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The New York Times

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Deportations vs. the laws of physics

Dara Lind

OPINION

If you didn't think they were serious before, you certainly ought to know better now.

Donald Trump's team has construed his U.S. election victory as a mandate for carrying out what it has described as mass deportations. Even before Mr. Trump announced a nominee to lead the country's Department of Homeland Security, he named Stephen Miller, an immigration hard-liner, as deputy chief of staff and homeland security adviser, and Tom Homan (who was the acting director of Immigration and Customs Enforcement during part of Mr. Trump's first term) as a White House-based czar to oversee "all deportation of illegal aliens back to their country of origin."

It is tempting to assume that after his first term and four more years of planning, Mr. Trump and his administration will find no obstacles to impose their will swiftly and completely.

But that's not true. No executive order can override the laws of physics and create, in the blink of an eye, staff and facilities where none existed. The constraints on a mass deportation operation are logistical more than legal. Deporting one million people a year would cost an annual average of \$88 billion, and a one-time effort to deport the full unauthorized population of 11 million would cost many times that — and it's difficult to imagine how long it would take.

So the question is not whether mass deportation will happen. It's how big Mr. Trump and his administration will go, and how quickly. How many resources — exactly how much, for example, in the way of emergency military funding — are they willing and able to marshal toward the effort? How far are they willing to bend or break the rules to make their numbers?

The details matter not only because every deportation represents a life



PHOTOGRAPHS BY SAUMYA KHANDELWAL FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Prahlad Pawar, 34, right, with his wife, Pushpa Pawar, 31, in Kolgaon, western India. The Pawars said their employer made them work as his personal servants in the off-season.

No detail too small when Musk slashes costs

Cuts at Twitter and Tesla hint at how he may try to trim government spending

BY RYAN MAC, KATE CONGER, JACK EWING AND ERIC LIPTON

On a Saturday morning in December 2022, Elon Musk summoned finance executives at Twitter, which he had bought six weeks earlier, to a conference call. Then he drilled into a spreadsheet that contained the social media company's expenditures.

Mr. Musk was angry, three people who were on the call said. Even though Twitter had just shed more than three-quarters of its employees — leaving it with just over 1,500 workers, down from nearly 8,000 — the company's spending still appeared to be out of control, the liaison told attendees.

Over the next six hours, Mr. Musk read out the spreadsheet line by line and asked workers to account for each item. He ordered some items — such as car services for executives — to be cut completely. At one point, he confronted an employee who was responsible for a multimillion-dollar contract related to website security and said his electric vehicle company, Tesla, spent far less on the same task. After the employee pushed back, Mr. Musk said she was no longer with Twitter.

The meeting was characteristic of the approach that Mr. Musk has taken to cutting costs. Frugal to a fault, the 53-year-old has been intimately involved in hacking down budgets at his companies, including Tesla, SpaceX and Twitter, which he renamed X.

Over nearly three decades as a tech entrepreneur, he has honed his penny-pinching by digging into minutiae and cutting as deeply as possible — often preferring to cut too much, rather than too little, according to 17 current and former employees and others with knowledge of Mr. Musk's strategies.

Perhaps most important, Mr. Musk has been brutally unsentimental about the cuts, paying little regard to norms and conventions. The tech mogul has slashed costs to the point that corporate processes — and sometimes even product safety — break down, philosophizing that he can just fix things later, the people said. And he has been unafraid to offend, stiffing vendors to negotiate better prices and sidestepping traditional suppliers to manufacture cheaper parts from scratch.

MUSK, PAGE 6

Trapped in a life of labor

BEED, INDIA

India's sugar workers who quit, fleeing abuse, often risk much worse

BY QADRI INZAMAM, MEGHA RAJAGOPALAN AND SAUMYA KHANDELWAL

When his daughter turned 12, Gige Dutta decided this would be the year that he and his wife quit cutting sugar cane in the fields of western India. The work required a long migration, and his daughter would have to drop out of school — the first step for many girls on a lifelong path of abuse and poverty.

But his employer refused to let them quit. He and his friends beat up Mr. Dutta and forced him into a car, Mr. Dutta said. According to a report that he



A Jaywant Sugars plant in Karad, India. One worker, Gige Dutta, said he was beaten by his employer and held captive in the sugar mill when he tried to leave his job.

filed with a local government agency, the men drove him to a mill that says it supplies sugar to many international companies.

Mr. Dutta was locked there for two days, he said, and left to sleep on the floor to reconsider his decision.

The sugar-rich state of Maharashtra supplies companies like Coca-Cola, PepsiCo and Unilever. Local politicians and sugar barons say that laborers like the Dutta are free to leave. The work is hard, they concede, but laborers can always seek work elsewhere.

But the sugar workers of Maharashtra are far from free. With no written contracts, they are at the mercy of their employers to decide when they may leave. They frequently work under the threat of violence, abduction and murder.

There is no official data about how often such treatment occurs, and abuses often go unreported, because workers

INDIA, PAGE 9

In a memoir, Cher explores her fraught childhood and marriage to Sonny Bono

BY ELISABETH EGAN

Twice during a 90-minute interview about her memoir, Cher asked, "Do you think people are going to like it?"

Even in the annals of single-name celebrities — Sting, Madonna, Beyoncé, Zendaya — Cher is in the stratosphere of the one percent. She's been a household name for six decades. She was 19 when she had her first No. 1 single with Sonny Bono. She won an Oscar for "Moonstruck," an Emmy for "Cher: The Farewell Tour" and a Grammy for "Believe." Her face has appeared on screens of all sizes, and her music has been a soundtrack for multiple generations, via vinyl, compact disc and Spotify.

But wrangling a definitive account of her life struck a nerve for Cher. There were dark corners to explore and 78 years of material to sift through. And —

this might have been the hardest part — she had to make peace with the fact that her most personal stories will soon be in the hands of scores of readers.

"This book has exhausted me," she said of the first volume of her two-part namesake memoir, which was released on Tuesday. "It took a lot out of me."

"Cher" is a gutsy account of tenacity and perseverance: Cher's childhood was unstable. Her marriage to Sonny Bono had devastating aftershocks. The book is also a cultural history packed with strong opinions, boldface names and head-spinning throwbacks: Cher's first concert was Elvis. Her first movie was "Dumbo." (She was so rapt, she wet her pants.) One of the first cars she drove was a '57 Chevy stolen from her boyfriend.

