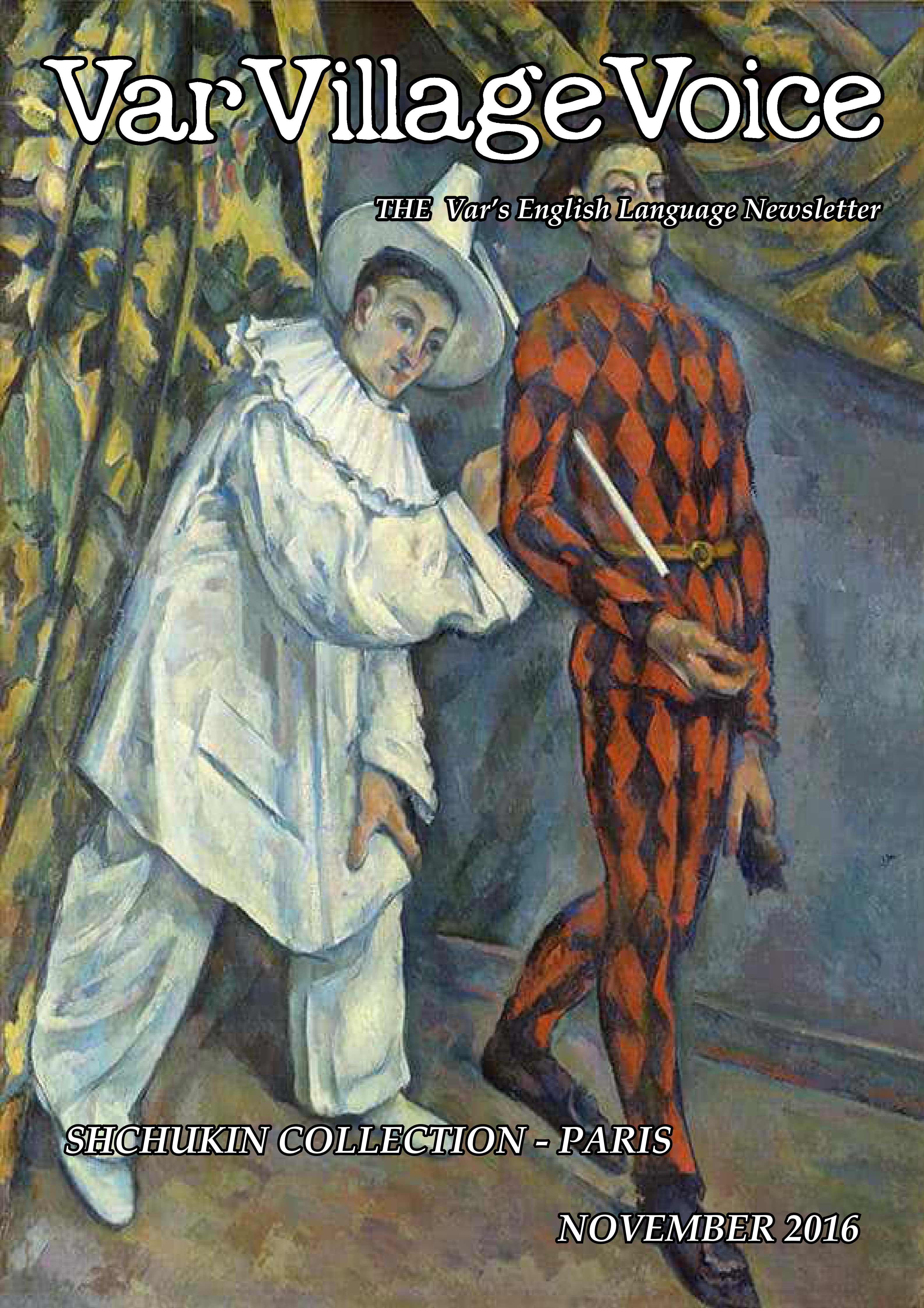
Var Village Voice

THE Var's English Language Newsletter



SHCHUKIN COLLECTION - PARIS

NOVEMBER 2016

Above. Paul Gaugin's Äha oe eeii – et quoi tu es jalouse? 1892. Pushkin State Museum, Moscow

Front Cover : Mardi Gras (Pierrot et Arlequin) 1888-90 Paul Cezanne, Pushkin State Museum, Moscow

"ICONS OF MODERN ART". The Shchukin Collection - Hermitage Museum – Pushkin Museum" in Paris from

October 20, 2016 to February 20, 2017

A superb, total blockbuster Modern Art exhibition opened just this October in Paris, at the Foundation Louis Vuitton, in the Bois de Boulogne. October to February 20 2017.

If one can get to see this exhibition all the effort will be well worth it, it is a once in a lifetime show, mainly because the Shchukin Collection - he collected over 275 major impressionist works of which around 150 will be on show - was taken over by the Communists and abolished to relative obscurity (Western Bourgois art) following the 1917 Revolution, and has since then for years been split between the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, and the Hermitage Museum, in St. Petersburg. For a time the collection was sent to Siberia, for safe keeping, at the time of the second world war, and some of the paintings suffered frost damage, which the Pushkin is trying to remedy. Many works have not been on display before, and many works have not been loaned out before, and it is only as a result of several years of negotiations between Bernard Arnault, multi millionaire owner of Louis Vuitton, and the Russian State, that finally this show comes to Paris. Only someone with incredible wealth behind him, as Arnault has, could afford to put it on, and also insure the Exhibition. The art world will be beating a path to this show.

See article page 17

CINÉMA
SALLE JACKY MATHEVET

ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

LORGUES CINEMA & OPERA TREATS

Live Opera direct from Royal Opera House, Covent Garden
2 November – 19h
Opera Bellini's NORMA tickets €9

Act 1 – 90 mins. Intermission 30 mins.
Act 22 70 mins. –ends approx. 22.h3030
November – 19h
Opera – Mozart's Cosi Fan Tutte
Tickets €9

JAZZ CONCERTS MOULIN DES ARTS – ENTRECASTEAUX

With Trio French Sumo - 5 November 20h30 & 6 November 16h00

Tickets €20 or €15 for members, including glass of wine. Reservations by phone on 04 94 69 58 07, and email: mrkucko@yahoo.fr

LA CAMERATA VOCALE CONCERT - SUNDAY 6 NOVEMBER – 16h30 DRAGUIGNAN, Eglise ND du Peuple

OPERA DE TOULON

STEPHEN SONDHEIM'S SWEENEY TODD

11 November 20h

13 November 14h30

BALLET – TCHAIKOVSKI'S LAC DES CYGNES – OPERA BALLET DE KAZAN

16 & 17 November 20h30

Tickets: 04 94 92 70 78 &
www.operadetoulon.fr

SAN REMO COACH TRIP SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER Book Now!

Last call for reservations for coach trip to San Remo, Saturday 19 November FOR THE MARKET, AND Eurodrinks Christmas shopping!. I gather bookings are doing well, so if you want a seat, get in touch pronto with Carolyn, with your cheque for €27.
The times of departure are as follows :

07h20 - Les Arcs-sur-Argens
07h30 - Le Muy Peage (no. 36)
07h45 - Frejus Peage (no. 38)
(return times are between 18h and 19h depending on the time we leave and the traffic)

CAROLYN MOULET
RIVIERA TOURS
Email : carolyn@rivieratours.fr
Mobile : 06 80 08 87 47 Tel : 04 94 73 69 02
Quartier Le Plan, 1018 Route des Arcs
83460 TARADEAU

OPERA DE TOULON – FESTIVAL DE MUSIQUE DE TOULON - CONCERT

Nuit Americaine

Friday 25 November - 20h.

Samuel Barber, Bernstein, Adams

Tickets: 04 94 92 70 78 &
www.operadetoulon.fr

ART SALE & EXHIBITION 25, 26 & 27 November ATELIER D'ART 1142 Route des Miquelets 83510 Lorgues

- Just below St. Antonin Village

Artist Tessa Baker is holding a Sale and Exhibition of many of her recent art works, at her Atelier the weekend of 26 to 28 November.
The Sale show will be enlivened by Wine and Canapes, and hours are as follows:

Friday 25 November 16h00 to 18h00

Saturday 26 November 11h00 – 18h00

Sunday 27 November 14h00 – 18h00

So do come along see the latest, meet up with your friends, take the chance to buy some nice Christmas presents, chat and enjoy a Pre Christmas get together.

You can get in touch with Tessa at 06 11 25 29 72 and on: website:

tessabakerart.com

Next year she will be starting off her teaching painting classes season with a month in Antigua, running from February to March 2017, coming home to teach classes, painting in Provence April to May, and then later on Cookery combined with Painting classes May to June.
So lucky people who can get away to the Caribbean to escape winter here, or who would like to spend time with Tessa here in Provence, do get in touch and book your places.

A Brexfast Of Champions

By TRENCHERMAN

It was the Friday of the Voiles de St-Tropez and owing to the time lost during a, much needed, sail change in the middle of a race on the Wednesday, we were placed fifth when we should have been able to come third.

Only two races left and a lot to do.

Amongst our crew was a very handy and attractive girl called Tess.

She is a radiographer and pig farmer, two occupations that don't immediately spring to mind as natural bedfellows, except that she lives on Alderney where having two (or more) jobs goes with the territory.

She had a brilliant idea for raising morale and injecting much needed energy into the crew; - bacon sarnies for breakfast, her own home cured bacon from one of her own pigs (she has 75), and not surprisingly the Isle of Alderney queues up for her rashers.

It tasted as bacon ought to taste, no white ooze, no limp flavour, but a full on bacon taste, just as it ought to be.

Needless to say we raised our game and gave the rest of the fleet a fright with our start that took them all by surprise as we left them in our wake.

