major, but certainly interesting:”

“Daimler, BMW, Audi, Porsche and Volkswagen are engaged in cutthroat competition to produce the best cars. At least that’s the story often told by auto company CEOs, economists and politicians. It’s a narrative about the beneficial effect of the market economy, which is based on competition among companies. But the narrative is wrong, and this is reflected in the convertible top.”

Daimler, BMW, Audi, Porsche and Volkswagen did not in fact compete over which company could offer its customers the best top. On the contrary, experts with the five automakers coordinated their actions in numerous meetings. For instance, they determined the maximum speed at which a driver could open or close the top.”

“No arms race when it comes to speeds,” read the minutes of a meeting in Bad Kissingen. Arguments against an arms race, according to the minutes, were “costs, weight, increasing technological risk and crash relevance.” The result of that meeting is that the soft tops on the convertibles sold by Daimler, BMW, Audi, Porsche and Volkswagen can only be opened and closed at speeds of up to 50 kilometers per hour.”

“Oh Lord, would you still buy me a Mercedes-Benz?”

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