On the page, Cher's voice reverberates with the grit and depth that made her famous.

But a ghostwritten first draft didn't have this effect, Cher said; it didn't feel like "her." It made her realize she needed to expand her project to a sec-

CHER, PAGE 2



Cher with Sonny Bono, her husband and musical partner, in the mid-1960s. She looks back on their tumultuous relationship in the first volume of her two-part memoir.

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PAGE TWO

Cher turns back time in a memoir

CHER, FROM PAGE 1

ond volume. "Too much life," she said.

"Lived too long."

After this epiphany, the bulk of the book came together in a feverish four months, thanks to two more ghostwriters and an editor who made a weeklong house call. It begins with Cher's birth in 1946 — her legal name was Cheryl Sarkisian — and ends in the early 1980s when she's chatting with Francis Ford Coppola about making the leap from singing to acting. (He asks, "So what are you waiting for?")

She has yet to read the final version.

"People can say what they want," Cher said. "It's who I am. I am who I am. I can't change it."

Cher's mother, Georgia Holt, was a singer, actor and scrapper from rural Arkansas who played bit parts in "Gunsmoke" and "I Love Lucy" (and lost a part in "Asphalt Jungle" to Marilyn Monroe). Her father, Johnnie Sarkisian, was a grifter and a heroin addict who mostly stayed out of the picture until he smelled money. They married when Holt was 19 and Sarkisian was 20; three months later, Holt was pregnant and her mother took her to get an abortion.

"It was her body, her life and her choice," Cher writes of Holt's decision not to go through with the procedure, which was illegal. "Thank God she got off that table, though, or I wouldn't be here to write these pages."

When Cher was an infant, Sarkisian deposited her at a Catholic children's home in Scranton, Pa., before skipping town. Holt, then a waitress at an all-night diner, forked over \$4.50 a week for her daughter's care, visiting weekly and reclaiming Cher as soon as she was able. The timeline is unclear — until the day she died, Holt cried when talking about this era — but Cher was able to walk by the time she left the orphanage.

Holt's role in her daughters' lives was not unlike the one Cher played in the 1990 film "Mermaids" — the unpredictable single mother that a New York Times critic described as "beloved in fiction and hell-on-wheels in fact." Cher and her younger sister, Georganne Bartylak, still argue about how many times Holt was married.

"I say six, which is a lot. She says eight," Bartylak said. "You cannot count the fact that she married two men twice. That's not fair!" Sarkisian was one of the two-timers (in every sense).

"The kind of chaos I witnessed — it's just too much," Cher said. "Too much anger, too much fear, too much — —"

Before she had a chance to finish, her boyfriend Alexander Edwards's 5-year-old son zipped into the room on a scooter, clutching a large pumpkin cookie.

"Enjoy it in good health," Cher said.

Edwards is 38. At 9 p.m. on a Tuesday, the couple had just come from the Victoria's Secret Fashion show, where Cher had performed. She still wore a lace-up top, sparkly pants and patent leather boots with significant heels.

"When I was younger, boys my age did not like me," Cher said. "And then when I got older, I didn't like men my age."

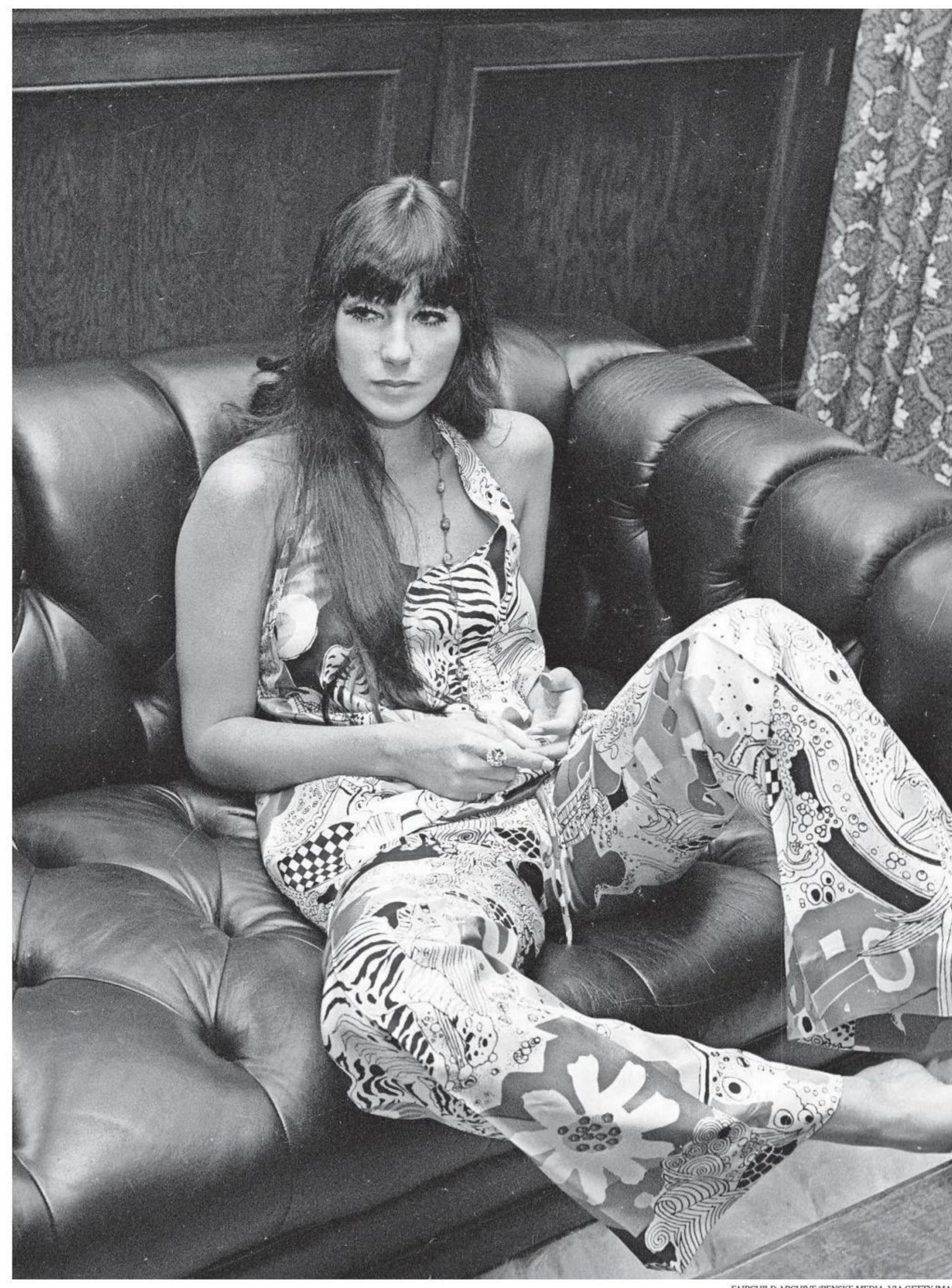
She was 16 when she first met Bono. He was 27. She lied about her age, and the two became friends. Soon afterward, Cher's living situation fell through and Bono offered her a place to live in exchange for cooking and cleaning.