I was relating this epic story to she who does not sail and also to a covey of our grown up(ish) children as we ate lunch in the town of Castelnaudary a week later.

We were there to start a cruise on the Canal du Midi in a boat I had rented, it was part of the celebrations that after fifty years of marriage we were still talking, and the children were there to act as referees.

I had promised a week of calm delight and local cuisine, which in Castenaudary, means beans, fat flageolet beans that have absorbed the flavours of confit of duck and pork, Toulouse sausage and smoked bacon. Cassoulet to you and me, served in a pottery casserole with a crunchy croute on top and washed down with one of the now many full on wines of the Languedoc or Corbieres. Castelnaudary is the birthplace of cassoulet, or Caçulet as it is in the language of the Oc.

We were in the dining room of the Hotel Restaurant du Centre et du Lauragais where including an indulgent amount of good wine, five of us ate very well for 125 Euros and about the same for the essential fluid. Should you find yourself not far away, I whole hearted recommend it.

Our cruise was calming, picturesque and full of interesting wild life; we eased our way down to Carcassone through flights of locks manned (or in fact, womanned) by delightful, friendly and helpful keepers. Early October meant the canal was not crowded and the weather was kind to us.

Carcassone was almost a shock to the system as it is a bustling town with restaurants and markets, including a wonderful indoor food market, and of course the 'Cité de Carcassone' the capital of the Cathars and a wonderful Disney-esque attempt to restore and recreate a medieval walled city, it was all done in the 19th century and despite the Loire Valley turrets and the over commercialisation, what is there provides a glimpse of the past and a very jolly afternoon's walking.

We went to the (notionally) best restaurant and were disappointed, unlike the evening before when I found a restaurant that was entirely different, in every way.

Robert Rodriguez has been described as having 'bistronomique ' food; but let me start at the beginning. I had done some research and both that and my nose told me that this was the place to go to.

So I telephoned and made a booking and with the help of Google maps, led my hungry crew to the door. It was locked. I checked the sign over the door and knocked loudly. A woman came to the door and opened it a crack, asked if we had a reservation and when I assured her that we had, she opened it all the way and led us into the dinning room, decorated with *objets trouvés;* mainly from between the two wars, the atmosphere, along with the formality of entry, created the sense of being in a speakeasy where without the password you would not be served.

There was one other table occupied and we were led to a large table clearly set for five people.

I ordered a bottle of white wine of the region as an aperitif and we perused the menu.

A menu not often found in a bistro, all be it an unusual one.

Let me just give you an idea… "*Coquilles St Jacques fraiches..de la baie de St Brieue.. pechées en plongée à la main..marinées au cedra corse..cuites en coquille..vapeur garrigue..légumes d'automne..huile d'olive extra vierge à la truffe blanche d'Alba bio tuber magnatum Pico…quelques pousses de roquettes sauvages.*

It was delicious….

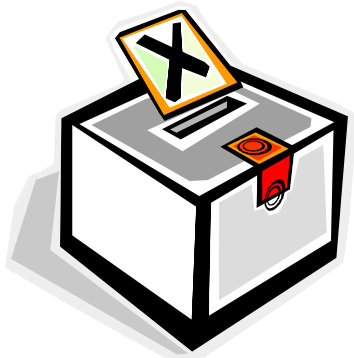
Another member of our party ordered…*Mon Caçulet Gourmand,* the description took so long to read that by the end he had forgotten what he was ordering. This is a restaurant where the chef proprietor has a distinct point of view and while it is vaguely comic, the food was way beyond what one might expect and is definitely on the list for another visit.

The return walk seemed longer that the way there but sleep came easily to a well-fed crew that night.

We returned the boat to Castelnaudary a few lazy days later and generally felt we had had an adventure worthy of the celebration.

I am still dreaming of the bacon of Alderney and of course daily waiting to see what a full English Brexit might bring?

Pip, pip



VOTES FOR EXPATS - Being British is about so much more than simply being resident in UK!

Just the 6 October past the promise was made by the present UK government that millions of expatriates will be given a "vote for life" in elections in a move that could strengthen the Conservative Party's grip on power.

The Government is to announce today that it will scrap the 15-year limit after

which more than 3 million Britons living overseas lose their right to vote.
The change – which will be subject to a vote in both Houses of Parliament – will apply to future general elections and give expats the right to vote in the last constituency where they lived.
Giving the vote to expats is likely to provide a significant boost to the Conservatives as many of them are retired and more likely to vote Tory.
Chris Skidmore, the constitution minister, said: "This statement shows how we will introduce 'votes for life'.
"British citizens who move abroad remain a part of our democracy and it is important they have the ability to participate.
"Following the British people's decision to leave the EU, we now need to strengthen ties with countries around the world and show the UK is an outward-facing nation.
"Our expat community has an important role to play in helping Britain expand international trade, especially given two-thirds of expats live outside the EU."
David Cameron first pledged to abolish the 15-year rule in September 2014, and it formed part of the Conservative manifesto.
Prior to 1985, expats were not permitted to register to vote in UK national elections. The Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 allowed expats to vote in elections for the first 15 years after they left the UK.
Geoffrey Clifton-Brown MP, parliamentary adviser to Conservatives Abroad, who has campaigned for the changes for years, said: "British citizens abroad **… are some of the best unofficial ambassadors that we have. It is only right and fair after a lifetime of contributing to the UK that they in turn should be given the right to vote**."
During the EU referendum, expats launched a High Court bid in an attempt to force the Government to overturn the 15-year rule, which proved unsuccessful.
Many expats remain concerned about their future migration status amid concerns that EU nations could "retaliate" for British migration curbs. Theresa May has refused to guarantee EU migrants the right to live and work in the UK amid concerns that it could become part of the EU negotiation deal. Liam Fox, the International Trade Secretary, raised concerns earlier this week that the issue could become a negotiating "card" as Britain approaches Brexit.

Chris Skidmore, Constitutional Minister, later commented on this announcement:

""Being British is about so much more than simply being resident in UK
""During the last Parliament we also extended the electoral timetable for overseas voters to allow for postal ballots to be issued earlier. This means that overseas electors now have more time to receive, complete and return their postal votes than was previously the case. As part of our manifesto commitment we will ensure that British citizens, no matter where they live, have the right to vote for life. We now intend to remove the barriers that prevent expats from votingin Parliamentary elections if they have lived abroad for longer than 15 years.
It was a previous Conservative government that first legislated to give expats the vote - before 1985, British citizens living outside the UK were unable to register to vote in UK Parliamentary elections. The Representation of the People Act 1985 changed this. Yet since then, the previous Labour government's decision to limit the Act has seen the time limit for British citizens living abroad being able to vote reduced to a period of 15 years. It is time to get rid of it completely.
Today, the Government has published detailed plans on how we intend to introduce votes for life for British citizens living abroad. This sets out how we will scrap the 15-year limit and open the franchise to the millions of citizens living abroad who have, until now, been denied their right to vote. In doing so, we will be taking forward our plans to foster a democracy that treats British citizens equally. Already we are continuing with legislation to ensure that we establish the principle of equal sized constituencies, ensuring that each elector's vote is worth the same as another.
""We are working to ensure that as many citizens as possible are registered to vote, with a record 46.5 million people currently on the electoral register. Now, we will ensure that no British citizen is denied their right to vote because of where they live.
Following the British people's decision to leave the EU, we need to strengthen ties with countries around the world and show the UK is an outward-facing nation.Our expat community has an important role to play in helping Britain expand international trade, especially given two-thirds of expats live outside the EU. Now, more than ever, Britain must be a global democracy, with every British citizen given the chance to play their role in forging our nation's future.This Government is committed to making ours a democracy that works for everyone - wherever they are in the world.""
Now I don't want to be gloomy about this very welcome announcement, and it is incredibly good news that at last Votes for Life Bill (for which I and others have been campaigning vigorously for the past few years) will be voted on some time in the future.
It is a bit of always Jam tomorrow, and one cannot predict an immediate outright victory, as above, many see expats as only potential Conservative voters – although not necessarily, there are a lot of Labour, socialist voters out there - but the House of Lords is heavily weighted to Lib Dem and Labour peers, who may well vote against.
If readers want to express opinions, particularly regarding the condition that they are represented by their last MP, they can write to: overseas-electors@cabinetoffice.gov.uk
It is rather ironic to think that possibly, had David Cameron pushed the Votes for Life Bill through before the Referendum, he might have scraped through with a Remain Vote! Ah well.

UK – EU BREXIT WATCH

DEUTSCHE BANK - GERMANY

"Greed, provincialism, cowardice, unfocused aggression, mania, egoism, immaturity, mendacity, incompetence, weakness, pride, blundering, decadence, arrogance, a need for admiration, naiveté: If you are looking for words that explain the fall of DEUTSCHE BANK, you can choose freely and justifiably from among the above list."

This is the astounding lead paragraph in a long, detailed article about the rise and fall of the German Deutsche Bank in a long piece in the German magazine **Der Spiegel**, published just this week 28 October. The article runs to 8 pages, over 17,000 words with short bios of major players, with photos.

If you wish to read it in full, and for those interested in how banks operate, not really for the common good, it is a must, do go to:

http://www.spiegel.de/international/business/the-story-of-the-self-destruction-of-deutsche-bank-a-1118157-

Below are extracts from this excoriating article, which details in depth, just what went on, and how, leading to the present situation whereby Chancellor Merkel, despite all her protestions and those of her Ministers might have to bail this bank out.

Up until now Chancellor Merkel - who together with the EU put together the process by which future failing banks would have to rely on "bail in'' processes, rescuing failing banks by taking investors money, as they did in Cypress, rather than be ''bailed out'', by member countries or the EU and its members - she and her Ministers, plus EU officials, have said "Nothing to see here – Move along Please" like police tidying up around an accident, "Nothing extraordinary", "NO Germany will NOT be bailing out Deutsche Bank! No need"! Still the rumours have swirled, and swirled in financial circles, as its shares have plummeted and the bank has haemorrhaged investment clients and others, and divested businesses - and with reason!

The whole story reads like a horror film scenario, drawing obvious parallels with the Gordon Geckos of the 1980's, and the Wolves of Wall Street.

The thing to remember however, is that whatever happens to Deutsche Bank, it has absolutely nothing to do with Brexit, and the UK Vote, absolutely NOTHING, although undoubtedly, if there is a collapse, there are those who will try and shift the blame to the UK, God knows why, but they will.

The major reason that Deutsche Bank and Italian banks are in the situation they are in at the moment, is that they did not heed the warnings of the Lehman Brothers collapse in 2008 – and ever since the rumours which started some months ago concerning Deutsche Bank, financial observers have been drawing parallels with the collapse of Lehman Bros in 2008 - triggering a major banking collapse and scandal that took the banks and financial world years to recover from, is that they did not restructure, and reform their practices. To a certain, far larger extent, banks in the UK did do so, and so hopefully are far less likely to be affected by whatever happens next.

Der Spiegel – Extracts:

"…………..Deutsche Bank is broken. It might be able to extract itself from the 7,800 lawsuits it is currently involved in, or it may shrink to the point that it will no longer pose a systemic risk, (as cited by the IMF!) or it may manage to find investors to help it scrape together sufficient capital to fulfill legal requirements. In the most extreme case, it may even be bailed out by the German state. But it is broken nonetheless when compared to that which it once was: a brand, a symbol, a German icon."

"………………Starting in 1999, and continuing at least until 2006, the bank engaged in deals in Libya, Iran, Burma, Syria, Cuba and North Korea, many of them suspected of having been conducted in violation of US sanctions, including money laundering.

''…..Starting in 2003, the bank is thought to have manipulated currency trading with the help of illegal software, thus purloining money from many thousands of customers.

''…..In 2005, Deutsche Bank hurt mid-sized companies and German municipalities by selling them derivative financial products known as Spread Ladder Swaps, which failed to bring the advertised savings, instead resulting in losses.

''…..Starting in 2008, the bank began helping US citizens hide unreported income in Swiss bank accounts.

Starting in 2009, the bank became part of a tax avoidance scheme involving CO2 certificates.

''……In November 2010, Deutsche Bank traders in South Korea manipulated the country's leading stock index through the 1.6 billion euro sale of a bundle of stocks.

Starting in 2011, Deutsche Bank employees in Moscow and London helped transfer rubles worth 10 billion dollars out of Russia in daily tranches without a recognizable commercial purpose.

''.....In 2011, Deutsche Bank was involved in the flourishing business of "Dark Pools," trading platforms that allow both buyers and sellers to remain anonymous -- but the bank was accused of having manipulated the prices of the securities to the detriment of the customers.

'......When several banks banded together to manipulate the Libor, the interbank interest rate, Deutsche Bank was involved.

'.......When gold and silver prices were manipulated, Deutsche Bank came under suspicion.

'...All of that, and the above list is just a sampling, took place during the years Josef Ackermann was the absolute sovereign of Deutsche Bank. Did he lose oversight? Or did he allow it to happen?

'.......On the eve of the financial crisis, the bank allowed itself a particularly notable bit of treachery, one which destroyed what was left of its once unassailable reputation. It didn't just sell its customers securities whose worthlessness was already apparent to the bank's own traders, but allowed its own investment bankers to place bets on Wall Street on those securities' further loss of value -- and grab just a bit more off the top at the cost of its own customers.

'..........Greg Lippmann, who joined Deutsche Bank in 2000, is the name of the trader who ultimately bet 5 billion dollars against his own products. His story, which has since been turned into a movie, can be read in a report on the causes of the financial crisis assembled by the US Senate. The report also contains testimony that, on three occasions in the winter of 2007, Lippmann obtained permission from Anshu Jain to continue with his extremely amoral activities. Lippmann allegedly earned $1.5 billion for the bank with such bets. It would be interesting to know if, as billions were disappearing around the world in 2008, he received a nice bonus for his efforts

"''.......Deutsche Bank continued dancing -- on Wall Street and in London. It danced and danced, looking like it had lost all connection to reality and all business sense. Even today, according to a report by the *Wall Street Journal*, Deutsche Bank carries a debt-to-equity ratio of 24:1, while Goldman Sachs has gone down to a ratio of 9:1. And the bank is still juggling billions in derivatives, securities that are essentially bets on future developments. **Its derivative portfolio represents no significant risk, (14 trillion euros , most in high risk level 3 tier derivatives, say financial observers!!) says current management, but given all that has happened, investors have lost trust -- just like what happened with Lehman Brothers.''**

''If history repeats itself, Deutsche Bank would be at the center of the inferno."

Meantime, rumours are starting to circulate that Deutsche will demand a €133 billion slush fund for its, and other European banks, rescue!

So, place your bets Messieurs, Rien ne Va plus! Read on !

DEUTSCHE BANQUE & BANQUE MONTE DEI PASCHI - Two Banks inextricably linked

Unfortunately it is only too likely the outcome of these banking scandals will have repercussions, and huge repercussions, just like in 2008, Europe wide.

The Deutsche Bank story continues unabated with reports that if it fails, the UK could also be involved in its debts! In the past week or so, it has finally agreed a settlement of €35 million for its involvement with rigging the silver market some years back. It has paid off the litigation and fines for being involved in the Libor rigging case. Meantime of course it is wrestling with, and has not yet resolved its case with the US Department of Justice, which is claiming €15 billion in amends for its involvement in the sub prime mortgage scandal which was responsible for the 2008 banking (and world) financial crisis.

It had announced it would be laying off 5,000 workers several weeks back, but since then has announced restructuring, loads more bank closures and further layoffs of 9,000 employees, most of which will happen in Germany. This seems an incredible figure, but from reports it seems that the bank did not like others restructure following the 2008 debacle, and has far too many branches in Germany, with little conversion to online banking. German banks together with French and Italian banks are apparently some of the most inefficient, and costly in their operations.

CEO of Deutsche Bank John Cryan, has repeatedly stated that the bank's liquidity is sufficient, but recently returned from the latest IMF meeting in Washington having failed to reach any agreement on the DOJ fine. For the past month spokesmen for Deutsche Bank have continually stated "Nothing to see here" "Deutsche is fine, solid, liquid, plenty of resources"etc.

But things keep on turning up! The latest was an indictement by Italian prosecutors in Milan

John Cryan – Deutsche CEO

Nearly four years after it was first revealed that Deutsche Bank had engaged in various shady deals at the height of the financial crisis designed to mask Monte Paschi's financial woes, on October 1 Italy finally charged the German lender and 6 of its current and former managers, including Michele Faissola (more on him later), Michele Foresti and Ivor Dunbar, for colluding to falsify the accounts of Italy's third-biggest bank, Monte Paschi, and manipulate the market. Two former executives at Nomura Holdings Inc. and five at Banca Monte dei Paschi di Siena were also charged.

As Bloomberg reported, prosecutors have been reconstructing how Monte Paschi's former managers misrepresented the lender's finances in the years through the two deals signed with Deutsche Bank in 2008 and Nomura in 2009. The investigation revealed Monte Paschi arranged the transactions to hide billions in losses that led to false accounting between 2008 and 2012, according to a prosecutors' statement released Jan. 14, when they completed the investigation.

To be sure, Deutsche Bank's intimate relationship with Monte Paschi is not new, and had been public knowledge ever since it first emerged in January 2013 that the German bank, as part of its long-standing relationship with the just as scandalous insolvent Italian bank, had used a complex transaction, dubbed Santorini, to mask losses from an earlier derivative contract. The world's oldest bank restated its accounts and has since been forced to tap investors to replenish capital amid a slump in its shares. It's now attempting to convince investors to buy billions of bad loans before a fresh stock sale.

However, in a new development in the neverending saga chronicling Deutsche Bank's illicit activities, earlier Bloomberg reported that Deutsche Bank, indicted for colluding with Monte dei Paschi to conceal the Italian lender's losses, "**mismarked the transaction and dozens of others on its own books, according to an audit commissioned by Germany's regulator.**"

In total, Deutsche Bankers arranged 103 similar deals with a total value of 10.5 billion euros ($11.8 billion) for 30 clients, according to the audit, Bloomberg writes citing the audit. In an attempt to "clean up balance sheets", the Frankfurt-based lender, Germany's largest, adjusted the accounting of 37 of those trades in 2013, in addition to Monte Paschi's, changing them from loans that had been kept off the books to **"derivatives"**.

According to Bloomberg, "the widespread use of a transaction that's now the subject of a criminal case highlights the lender's appetite for complexity at a time when the bank was expanding its fixed-income empire

According to the German audit, while Monte Paschi was the only client that used a transaction to "window dress" its books,**Deutsche Bank didn't correctly account for similar deals with banks from Italy to Indonesia made between 2008 and 2010.** The report also said senior executives didn't properly authorize the Monte Paschi trade, dubbed Santorini, or more importantly, adequately review the transaction ***after receiving a subpoena from the U.S. Federal Reserve in 2012.***

To professional financial observers it all seemed a flashback to Lehman Brother's infamous "Repo 105" designed to make the Lehman balance sheet appear healthier than it was for quarter end purposes, often times by tens of billions of dollars, so the deals structued by Deutsche Bank were known internally as "**enhanced repos**"!

The shades of the Lehman Bros. 2008 banking debacle continues to hang over Deutsche.