Matching souvenir wedding rings came a few years later — as did parenthood and fame, "I Got You Babe" and "The Sonny & Cher Show."

"It wasn't a #MeToo moment because I lied to him," Cher said. But, she said,

"I'm not forgiving him because there were some things he did that were ridiculous."

Bono became Cher's champion, persuading his boss, Phillip Spector, to let her sing with the Ronettes one day when Darlene Love's car broke down. They started recording together, first as Cae-



FAIRCHILD ARCHIVE/PENSKE MEDIA/GETTY IMAGES

Clockwise from above: Cher early in her musical career, when she quickly became a style icon; a family photograph with her parents, Georgia Holt and Johnnie Sarkisian, in New Mexico in the 1950s; a picture from Christmas, 1961, showing the singer, right, with her sister Georganne, center, their mother, and Gilbert LaPiere, a stepfather; and Cher as a new parent with baby Chas, now named Chaz, in 1969.



VIA CHER

wife. The couple stopped going to dinners, concerts and movies.

Bono also arranged their finances so that Cher was working for him, underpaid. She wasn't immediately aware of this; Bono was "like a parent" to her, and their home represented stability, everything she'd missed in her tumultuous youth. She trusted him.

"He took all my money," Cher said. "I just thought, We're husband and wife. Half the things are his, half the things are mine. It didn't occur to me that there was another way."

Hard as it was to square this confession with the stage-dominating Cher of legend, there was grace in her honesty.

"To this day," Cher said, "I wish to God

I could just ask, 'Son, at what point, during what day, did you go, 'Yeah, you know what? I'm going to take her money?'

Bono died in a skiing accident in 1998. But by then their marriage was long over. She rebuilt her career, exiling herself to Las Vegas, where she put on two shows a night, seven days a week, for several months.

She dated David Geffen, who helped her sort out her finances — "I didn't know how to make a check out. I didn't have a banking account" — and had a brief marriage to Gregg Allman. But it's clear from her memoir that her time with Bono was foundational.

These days, Cher enjoys her time with Edwards, whom she met two years ago after she complimented his diamond-studded teeth.

"I did everything I said I wasn't going to do," Cher said. For instance, "Don't fall in love with a man who's younger."

She's proud of her family, her charity work and her Oscar. She admitted that she doesn't know her address or her phone number — "Look," she said, smoothing her curtain of black hair, "People find me" — but remains focused on issues that matter to her: "Are you a good person? Are you a bad person?"

Cher is restrained on the subject of her children, Elijah Sky Blue Allman and Chaz Bono, who is transgender. In a note at the front of the book, she writes, "In this memoir, I refer to my son Chaz as Chas, the name he went by during the years covered in this book. Chaz has granted his blessing for this usage. In the next volume, at the appropriate point, I will refer to my son as Chaz."

And of course, unlike many of her contemporaries, Cher remains committed to her career. She still works with her voice teacher, who is 96.

"You're not really supposed to be able to sing at this age," she said. "I've been singing my whole life. It will make me sad the day I can't."

Cher smiled benevolently at Edwards's son. Then, she added, "I've been on the road my whole life. It's either a day off or it's a work day. What would I do if I wasn't doing this?"

Carrie Thornton, Cher's editor at Dey Street, said that a two-volume approach wasn't always the plan. But, during the writing process, it became apparent that Cher's move from singing to acting made for a natural break. Plus, Thornton pointed out, a two-part memoir "feels like such a flex." The second volume is planned for a year from now.

Peeling back the story of the \$6.2 million banana

BY ZACHARY SMALL

It wasn't just a banana. It was a banana with a back story.

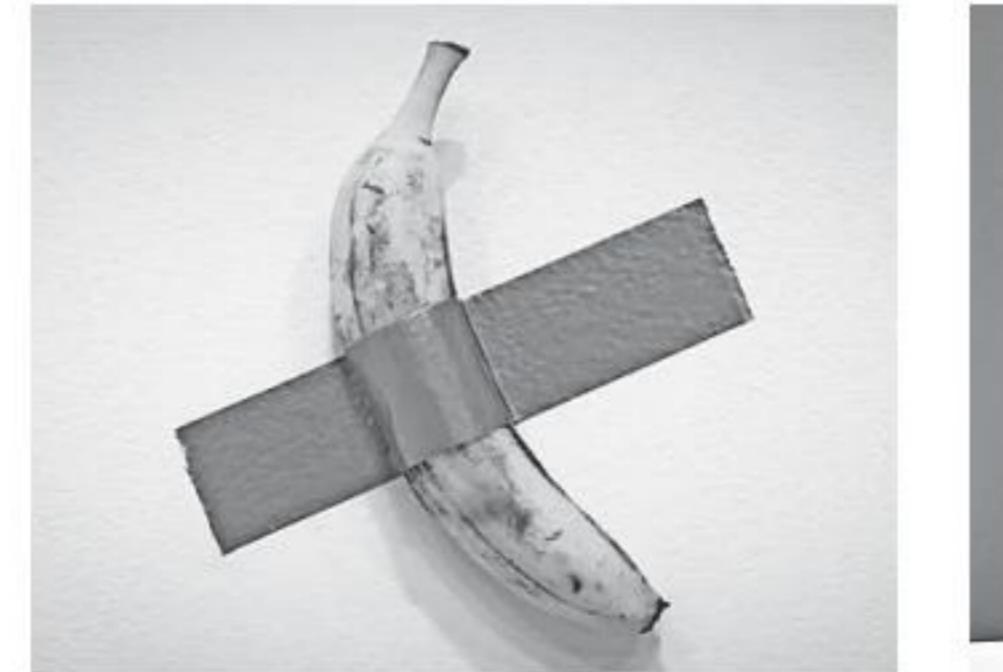
The spectacle on Wednesday, when a Sotheby's auctioneer in Manhattan warned bidders not to let Maurizio Cattelan's fruity artwork "slip away," ended with a duct-taped banana selling for an astonishing \$6.2 million, with fees.

A crypto entrepreneur named Justin Sun placed the winning bid from Hong Kong, adding Cattelan's 2019 conceptual artwork, titled "Comedian," to the quirky collection he has amassed over the last few years. (It includes a Giacometti sculpture, a Picasso painting and a very expensive NFT of a pet rock.)

But winning the auction is just the beginning of negotiations that will take place over the next month or so (a buyer typically has 30 days to pay, by which time the banana will inevitably rot). In a phone interview, Sun said that he intended to pay for the banana with his own cryptocurrency; however, Sotheby's might accept payment only through more popular forms of digital payment.

Here are six questions you might have after seeing the ultracharacteristic wave millions around for a piece of fruit.

WHAT DOES \$6.2 MILLION GET YOU? Contrary to the crypto entrepreneur's statement that he intended to "personally eat the banana," it would be unlikely that the actual banana presented at Sotheby's would survive the plane ride



Maurizio Cattelan's duct-taped banana artwork, titled "Comedian," will most likely rot before it reaches its buyer, Justin Sun, a crypto entrepreneur and art enthusiast.

banana (the work is No. 2 of the three editions the artist made). It is the buyer who then consigned the banana for the Sotheby's auction.

In recent years, artists have turned to blockchain tools like NFTs, or non-fungible tokens, to enshrine resale royalties in sales contracts. Auction houses like Sotheby's have honored those contracts, even when the broader NFT market has largely abandoned them.

But artworks — whether traditional or unconventional, like "Comedian" — have no provisions that would require a portion of Sun's payment to be redirected to the artist.

"Auction houses and collectors reap the benefits, while the creator, who makes the very object driving the market, is left out," Cattelan said in an interview before the sale. "NFTs offer royal-

ties with every resale — doesn't it seem strange that the traditional art market hasn't adopted a similar system?"

WHY WOULD ANYONE PAY IT?

According to Sun, "This is not just an artwork; it represents a cultural phenomenon that bridges the worlds of art, memes, and the cryptocurrency community. I believe this piece will inspire more thought and discussion in the future and will become a part of history."

But more generally, participation in the art market provides the ultracharacteristic with cultural clout, self-fulfillment and a sense of community. Building a collection is oftentimes a first step to joining the boards of museums and influential nonprofit groups, where the wealthy can establish their legacies.

In recent years, the nouveau riche of

the cryptocurrency world and other industries have also purchased artworks to promote themselves and their businesses. Even underbidders, people who fail to secure the winning bid, are often willing to reveal their identities for publicity's sake. The morning after the "Comedian" sale, two crypto entrepreneurs said through a spokeswoman they had also participated in the auction alongside five other groups of bidders who lost the artwork to Sun.

HOW MUCH DOES A BANANA COST?

The vendor working at the fruit stand outside Sotheby's on Manhattan's Upper East Side, where the auction house sourced its banana on Wednesday, said that a single banana would cost 35 cents. He was unaware that his Dole-branded banana would become an artwork valued at \$6.2 million.

Overnight, that means the value of his banana had increased 18 million times. The vendor, who is from Bangladesh, did not respond to the question of whether his stand would raise its prices.

WHO IS JUSTIN SUN?

Sun, who is 34, is the founder of Tron, a cryptocurrency. Last year he was charged by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission with the unregistered sale of securities, as well as manipulative practices that created the false appearance of strong investor interest for his digital currencies. He has contested the charges, arguing in a court fil-

ing that the commission misapplied the law and does not have jurisdiction.

Born in China, Sun also has Grenadian citizenship, and he was for a time Grenada's ambassador to the World Trade Organization. He still uses the honorific "his excellency" on the website of Tron.

Currently, he works with the art adviser Sydney Xiong, who in 2021 helped him purchase a \$20 million Picasso painting and a \$78.4 million Giacometti sculpture.