Reuters Breaking News – Deutsche:

Deutsche Bank (DBKGn.DE) is considering a u-turn in its retail banking strategy and may opt for a full integration of its Postbank (DEUPF.PK) operations instead of a sale, three people close to the bank said. The move, if agreed, would see Deutsche's Postbank holding dismantled and its Bonn headquarters dissolved. The yellow Postbank brand would be kept and Postbank customers would be serviced by a newly created Deutsche Bank retail banking unit, which would also comprise the so called blue bank, as Deutsche Bank-branded retail operations are known. The full integration would not only allow Deutsche Bank to cut overhead functions, reduce the number of branches and cut thousands of jobs, but also secure Deutsche Bank's access to Postbank customers' deposits, the sources said.

This presumably would allow them a bank "bail in", or the Cypress effect. How will German savers fancy those apfels!

Will Italy Leave the EU? ""Follow the Money""

This astounding headline is from the very reputable Bloomberg financial column of October 17th. Didn't I say last month "Follow the money"" or did I not. Maybe for some of you, I am banging on a bit much, but, BUT, believe me, things are serious. Just some people like J.C.Juncker - Oligarchs, who think they are Emperors - Eureaucrats, all desperate to preserve their positions, salaries, gold plated pensions, choose to ignore the fact the ship is sinking. They totally ignore the festering, stinking mess in their own backyard, but continue to come out with baseball bats to hammer the UK Democracy for having had the guts to vote against them.

It's intriguing to realise that many countries in the EU only achieved Democracy after WWII, Italy after Mussolini, France in 1946, Spain after the fall of Franco, etc, and then the wall came down. So many EU countries were, and apparently still are obeying the dictates of their leaders, especially those in Brussels. I am humming and harring between the similes of the Titanic plunging into the North Atlantic, and Nero fiddling whilst Rome burnt to the ground - except in the latter case, it didn't really happen that way, Nero was a bit ignorant, lets say lackadaisical, but not all that – but it is hard to imagine more ludicrous behaviour in trying to come up with reasonable descriptions of the activities of EU Eurocrats, and EU politicians over the past month. EU officials from J. C Juncker to Polish ex Prime Minister Donald Tusk, have waved big sticks at the UK, for the past few months, like loan shark enforcers, apparently not realising that that sort of reaction just goes against every ingrained morsel of British character.

We really don't like being bullied, and the more the bullying continues, the harder our reflexes will be to resist and overcome the bullies of this world.

The UK knows it has a really solid case for exiting the EU – so does the EU - and the EU has taken fright. The more, they the EU threaten, the more the case for leaving becomes strengthened.

It becomes increasingly obvious that money – remember ""ALWAYS FOLLOW THE MONEY!"" – is at the bottom of their hysterical demands. Whilst various EU apparachiks make denouncing statements, …..the four freedoms are sacrosanct, freedom of capital, goods, peoples etc, rules apparently for some but not for all -

Francois Hollande:

"*Britain must suffer the consequences of leaving the EU in order to save the institution from an existential crisis. There must be a threat, there must be a risk, there must be a price.*"

Donald Tusk

""Britain may decide against Brexit when they realise just how painful it will be"", warns EU chief

Threats, Threats, Threats!

Sententiously, sanctimoniously, declaiming that these freedoms are at the heart of the EU – they totally ignore the mess they have created by forcing EU countries into signing the Lisbon Treaty, - which many countries objected to, and rejected in its original forms in referendums, which has resulted in the

present and overhangingly ghastly immigrant crisis.
As many other financial commentators have pointed, officials of the EU sclerotically waving their big sticks around, will in the end be totally counter productive, as Brexit repercussions are far more likely to affect the EU adversely than the UK!
The more these Eurocrats prevaricate the more obvious their panic becomes. It is like a gigantic game of Liar's Dice, as to who can bluff whom the longest, who will blink first. And on the whole my bet goes for Prime Minister May. Apart from other trump cards she holds, she is a woman! No, I am not getting on a feminist track, BUT she is a very clever astute political player. And men particularly of the breed of J. C. Juncker always underestimate the intelligence of a clever woman.
Basically, as many observers, commentators are now saying, there is increasing dissatisfaction throughout the EU, now being portrayed in poll after poll. and the Eurocrats are increasingly terrified of a tsunami of EU defections. My gut feeling is that a lot of finger nails are drumming nervously on the committee tables biding time, waiting for the results of the Italian Referendum, due December 5.
It appears a lot of Italian voters have not too much idea of what they are supposed to be voting for December 5 – i.e. constitutional reforms, of the Senate, streamlining government – and will more likely be voting for/ against Prime Minister Renzi and government, and also for / against the Euro!
If, if, Italy votes NO, the s* will start to hit the EU fan.**

BREAKING NEWS

PRIME MINISTER RENZI HITS BACK

Renzi to EU: If you build walls against migrants, don't expect Italian money

Meantime Italy is taking the brunt of migrant arrivals, with little help from the EU, and in the past few days PM Renzi declared defiantly:
"We give 20 billion (euros) to Europe so that we can get back 12 - and if Hungary, the Czech Republic (Hungary) and Slovakia want to preach at us about immigrants, allow Italy to say that the system is no longer working," Renzi told RAI 1 television. Asked if he was ready to use Italy's veto to torpedo the EU's budget, he said: "**Yes, absolutely.**" Renzi railed against central European countries that have closed off their borders to migrants and refused to take in asylum seekers under an EU quota plan as Europe battles its worst migration crisis since World War II. "**If you build walls against immigrants, you can forget about seeing Italian money. If the immigrants don't go there, the money won't go there either," he said.**

LITHUANIAN BRAIN DRAIN

And talking about elections, Lithuania has just gone to the polls, voting in a Peasant & Green party alliance, with a majority of seats. The campaign was dominated by issues such as low wages and and how to stem the flow of Lithuanian workers to other parts of the EU. Since Lithuania joined the European Union in 2004, an estimated 370,000 people have left – the population has shrunk to 2.9 million from 3.3 million a decade ago
At the beginning of last year it adopted the EU's common currency, the euro, which has sharply increased prices while wages and pensions remain among the lowest in the bloc. The Brain Drain of their young and talented to other EU countries was cited by many politicians, saying ""we are going to be left a country of the old
This obscure protest party in Lithuania with previously just one MP in parliament has stormed to power in a shock general election victory after pledging to tackle the country's emigration crisis. Hundreds of thousands of Lithuanians have been lured abroad by higher wages in an alarming "brain drain" that has seen the population plummet to less than 2.6m
It has lost more than 370,000 people - of which roughly half have gone to Britain - since the eastern European country joined the bloc in 2004.
But the LPGU's promise of change and the introduction of a technocratic government won over Lithuanians tired of the old parties, and frustrated with a sluggish economy and the inability of previous government to prevent people seeking a better future by moving abroad.
The problem of emigration became one of the key topics of the election campaign.
Since joining the EU in 2004 Lithuania's population of around 3 million has shrunk by about 370,000, with as many as 150,000 heading to Britain: the fastest population decline in the EU.
And even before accession tens of thousands of Lithuanians had packed their bags to escape the low wages and poor economic prospects of their homeland.
"It's a huge problem, our biggest problem," Virgis Sinkevicius, an LGPU member and one of its new MPs, told The Telegraph.
"Since 1990 we have lost about 800,000 people and for a small country this is a huge loss. We are losing are youngest and brightest so in the future we will just old have people who will be dying. We will have a dying society."
His party hopes to stem the flow of people moving abroad by trying to create jobs and by improving the conditions for foreign investment.
So much for the much vaunted EU free movement of people, something that journalist Janet Daley wrote about in detail a month ago.

POLITICIANS WILL SAY ANYTHING!

Just recently, Janet Daley, American columnist long time resident in the UK, commented:
"When the UK were asked to vote in a referendum on the Common Market, the most heated popular issue was the cost of food. Those opposed were adamant that food prices would rise as a consequence of losing special trade relationship with the Commonwealth: dairy products and lamb from New Zealand, and particularly cane sugar from the West Indies**, would have to be replaced by more expensive versions from European member states. Enthusiastic Joiners adamantly denied this. Result: the UK stayed in and food prices went up (and we didn't even get the cheap wine we'd been promised as a consolation).
Moral of the story: when people are determined to accomplish a political end, they will say almost anything. The native wit and scepticism of the British electorate must be on full alert.
Much of the huff-and-puff coming from the EU is blatantly political and self-

serving: what Francois Hollande and even Angela Merkel are saying now is tailored for the home market. They are both facing difficult (in Hollande's case, terminal) election periods and Brexit is a threat to the stability of the EU which they could do without. The uncritical, unquestioning coverage given to their pronouncements by the intransigent Remain sections of the British media is pure mischief."

""And then recently the President of the European Council, Donald Tusk, added his contribution to Project Fear Mark II with a textbook threat: so terrible for Britain will be the consequences of Brexit negotiations that the country will beg to be allowed back into the club.

""There will be no cakes on the table for anyone. There will be only salt and vinegar""! No softer options, no loosening of ties, no friendly agreements to maintain civilised relations: there can only be "hard Brexit" or "no Brexit", and when we glimpse the full horror of that pitiless wasteland outside the boundaries, we will repent and reverse our decision to leave.

But wait – I thought it was impossible to retreat once we started the clock ticking with Article 50. Wasn't that the original warning? There'll be no way back, no way of cancelling the outward trajectory after you start the process, blah-blah? So which is it? Will we inevitably be cast out on our fundaments or will we be allowed to crawl back on our knees?

I've said this before and I'll say it again: the British are brave to the point of perversity. Trying to bully them is entirely counterproductive. They also have a sardonic sense of the ridiculous which, rather like a taste for Marmite, is incomprehensible to those who do not share it."