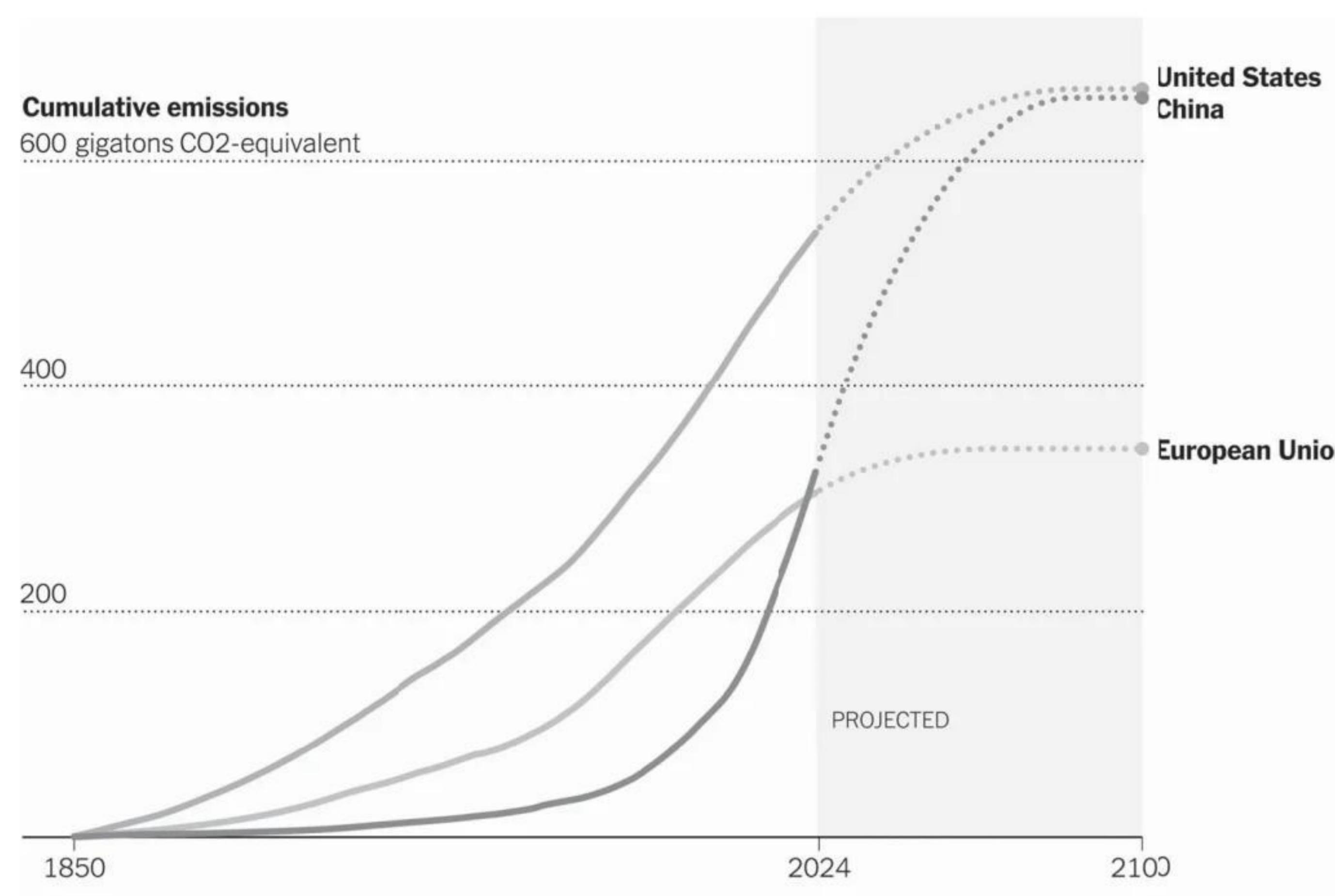
WHO BELIEVES THIS IS ART?

Artists have been pushing the boundaries of what defines art for centuries. A notorious example — and one that undoubtedly inspired Cattelan — comes from the French artist Marcel Duchamp. In 1917, Duchamp flipped a urinal onto its back and wrote the fictitious name R. Mutt onto the porcelain, like an artist's signature. He declared that the urinal had been turned into a sculpture called "Fountain," much to the horror of that generation's traditional art world.

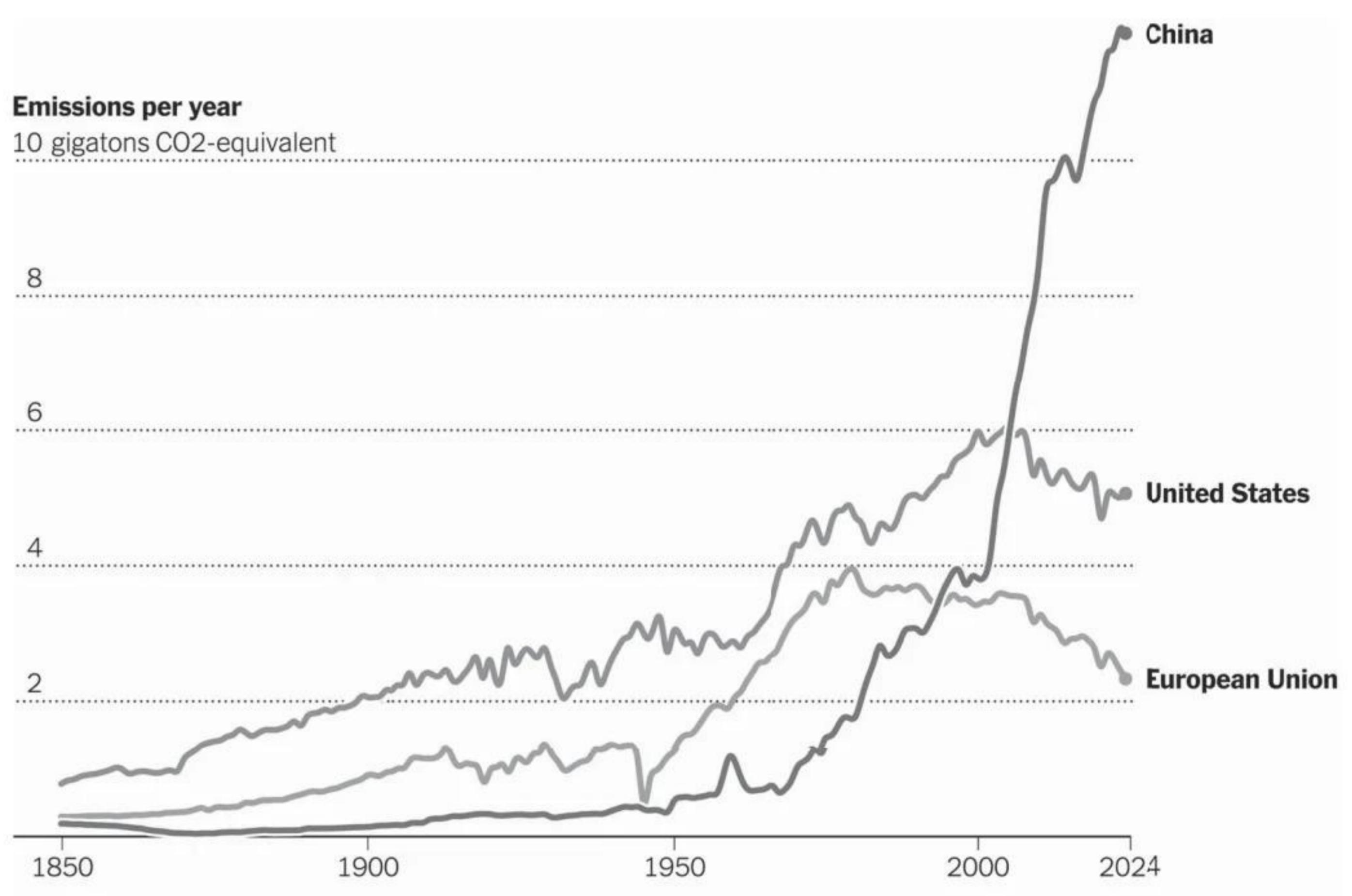
With his banana, Cattelan was provoking similar questions about the role of public opinion and elite institutions in defining what is and is not art. But he was also calling attention to the art market's appetite for anything — even a common fruit — that can be marketed and branded as a valid work of art.

Chris Buckley contributed reporting from Taipei, Taiwan.

World



Source: Jones et al. (2024), Carbon Brief and I.E.A. | Note: European Union totals were calculated for the current 27 member countries.



Source: Jones et al. (2024), Carbon Brief.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

China emissions upend climate politics

Current funding plan under question, given an astonishing increase

BY BRAD PLUMER AND MIRA ROJANASAKUL

For many years, wealthy places like the United States and Europe have had the biggest historical responsibility for global warming and have been tasked with taking the lead in stopping it.

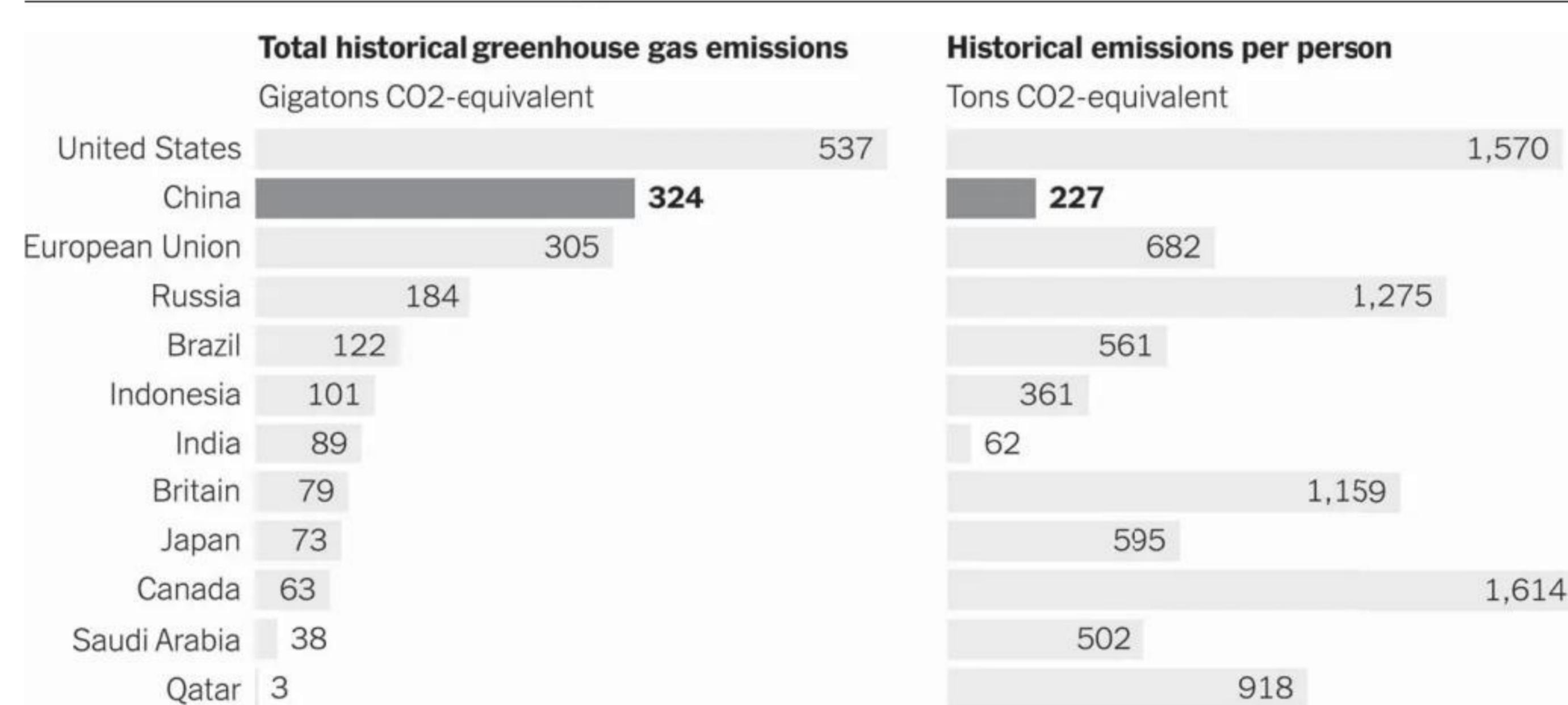
China's astonishing rise is upending that dynamic.

Over the past three decades, China has built more than 1,000 coal-fired power plants as its economy has grown more than 40-fold. The country has become by far the largest annual emitter of greenhouse gases in the world.

The United States has still pumped more total planet-warming pollution into the atmosphere since the 19th century, in part because the country has been burning coal, oil and natural gas for longer. But China is quickly catching up.

Last year, China for the first time passed Europe as the second-largest historical emitter, according to an analysis published on Tuesday by Carbon Brief, a climate research site.

When humans burn fossil fuels or cut down forests, the resulting carbon dioxide typically lingers in the atmosphere for hundreds of years, heating the planet all the while. That's why historical



Source: Jones et al. (2024), Carbon Brief. Note: Per capita figures based on 2024 population.

emissions are often used as a gauge of responsibility for global warming.

China, for its part, has promised that its emissions will peak this decade and then start falling. The country is installing more wind turbines and solar panels than all other nations combined and leads the world in electric vehicle sales. But even with China's shift to low-carbon energy, the Carbon Brief analysis found, the nation's historical emissions are projected to approach those of the United States in the coming years.

QUESTION OF MONEY

China's historical responsibility for climate change has become a major point of contention in global climate politics.

This month, diplomats and leaders from nearly 200 countries gathered at the United Nations climate summit meeting in Baku, Azerbaijan, to discuss how to raise the trillions of dollars that vulnerable nations will need to shift to clean energy and to cope with droughts, heat waves, floods and other hazards of a warming planet.

developing by that framework, and have not been required to chip in.

Today, however, many wealthy nations say this distinction no longer makes sense.