** Tate & Lyle Sugar UK are looking forward to importing far more raw sugar cane from the West Indies, for processing, as a result of Brexit, instead of being subject to the tarifs imposed by the EU that protects sugar beet growers from competition. See Bloomberg.

POVERTY RISING IN EU STATES

As commentator Mathew Lynn writes Eurostat, the statistical agency of the European Union, has just published its latest findings on the numbers of people

"at risk of poverty or social exclusion", comparing 2008 and 2015. "We are all tediously aware of how the euro-zone has been a financial disaster. But it is now starting to become clear that it is a social disaster as well. What often gets lost in the discussion of growth rates, bail-outs and banking harmonisation is that the eurozone is turning into a poverty machine.

As its economy stagnates, millions of people are falling into genuine hardship. Whether it is measured on a relative or absolute basis, rates of poverty have soared across Europe, with the worst results found in the area covered by the single currency.

Eurostat, the statistical agency of the European Union, has published its latest findings on the numbers of people "at risk of poverty or social exclusion", comparing 2008 and 2015. Across the 28 members, five countries saw really significant rises compared with the year of the financial crash. In Greece, 35.7pc of people now fall into that category, compared with 28.1pc back in 2008, a rise of 7.6 percentage points. Cyprus was up by 5.6 points, with 28.7pc of people now categorised as poor. Spain was up 4.8 points, Italy up 3.2 points and even Luxembourg, hardly known for being at risk of deprivation, up three points at 18.5pc.

It was not so bleak everywhere. In Poland, the poverty rate went down from 30.5pc to over 23pc. In Romania, Bulgaria, and Latvia, there were large falls compared to the 2008 figures – in Romania for example the percentage was down by seven points to 37pc.

What was the difference between the countries where poverty went up dramatically, and those where it went down? You guessed it. The largest increases were all countries within the single currency. But the decreases were all in countries outside it.""

But the fact that poverty levels are rising so fast in what were prosperous countries is shocking. There is no sign of that rise slowing down – indeed, in countries such as Greece and Italy, it is accelerating. What were once dirt-poor countries, such as Bulgaria, or middle income countries like Poland, are fast over-taking what used to be developed Europe.

Not being able to afford a phone, or to eat meat three times a week, afford heating, is no fun. But thanks to the euro that is now the fate of millions of Europeans – and it will not change until the currency is taken apart."

Suicides more than doubled in Greece over the past year, now one reads that Italian pensioners, seeing their life savings evaporate, are also committing suicide. What an indictment of the EU.

SWEDEN OFFERS OLIVE BRANCH

But Sweden does not seem to be falling in line with the belligerent Eurocrats. Sweden has warned that it would be a serious mistake to chastise Britain for voting to leave the EU, appealing instead for an amicable settlement to minimise damage for both sides.

"The softer the Brexit, the better. We're an open country and we are in favour of free trade, and we want to see a solution that is as beneficial as possible for everybody," said Magdalena Andersson, the Swedish finance minister.

The olive branch from Stockholm reflects the shared view of the Nordic bloc that there is nothing to be gained from a

fractious divorce between Britain and the EU.
“I think our basic instincts are the same. We’ve heard some voices from the Continent that now is the time to punish the British, whereas our instinct instead is that this is the new situation and we have to make the best of it. We have to see what is good for jobs and growth,” she told the Daily Telegraph on a trip to London.
The EU itself needs to tread with care since there are large eurosceptic movements in Sweden, Denmark, and Finland. A hard-line stance that ignored the concerns of the Scandinavian bloc would risk opening fresh rifts within an already badly-fractured Union.
There are over 1,000 Swedish companies operating in Britain, employing 100,000 people, from Saab, Scania, and Electrolux, to Skype and Ericsson, to Ikea and H&M. “They’re worried about potential trade barriers and tariffs, and about the Swedish personnel,” said Ms Andersson. “A weak British pound affects Swedish exports companies, and that could of course affect the Swedish economy,” she said. Britain is the country’s third biggest foreign market.

HOUSE OF CARDS

Meantime Economist (!) Professor Otmar Issing, and previously a towering figure in the construction of the single currency, declared that the European Central Bank is becoming dangerously over-extended and the whole euro project is unworkable in its current form, the founding architect of the monetary union warnedjust last week.
Prof Issing lambasted the European Commission as a creature of political forces that has given up trying to enforce the rules in any meaningful way. "The moral hazard is overwhelming," he said.
The ECB is now buying corporate bonds that are close to junk, and the haircuts can barely deal with a one-notch credit downgrade
The European Central Bank is on a "slippery slope" and has in his view fatally compromised the system by bailing out bankrupt states in palpable violation of the treaties.
"The Stability and Growth Pact has more or less failed.
"The no bailout clause is violated every day," he said, dismissing the European Court's approval for bailout measures as simple-minded and ideological.
Prof Issing slammed the first Greek rescue in 2010 as little more than a bailout for German and French banks, insisting that it would have been far better to eject Greece from the euro as a salutary lesson for all. The Greeks should have been offered generous support, but only after it had restored exchange rate viability by returning to the drachma.
As he said, a major contributor to the Euro, **"One day, the house of cards will collapse!" Very possibly sooner than he thinks.**

ITALY & THE EU

The Bloomberg article quoted above stated: ”Will Italy follow the U.K.'s example and leave the European Union? Far-fetched as it may seem, capital flows as Bloomberg quotes in detail, suggest that some people aren’t waiting to find out. To keep the euro area's accounts in balance, Europe's central banks track flows of money among the members of the currency union. If, for example, a depositor moves 100 euros from Italy to Germany, the Bank of Italy records a liability to the Eurosystem and the Bundesbank records a credit. If a central bank starts building up liabilities rapidly, that tends to be a sign of capital flight. Lately, Italy's central bank has been building up a lot of liabilities to the Eurosystem. As of the end of September, they stood at about 354 billion euros, up 118 billion from a year earlier -- and up 78 billion since the end of May, before the U.K. voted to leave the EU. The outflow isn't quite as large as during the sovereign-debt crisis of 2012, but it's still significant. The main beneficiary seems to be Germany, which has seen its credits to the Eurosystem increase by 160 billion over the past year.”

Gold Bullion dealers are springing up all over Italy.

The Italian bank investors obviously know what will happen if a Bank Bail In happens, they lose all their investments, as happened to people in Cyprus, and they are moving their money out of the banks, under the mattresses, and into Gold, as another Financial Commentator observed this month. And it certainly gives another dimension to the expression **“going to the mattresses!”** Hopefully they are not transferring their investments to Deutsche Bank!
If now the Italian Government, and Prime Minister Renzi is forced to a bank ‘’bail in’’ there are at least 354 billion euros less to count on, not pretty.
People in Cyprus had to find this out the hard way in early 2013. People awoke on an otherwise normal Saturday morning to the shock that the money in their bank accounts had been taken by a bail-in to recapitalize the banks.
Not surprisingly, many Italians aren’t just waiting around to get “Cyprused.”
When shares in Deutsche Bank AG, Germany’s largest lender, tanked last month, sparking rumors of a state-funded bailout, Italian politicians couldn’t help indulging in a bit of schadenfreude. Scolded by Berlin for years for his apparent failure to sort out Italy’s endemic bank problems, Premier Matteo Renzi showed evident pleasure in wagging the finger back at Germany.

“I am sure German authorities will do everything needed to prevent Deutsche Bank’s crisis from worsening,” he told Italian state television late last month. “We have always said that as far as the issue of credit is concerned, Europe has to do everything needed to fix the situation of banks and that the main concern comes from German banks."

At the same time, some Italian officials say Deutsche Bank's travails are more likely to complicate their work by potentially bringing on another European banking crisis at a time Italian officials are trying to raise capital for the country's most troubled bank.

Over the summer, Berlin and Rome sparred over Italian attempts to inject capital into its struggling banks without imposing losses to junior bondholders first, losses that would be dictated by recently introduced European bank resolution rules.

The European Commission, with strong backing from Berlin, declined to offer Rome any dispensation. In private, European and German officials fumed that Rome hadn't considered bailing out Italian banks until just after the new rules, aimed at discouraging such bailouts, had kicked in. Some accused Italy of using the uncertainty caused by Britain's Brexit vote to try to sabotage the continent's brand-new rule book.

"We worked to set down certain rules about bank resolution and bank recapitalization," German Chancellor Angela Merkel said in June. "We can't do everything again every two years. We put a lot of effort into that."

The German state, Mr. Renzi retorted, had injected €247 billion into its banks—when doing so was still allowed. A few years earlier, he added, a different German government had simply ignored the European Union's fiscal rules to run an outsize budget deficit, showing that **European rules could be bent as long as Germany was doing the bending.**

Because of Italy's structural economic problems, it should have a significantly weaker currency. But since Italy is wrapped in the euro straightjacket, it gets monetary conditions that are far too tight than appropriate for the country.

Nearly two decades of no economic growth have had consequences for Italian banks, which are now woefully undercapitalized.

The Italian economy is made up of many small and medium-sized businesses. Those businesses have taken out loans from Italian banks. But as the economy is in a depression, many of those loans have gone bad or will go bad.

This has created a crisis in the Italian banking system. It took years to build up, but now the situation is coming to a head. The Italian banking system is insolvent, and now everyone knows it. Shares of Italian banks have plummeted more than 50% so far this year.

"There is a lot of talk about bad loans at Italian banks, but for some tens of billions of bad loans in our banks there are hundreds of thousands [of derivatives] in German banks," Renzi said last month.

The spat was all the more bitter for marking the climax of years of German-Italian bickering over economic policy—including Berlin's refusal to build a Europewide bank-deposit-guarantee system despite the EU's pledge to do so as the last pillar of its new banking-resolution regime.