"An expanded donor base has been long warranted," John Podesta, President Biden's international climate adviser, said this month. "This is not 1992 in terms of the economic structure of the world."

China, for its part, has argued that it has already provided roughly \$24.5 billion in climate finance to other developing countries since 2016. But European officials have said that China is not subject to the same transparency requirements and have urged the country to formalize the aid they provide under UN agreements.

So far, China has been reluctant to do that.

In a recent speech, Ding Xuexiang, China's vice premier, said that wealthy countries taking the lead on providing financial aid was a "cornerstone" of global climate agreements.

At the same time, other world leaders have criticized wealthy emitters like the United States and Europe for failing behind on earlier promises for climate aid and have urged them not to point to China as an excuse for inaction.

"We cannot continue to hear the same promises as small islands suffer in the absence of real action from those most responsible for climate change," said Prime Minister Gaston Browne of Antigua and Barbuda.

DIFFERENT APPROACH

Total emissions aren't the only metric to consider in issues of fairness. Another is emissions per person. Because China has 1.4 billion people, its historical emissions per capita are still lower than those of the United States, European Union, Japan and Canada.

And while India is today one of the world's largest consumers of fossil fuels, its historical emissions per person are relatively small. India is the most populous country in the world but relatively poor, with tens of millions of people lacking reliable access to electricity. India says it should be granted time to burn more fossil fuels as it develops.

At the same time, some affluent oil-and-gas-producing nations, like Saudi Arabia and Qatar, have disproportionately large emissions per capita. American and European leaders have suggested that these countries, too, should contribute more climate finance.

METHODOLOGY

Data for carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions from 1850 to 2023 is from Jones et al. (2024); data for 2024 from Carbon Brief; projected data for 2025 to 2100 is based on the International Energy Agency's "stated policies scenario" tracking nations' climate actions. European Union totals were calculated for the current 27 member countries. Lines show cumulative territorial CO₂ emissions from fossil fuels, cement, land use, land use change and forestry.

'Iron Lady' calls on Trump to save Venezuela's democracy

BOGOTÁ, COLOMBIA

BY JULIE TURKEWITZ

She galvanized a nation to oust Venezuela's autocrat at the ballot box, spending months surrounded by people and filling avenues with supporters who risked beatings and arrest just to hear her speak.

Now, with President Nicolás Maduro accused of stealing the election and his government threatening her capture, María Corina Machado, Venezuela's wildly popular opposition leader, has gone into hiding — alone.

In a series of rare, in-depth virtual interviews since she mobilized millions to vote against Mr. Maduro in July, Ms. Machado said she was holed up in a secret location somewhere inside her country. Because anyone who helps her could be detained — or might lead government agents to her — she said she has not had a visitor in months.

Nicknamed the country's "Iron Lady" for her conservative politics and steely resolve, Ms. Machado is, she admitted, "longing for a hug."

Her mother has urged her to mediate. She has not.

Instead, the former lawmaker is working around the clock, taking virtual meetings with foreign ministers and human rights organizations, urging them to remember that a broad coalition of nations acknowledges that her chosen candidate, Edmundo González, won the July vote by a wide margin and should be taking office in January.

Just hours after the election, Mr. Maduro declared victory, but he released no evidence to back up his claim. In response, the Machado team collected and published vote-tally receipts from more than 80 percent of polling stations.

The tallies, they said, showed that Mr. González had garnered almost 70 percent of the vote. (Fearing for his freedom, Mr. González, 75, fled to Spain in September.)

Ms. Machado argued that Venezuela now offers something extremely tempting to President-elect Donald J. Trump: "an enormous foreign policy victory in the very, very short term."



María Corina Machado, Venezuela's opposition leader, at a campaign rally this summer. She's been in hiding since July.

ADRIANA LOUREIRO FERNANDEZ FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

being investigated for crimes against humanity by the International Criminal Court and could face arrest if ousted, has much incentive to leave.

"She says, 'Maduro has no choice — he has to negotiate,'" said Phil Gunson, an analyst with International Crisis Group who has been based in Venezuela for more than two decades. "I think he does have a choice, and his choice is to remain in power."

In Mr. Trump's first term, Mr. Maduro characterized the U.S. president as imperialist enemy No. 1. But in the days since Mr. Trump won a second term, Mr. Maduro has tried to curry favor, publicly expressing hope that the two could work together.

Mr. Maduro clearly needs the United States to lift sanctions, while Mr. Trump, who has vowed to undertake mass de-

portations, could use the Venezuelan leader's help in making good on his promise.

Speaking recently on one of his talk shows, Mr. Maduro called for a new moment of "win-win" relations.

Many opposition leaders have come and gone in Venezuela over the years; few have built as broad a coalition as Ms. Machado. The eldest daughter in a prominent steel business family, she has spent roughly two decades trying to remove Mr. Maduro and his predecessor, Hugo Chávez, from power.

In 2002 she founded a voter rights organization, Síntesis, which pushed unsuccessfully to oust Mr. Chávez through a recall vote. Síntesis received U.S. funding.

It is only recently, after an overwhelming victory in a primary race in

2023, that Ms. Machado emerged as the leader of the Venezuelan opposition. When Mr. Maduro's government barred her from running in the general election, she managed to get Mr. González on the ballot in her stead.

On the campaign trail, she was received almost as a religious figure, often wearing white, promising to restore democracy and reunite families torn apart by an economic crisis and mass migration.

"Maria!" her followers shouted, before falling into her arms.

In hiding these days, she wakes up alone, cooks and ponders the future of the country alone. Her three adult children live abroad; it is unclear when she will see them again.

Ms. Machado declined to say whether she even could go outside.

"It's a difficult test," she said of isolation.

Mr. González, now in Spain, has focused on pushing their cause in meetings with European leaders.

In the interviews, Ms. Machado's voice often quickened to a near-panic pace, and she expressed frustration that some nations were not doing more to isolate Mr. Maduro.

"We Venezuelans did everything the international community asked of us," she said, a reference to the millions of people who risked retaliation to vote for her movement. "Now it's time for the international community to do its part."

Nearly 2,000 people have been imprisoned in a post-election crackdown by the Maduro government, according to the watchdog group Foro Penal. Among them are some of Ms. Machado's closest advisers. At least two people have died after being taken into custody and two dozen more were killed in protests just after the July vote. The youngest, Isaías Fuenmayor, was just 15.