""**The comparison with the Titanic is an apt one.** Like the Titanic, the EU was presented as a "super-state", one that would be bigger and better than all the others in Europe. **It was declared unsinkable.** Yet, soon after it was launched, it hit an unexpected iceberg from which it could not recover.

Years from now, historians and economists will debate the identity of the EU iceberg. **Some will say Brexit, others will say Deutsche Bank.** Still others will cite events that we have not yet seen. However, for our purposes, it matters little. **The dominoes have begun to fall and all of us that may be impacted by an EU collapse should make sure that we have all our own ducks in a row – to assure that we are impacted as minimally as possible."**

The *Financial Times* recently put it this way:

An Italian exit from the single currency would trigger the total collapse of the eurozone within a very short period. It would probably lead to the most violent economic shock in history, dwarfing the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy in 2008 and the 1929 Wall Street crash.

That's how important the upcoming referendum in Italy is. It would be the first domino to fall in the collapse of the EU.

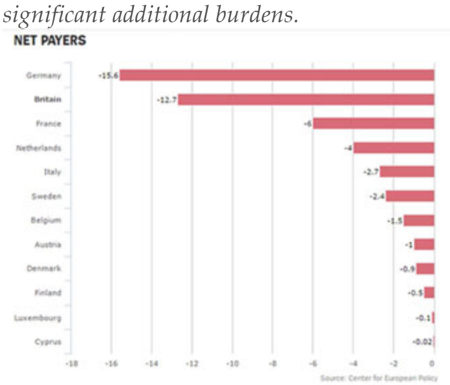
And when I said last month, "Follow the Money", I could not have been more prescient. Just after writing that I stumbled across an article that had appeared some time earlier in **Der Spiegel,** German magazine reiterating that very point, that once the UK had quit the EU, who was going to fill the financial gap.

QUOTE ""10 Billion Euros or Worse

Commissioned by the European Commission and the General Secretariat of the European Council, the first calculations on how expensive Brexit might be for the 27 remaining member states have now been completed. According to one paper, net revenues that flow into the EU from Britain each year range from 14 to 21 billion euros. If you subtract the money Britain gets back from Brussels, the EU budget would shrink by up to 10 billion euros per year.

But it could be even worse. The rebate to Britain's EU contributions negotiated by Margaret Thatcher has led to more than 110 billion euros in savings for the British over the years. Given that other net payers, including Germany, did not want to be made responsible for the additional costs this created, they were also given a rebate. In addition to Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Austria and Denmark also currently enjoy a reduction in what they must pay into the budget. After Brexit, this spat could intensify, especially given that France, which is also a net payer, doesn't get any rebate at all.

A paper by the Center for European Policy (CEP), set to be presented in Berlin this week, delivers numbers of a similar magnitude. The comprehensive study on redistribution in the EU shows that the remaining EU member states, above all Germany, are facing significant additional burdens.



From 2008 to 2015, the United Kingdom's contribution to the EU rose each year, to the point that it ultimately became the third biggest net payer into the EU's budget, the paper notes, with the average yearly amount paid by Britain pegged at 6.5 billion euros during this period. The only countries that pay more for European unity are Germany and France.

In 2015, the study found, Britain was in second place: The British paid 12.7 billion euros more than they got back from the EU. By comparison, Germany paid 15.6 billion.

The paper also determined that the British paid more into the EU per capita than Germany did that year. "After this country's withdrawal from the EU, this net amount will have to be redistributed among the other member states," writes CEP report author Matthias Kullas. "The other major net payers -- especially Germany, France and Italy -- will be facing significant additional costs."

Brexit could also lead to painful shortfalls for the European Investment Bank (EIB), Kullas calculated. If the British were to withdraw their share capital in the development bank, it would result in a shortfall worth billions. The EIB would be forced to make fewer loans -- loans that are vital for infrastructure projects across the Continent. (see EU White Elephants)***

According to Kullas, the British have thus far borne the greatest burden at the bank. Their share of total capital is 16 percent, but they only benefit from 8.8 percent of the loans. No other country has a larger imbalance.""

Now do you see why the bullies are trying to hit the UK over the head with baseball bats, like loan shark enforcers!

Liam Fox told the Spectator that Germany risks becoming the world's biggest cash machine after Brexit because it may end up paying for a failing European Union that is in danger of imploding:

"If I were a German politician I would be worried that, without Britain, Germany has the potential to become the greatest ATM in global history."

They've figured this out for themselves…

Of the 28 current members of the EU it may surprise co-conspirators to learn that only 12 countries were net contributors. Ireland has become the the thirteenth net contributor for the first time since it joined in 1973, hitherto it has been a net beneficiary to the order of €50 billion. *Expect Irish attitudes to the EU to change as that equation changes.*

Even after Margaret Thatcher's rebate, Britain was the second biggest contributor to the EU's budget. German Finance Minister Wolfgang Schäuble had his ministry's experts calculate what Brexit would mean for Germany's federal budget. As a result of the European Commission's budget contribution equation, Germany's share of the overall economic strength of the EU would rise from today's 21% to 25%. Thus the German taxpayers' share of the EU budget will rise by about €4.5 billion a year in 2019/20

RULES FOR SOME BUT NOT FOR OTHERS!

Italian Prime Minister RenzI is caught between an increasingly hard place and bigger rocks, and recently declared that other EU states should take their fair share/quota of migrants, Or have their EU funding cut, which seems a perfectly reasonable arguement

So far this year more than 144,000 migrants and refugees have reached Italy, the vast majority of them arriving in dinghies and decrepit fishing vessels that set out from Libya and Egypt.

Italy has nowdemanded "tough" treatment of Eastern European countries that refuse to accept refugees under the EU's relocation scheme, saying they should have their funding from Brussels cut.

Matteo Renzi, the prime minister, condemned the stubbornness of countries like Hungary, Poland and Slovakia, which have repeatedly refused to take in refugees, particularly Muslims, saying the newcomers would threaten their national identities and undermine social cohesion.

Since Balkan countries closed their borders in the spring, blocking refugees from reaching northern Europe from Greece, and the EU struck a deal with Turkey to halt the flow of people across the Aegean, Italy has borne the brunt of Europe's migration crisis. The country is struggling to accommodate 160,000 asylum seekers, with towns and cities bridling at the government's orders to look after the migrants. And now france is following suit, in clearing the Jungle at Calais, and dispatching coach loads of mainly economic migrants all over France, French villages down here in the Var, Pierrefeu and Tourves are up in arms.

Under the EU's relocation plan, nearly 40,000 refugees were supposed to be relocated from Italy and settled in other EU nations. But the scheme has come up against trenchant opposition, especially from Eastern European states, and so far less than 1,300 have been transferred.

In a referendum in Hungary earlier this month, 98 per cent of people who turned out to vote objected to EU refugee relocation quotas. Slovakia is also opposed to the relocation scheme. Prime Minister Renzi accused the EU of suffering from "frenetic paralysis" both in its response to the migration crisis and its reaction to Brexit.

Many of the people who have reached Italy across the Mediterranean are Africans who are judged to be economic migrants. Nigerians make up nearly a fifth of the arrivals in Italy, followed by Eritreans at 13 per cent and then nationals from Sudan, Gambia, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Somalia, Mali, Senegal and Bangladesh, according to the UNHCR.

At the same time Sweden also announced that Hungary should either accept its quote of migrants or be denied EU funding, plus earlier demanding that Hungary be expelled from the EU for its stance on migrants.

And in the past week or so Germany has voted to greatly limit benefits for unemployed EU nationals. ""**The German government approved a new law to curb social benefits for EU citizens who arrive in the country without a job immediately, as it responds to pressure to get tough on migrants. All in an effort to discourage 'Welfare tourism'." Well that's a turn up for the books.**

Meantime David Cameron was only able to extract a deal whereby the UK could cut funding /welfare / unemployment benefits after 5 years or so. Sauce for Goose but not for Gander.

Citizens from Poland, Bulgaria and Romania accounted for the most claims.

Meantime Chancellor Merkel did a whirlwind tour of several African states, Mali, Chad, Nigeria and Ethiopia to persuade them with parcels of promised goodies, into taking back their migrants.

While most asylum-seekers in Germany so far this year came from Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, Germany has also taken in over 13,000 Eritreans and thousands from other African countries. More than 10,000 came from Nigeria, the oil-rich economic giant,

The EU's auditors have in the past month (2016) failed to sign off Brussels accounts for the 22nd year in a row, claiming that they are 'materially affected by error'. Some examples of waste include a project where the team tasked with repaving a 1 kilometre footpath in Italy ended up buying a €4,000 mountain bike, a €3,500 panoramic spyglass and donating €10,000 to a local church from their budget.   An Agency in Mozambique claimed €874,309 for office and lab supplies but provided no proof the items were ever bought.   The accountants had an 'adverse opinion'of the legality and regularity of EU payments, a term which is used only in serious cases of error!   **Wow! Congratulations to the EU, 22 years in a row!**

And the thing is it is not EU money being burnt, it is our Money, our Taxes, yours, mine, your neighbours, your childrens taxes, with little oversight or supervision, no proper feasability studies.

One can only imagine how so many of these EU White Elephants saw the light of day, (more on them next month)"You vote for my project, and I will vote for yours!"   Scratch my back and I will scratch yours!!

If you doubt the above, just google ""EU white elephants"and be prepared to be appalled!

THE PRICE OF BREXIT IS HIGH AND RISING

On top of previous demands such as a "fair but inferior deal" for the UK, the EU now wants a €20 billion divorce settlement as the UK's "fair share" of inane projects the UK (theoretically!) agreed to as part of the EU – or possibly the UK were voted down by other EU members, the gang of 27! Rember how many tims in the p.asst few years the UK's veto has been totally ignored, 72 times out of 72!

BUT EU officials insist the UK is on the hook for past spending commitments.

Here is the question of the day: Why Should Britain Pay for a Brexit Divorce?

Money has long been the subject of the most ferocious political fights in Brussels and the Brexit divorce — and Britain's legacy bill of as much as €20bn — is shaping up to be one of the most epic of them all. At the heart of the debate is a question about the nature of the bloc. Is it a club where a member's liabilities expire on withdrawal or one where a member honours its promises even after it leaves? For the EU-27 the answer is clear. One official compared it to Britain signing a five-year gym membership then asking for its money back after three. Another senior diplomat said it was like Britain "sitting at the restaurant, picking from the menu, then leaving before the bill arrives". Over time this has built up into a roster of outstanding payment promises — known in Brussels by the French term *reste à liquider* — running to more than €200bn. It could increase to €241bn by 2019. With Britain's planned departure, it forces a financial reckoning that politicians had imagined would never be needed.

These are not the only liabilities. The EU accounts detail more than €300bn in shared payment liabilities, from fisheries agreements to pensions to promised funding for satellites building.

On top of that are about €56bn of shared contingent liabilities — where the EU raised funds to lend to countries such as Ireland, Portugal and Ukraine — and €21.4bn of loan guarantees that may generate costs in years to come.

Britain may argue it is no longer legally liable. It could be right. But the settlement will come in a political negotiation to leave the EU, not in a court. The crucial point is that the EU is preparing to make payment of Britain's legacy bill a basic condition of securing single market access or a transition agreement, which would provide a soft landing for British business operating in Europe. Inane EU projects provide yet another reason the UK was wise to kiss the EU goodbye. Meanwhile the EU demands on the UK keep mounting.

Growing List of Demands **

The free movement of persons and citizenship, including free movement of workers which is of course one of the reasons the UK left in the first place.

Ongoing payment for access to the common market.

A "fair" but inferior deal for the UK, a contradiction in terms. Spain wants Gibraltar, it goes on and on.

A €20 billion divorce settlement as the UK's "fair share" of EU projects approved during the time the UK was part of the EU.

****EU's demand for the Four Freedoms**:

Four Freedoms

The free movement of goods. The free movement of services and freedom of establishment. The free movement of persons (and citizenship), including free movement of workers. The free movement of capital.

EU Hypocrites on Free Movement of Capital

Curiously, the EU does not abide by its own rules. Greece is still under capital controls. Cyprus was under capital controls from 2013 to 2015.

EU Hypocrites on Free Movement of Services and Freedom of Establishment

To understand the hypocrisy inherent in this, look no further than French rules on nearly everything. Businesses cannot fire workers, move elsewhere, shut plants, etc. Think goods move freely? Then think again. Remember French farmers and vignerons,blocking the roads from Spain objecting to imports of Spanish vegetables, and spilling thousands of litres of Spanish wine on the roads.

RULES FOR SOME BUT NOT FOR OTHERS

And Freedom of Movement. Other countries in the EU can cherry pick, whom they accept: what about the positions of Austria, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic who are refusing to accept immigrants?

It all makes the EU's demand for a €20 billion divorce settlement on top of other impossible demands all the more laughable.

Curiously, this absurd piling on is to the benefit of the UK. **The UK is prepared to walk away already, so now it can walk away from another €20 billion demand.**

Meanwhile, the costs on the EU continue to pile up

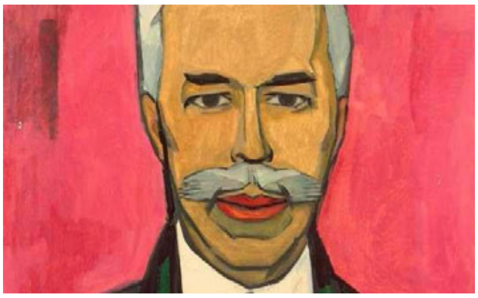
"A 15% tariff by the UK on German cars would effectively mean the price of German cars to UK buyers would rise by a whopping 30% since May, but the price of British goods in the EU would be roughly unchanged.

A hard Brexit would mean the UK would no longer contribute to the EU budget.

And a hard Brexit would also mean the the EU would not see the "€20 Billion Divorce Settlement" that it seeks.

Free from the nonsense of having to get 27 nations all to agree in trade talks, the UK can negotiate new trade deals much faster than it can now. The recent stalemate negotiations between Canada and EU, totally held up by the single state Wallonia are a perfect example of how impossible the gang of 27 are to deal with.

But as it stands, and contrary to all the Remain fearmongering and punishment talk, it's the EU, not the UK that will get clobbered the most if there is a hard Brexit."



Sergei Shchukin – collector

"ICONS OF MODERN ART". The Shchukin Collection - Hermitage Museum – Pushkin Museum"

Paris from October 20, 2016 to February 20, 2017

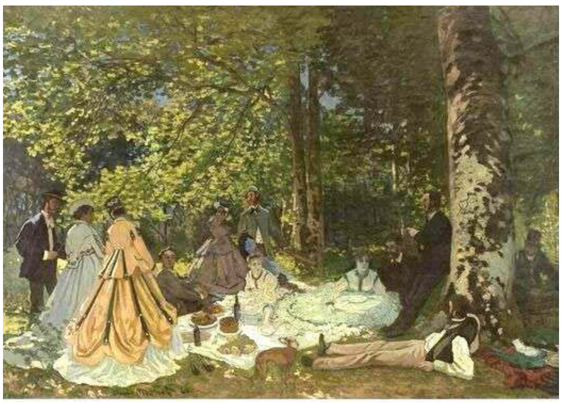
Pure pictorial dynamite: Icons of Modern Art is the perfect excuse for a trip to Paris

When Sergei Shchukin began buying up Matisses and Picassos in 1900s Paris, a patron emerged of a power and influence not seen since Renaissance princes and popes. The fabulously wealthy, astute Russian textile merchant, his eye honed on details of fabric and thread, was both a Maecenas and a messenger. Allowing Matisse complete freedom while inviting monumentality of scope and stylised treatments of the figure – nudes were at that time rarely if ever portrayed in Russian art circles – Shchukin commissioned in 1910 the large ""Dance" and "Music" panels which were decisive for modern art.

The Fondation Louis Vuitton is presenting "Icons of Modern Art. The Shchukin Collection, Hermitage Museum – Pushkin Museum" in Paris from October 20, 2016 to February 20, 2017 as part of the official program of the France-Russia Year of Cultural Tourism 2016-2017, in association with the State Hermitage Museum and the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Art

Curated by Anne Baldassari, Director of the Picasso Museum, the exhibition is dedicated to the collection of modern masterpieces brought together by the visionary Russian collector of modern French art, Sergei Shchukin (1854-1936), whose collections form the core of the collections of the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg and the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow.

Sergei Shchukin was a leading Moscow industrialist and textile magnate who by the end of the 1890s became part of the Paris circle defending the impressionists, post-impressionists, and modern artists. His connections with art dealers such as Paul Durand-Ruel and Ambroise Vollard as well the artists Monet and Matisse had a major influence on his collection of what was the most radical art of his time.



Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe, 1866, by Claude Monet

"Icons of Modern Art" will present 130 of the most important works from the Shchukin collection by the likes of Monet, Cézanne, Gauguin, Rousseau, Derain, Matisse, Picasso, Degas, Renoir, Lautrec, and Van Gogh, which will be shown alongside a major collection of some 30 masterpieces by Russian avant-garde masters including Malevitch, Rodtchenko, Larionov, Tatline, Popova, and Rozanova.

According to the Fondation Louis Vuitton, one of the main "thrusts" of the exhibition will be to organize what it describes as "a series of confrontations between modern masters and artists of the Russian avant-garde as a way of fully re-enacting the shock waves generated by this important dialogue in the history of fine art."

In addition to the works drawn from the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Art and the Hermitage Museum, "Icons of Modern Art" also includes contributions from the Russian Museum in Saint Petersburg, Moscow Oriental Art Museum, Tretiakov Gallery in Moscow, Museum of Modern Art in New York, Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris, and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.

One day in 1908, an elegant Russian art collector, who had a stammer, was entertaining a friend in his Moscow palace. "I'm going to show you something," he said, drawing back a curtain to reveal a canvas by the Post-Impressionist painter Paul Gauguin. It depicted a nude Tahitian woman reclining, like a tropical goddess of love, beside several mangoes. "A m-madman painted it," said the collector, with a laugh, "and another m-madman bought it." He was, of course, referring to himself – Shchukin.

This self-appointed "madman" was Sergei Shchukin, a highly wealthy textile merchant who had an infallible eye when it came to avant-garde art.

Between 1898 and 1914, Shchukin amassed a visionary collection of 275 works of modern art. These included outrageous masterpiecess – by all of the greats: Monet, Cézanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh, Picasso, Matisse. In his lifetime, he was mocked by Muscovite high society, which considered him the dupe of manipulative French dealers. Twelve years after his death in Paris in 1936, Stalin actually banished Shchukin's "Western bourgeois art", which had been nationalised following the Revolution. His collection up until now has remained fairly inaccessible for Westerners, divided between two museums: the Pushkin in Moscow and the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg.

As late as the 1890s, Shchukin favoured art that was conventional or dull: a tapestry by Burne-Jones, a schlocky view of an "enchanted" castle by the Scottish landscape painter James Paterson. The turning point came in 1898, when Shchukin, already living at the old Trubetskoy Palace in Moscow with his wife and children, met the important Impressionist art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel.

Matisse – the Pink Room, which the Pushkin has been restoring

A large underground gallery in the Frank Gehry-designed Fondation bears witness to his sudden infatuation with Impressionism.

Elsewhere, there is a similarly astonishing gallery devoted entirely to Picasso, which contains his Cubist masterpiece, the tragic Three Women (1907-08). And OH, the

Gauguins. The collection is just astounding.
Shchukin managed to escape from the Revolution to Paris, smuggling diamonds in his daughters doll, but leaving behind his treasured collection,. He died in Paris in 1936.

La Desserte – Matisse

Above, likely my most favourite work by Matisse, here it is called La Desserte, but sometimes it is called The Red Room, although there is another Matisse known as the Red Room. It is stunning. I have seen it three times, and have a poster of it, framed, that I bought yonks ago in New York, after seeing it at the Matisse show at MOMA. I subsequently saw it at the Pompidou Matisse expo, a year later, and then again at the Royal Academy show "From Russia …" in London. Every time, this picture just hits me in the stomach, difficult to describe, but it is wonderful.
Way back when, 1964, before the wall fell, I had been sent on work business to Moscow by the company I worked for. Due to Russian intransigence, bureaucracy, I was left twiddling my thumbs for nearly a week. I had looked up things before going, and remembered that the Puskhin was reputed to hold some wonderful Impressionist art works. I made enquiries how to get there, getting absolutely no help. The Baboushkas on every floor of the hotel - they were in charge of everything back then, and we were staying in the hotel right opposite the Stalin Mausoleum in Red Square - just told me Nyiet, Nyiet! and offered to organise me trips to see the Hall of Progress, which I politely declined. (The astuce then was to enter one's hotel room, and declaim loudly, OH dear, no coat hangers – within a few hours, coat hangers would arrive!).
So I set off my own, having a reasonably good idea of where the Pushkin was located, not too far away, and I have a pretty good bump of direction. I did not dare take a bus or metro, but just walked, realising that the Muscovite crowd did not really take to me, not liking me in my fancy western gear, a nice summer dress (a sale bargain from Wallis) and sandals, but somewhat smarter than what they were wearing. I finally came across a very impressive building, huge, guarded by enormous men (possibly an army unit whose parameters were that every soldier had to be at least 6'4", or maybe it was the huge Cossak type headgear!) in wonderful red unforms heavily decorated with gold braid. I enquired "Pushkin?", I got Nyiet, Nyiet, again, but they were nice. I peaked in and got the impression it was a very, very important library.
I persevered, and then finally stumbled across it. I don't read Cyrillic, but I could make out that it seemed to say Pushkin. I paid, went in and spent several glorious hours, surrounded by some superb Impressionist treasures, which made the whole week very worth while.
So, having the wonderful art work treasures of the Shchukin legacy reunited, in this one show, is just fabulous.
Come hell and high water, I and pal Val, will be shooting up to Paris to see this Expo, no matter what.
www.fondationlouisvuitton.fr

CRISIS – WHAT CRISIS! By SIMON EVELEIGH

After nine games, Toulon are second in the Top 14, breathing hard down Clermont's neck. In Europe, after a disappointing home defeat to Saracens (more of which later), they got things back on track with a win at Sale. On the face of it, therefore, things do not look too bad for Toulon.
However, October has followed the pattern of the rest of the early season, with mixed results on the pitch and intrigue off it.
To start with the sporting action, the month began with a match at the Stade Vélodrome in Marseille and a resounding bonus point victory over one of Toulon's main rivals, Montpellier.
A week later, Toulon travelled to La Rochelle, the surprise package this season. La Rochelle are unbeaten at home this season, so a 17-17 draw can be viewed as a successful day's work.
Having seemingly got things on track after a sticky start, Toulon got their European campaign underway with a home game against reigning champions Saracens. Playing Saracens is probably the toughest assignment in European rugby at the moment. They did a domestic and European double last season and they have started this campaign in dominant fashion, losing only once in their first nine games.
In the first half at Toulon they gave a master class and led 25-6 at the break. Whether Toulon raised their game in the second half or the visitors took their foot off the pedal, the second period was far less one-sided and Toulon narrowed the gap. The final score was 31-23, but Toulon will have been disappointed not to have at least got a losing bonus point, although having conceded three tries in the opening 40 minutes, preventing their opponents from taking a try bonus point could be viewed as a minor victory.
Having said that, the way Saracens outclassed Toulon in the first half will have sent shivers down the spines of every one of Saracens' prospective opponents.
A week later, Toulon went to Sale and came away with a valuable win in what was a pretty poor game of rugby. Indeed, neither side managed to score a point in the second half.
With back-to-back matches to come against Scarlets in December, Toulon's fate is still in their own hands, but they may well need to win at Saracens in late January to qualify for the quarter-finals.
Last month I mentioned the appointment of Mike Ford as Toulon's backs coach, but his role at the club changed in the days after the Sale match when he was promoted to head coach, following the departure of Diego Dominguez.
Ford's first match in charge was at home to Grenoble and in a great display, they ran in 6 tries in a 42-12 win.
Yes, Grenoble are weak and look like one of the favourites for relegation, but there were signs that Ford's Toulon will play a slightly different brand of rugby than is the norm in the Top 14. However, having

had a few false starts already this season, we will need to wait for sterner tests before making a judgement on the Ford "revolution".

Toulon play three times in November, away to Lyon, home to Stade Français and at Castres, but domestic action will be overshadowed by the Autumn internationals, as the might of the southern hemisphere comes to Europe.

If the northern hemisphere sides that play South Africa and Australia will fancy their chances, some will have the unenviable task of playing New Zealand.

Chris Ashton leaves Saracens to join Toulon

The All Blacks have won a world record 18 successive matches and are playing rugby that the rest of the world can only dream about. Having retained their world title this time last year and following the loss of some of the very best players to have ever worn the famous black shirt, a drop in performance levels would have been quite understandable.

Unfortunately for their opponents, but happily for the rugby-loving spectator, New Zealand have taken their game to even higher levels in the last twelve months and currently are so far ahead of the rest that it is difficult to see who can possibly challenge them.

England are currently ranked second in the world and may well be building a team capable of toppling the All Blacks in the next few years. However, Eddie Jones will probably be quite pleased that he does not have to face them now, especially as England have lost several key players through injury.

England start with South Africa and finish with Australia, with Fiji and Argentina sandwiched in between. Even with their lengthy injury list, England will be expected to win all four and anything less would be a setback.

France will be hoping to build on the morale boost they got when they won in Argentina in June. They start with a tricky match against Samoa, before entertaining Australia and New Zealand on successive weekends.

As mentioned previously, rugby is striving to break the American market and this continues when Ireland and New Zealand go head to head in Chicago on 5 November. The two teams will meet again two weeks later in Dublin, with the New Zealanders stopping off in Rome between times.

To help armchair fans plan their viewing over the next few weeks, the full list of fixtures is as follows (kick off times all in Var time);

Enjoy the action and I look forward to reporting on it all next month.

FIXTURES:

05/11/16 15:30 Wales/Australia
Millennium Stadium
05/11/16 16:00 Barbarians/South Africa
Wembley Stadium
05/11/16 123:00 Ireland/New Zealand
Chicago
12/11/16 15:00 Italy/New Zealand
Stadio Oylimpico
12/11/16 15:30 England/South Africa
Twickenham
12/11/16 15:30 Scotland/Australia
Murrayfield
12/11/16 17:45 France/Samoa
Toulouse
12/11/16 18:30 Wales/Argentina
Millenium Stadium
12/11/16 20 :15 Ireland/Canada
Aviva Stadium
19/11/16 15:00 Italy/South Africa
Florence
19/11/16 15:30 England/Fiji
Twickenham
19/11/16 15:30 Wales/Japan
Millenium Stadium
19/11/16 18:00 Scotland/Argentina
BT Murrayfield
19/11/16 18:30 Ireland/New Zealand
Aviva Stadium
19/11/16 21:00 France/Australia
Stade de France
26/11/1615:00 Italy/Tonga
Padua
26/11/16 15 :30 England/Argentina
Twickenham
26/11/16 15:30 Scotland/Georgia
Kilmarnock
26/11/16 18:30 Ireland/Australia
Aviva Stadium
26/11/16 18h30 Wales/South Africa
Millennium Stadium
26/11/16 21:00 France/New Zealand
Stade de France
03/12/16 15 :30 England/Australia
Twickenham

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This organisation exists to support not only the bereaved, but also those who are terminally ill, & their families/friends.
If you, or someone you know, could benefit from our confidential support, then please contact Sandra- 04 94 84 64 89 / 06 32 35 31 24 - email info@bsnvar.org-
or go to our web site www.bsnvar.org for further information.

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Part of the Anglican Church of Lorgues with Fayence
2nd Sunday at "Arc-en-Provence"
1801 Chemin des Pailles Lorgues
4th Sunday at Notre Dames des Anges
17 Avenue des Quatre Pierres - Lorgues followed by bring & share lunch.
Contact Rev Peter or Shirley Massey
O4 94 73 93 37 or 06 87 94 04 83
Website www.lorgueswithfayence.org

Fellowship of the Ascension
MONTAUROUX
Part of the Anglican Church of Lorgues with Fayence
1st, 3rd Sundays11 an at The Presbytery Montauroux
37 Rue St Brigitte, followed by bring and share lunch
Contact Rev Peter Massey 0494 739337
or Hilary Rost at 0494 477067
Website www.lorgueswithfayence.org

St. John the Evangelist –
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Holy Communion every Sunday at 10.30 a.m. followed by refreshments.
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Grimaud Village Church
1st Thursday each month 11am
Ring 04 94 60 87 05 for details
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Is ALCOHOL a problem for you?
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08 20 200 257
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Art Sale and Exhibition

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Artist Tessa Baker is having a sale of her works at her atelier.

Wine and Canapés

Opening night Friday 25th November at 16.00-18.30
Saturday all day from 11.00-18.00
Sunday all afternoon from 14.00-18.00

Address:
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