That so many people are suffering after supporting her weighs heavily.

"How many more deaths?" she asked, her voice rising. "How many more disappearances?"

(Last weekend, the Maduro government released 131 prisoners detained since July's election, according to Foro Penal.)

In calling on Mr. Trump to help restore her nation's democracy, Ms. Machado is appealing to a U.S. president-elect who still refuses to recognize the result of an election he lost in 2020.

But Ms. Machado said she was also emphasizing that pushing out Mr. Maduro is in the United States' interest "in terms of hemispheric security," she said. Mr. Maduro is a major ally of Russia, Iran and China.

Asked how long she can remain in hiding, Ms. Machado said that she was "working to make it as short as possible" and hoped that all Venezuelans would soon be "reunited in freedom."

"But I am willing to do what has to be done," she said, "for as long as it takes to assert the truth and popular sovereignty."

Isayan Herrera contributed reporting.

WORLD

Boundaries for Israeli leader constricted

BERLIN

International warrant means Netanyahu must plan his travels carefully

BY MARK LANDLER
AND STEVEN ERLANGER

The arrest warrant issued by the International Criminal Court for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel will confront governments around the world with a dilemma: whether to detain the leader of a democracy that is also an ally of many of their countries.

The warrants issued on Thursday, which seek the arrests of Mr. Netanyahu and his former defense minister, Yoav Gallant, are a diplomatic landmark: It is the first time leaders of a modern Western democracy stand accused of war crimes by a global judicial body. But they are also a reminder of the significant gaps in the court's jurisdiction and the often patchwork enforcement of previous such warrants.

The court has 124 signatories, all of which are formally obliged to carry out the arrest warrants if Mr. Netanyahu, Mr. Gallant or any other person wanted by the court steps on their soil, even if by accident, as, for example, because of an aircraft malfunction requiring an unscheduled landing.

The warrants "are binding on all parties to the I.C.C.," said Philippe Sands, an expert in international law who has argued before the court. "If they set foot on the territory of a state party, that state party has an obligation to arrest and transfer to The Hague. That's pretty binding."

But the United States and Israel are not signatories to the court, nor are China, Russia, India and several other countries. Even countries that are signatories do not always comply with the court's arrest warrants, especially when leaders of powerful countries are involved.

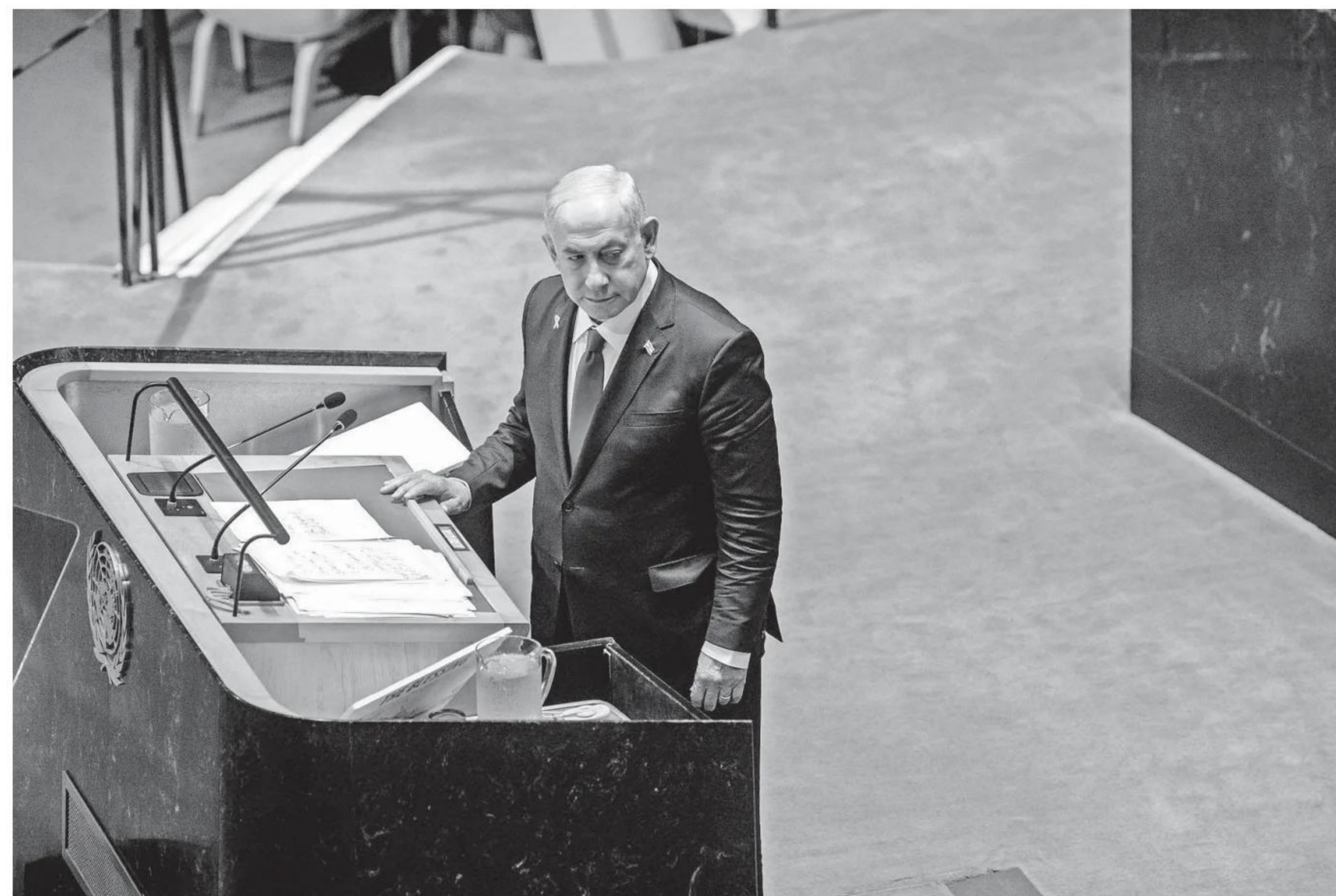
Mongolia, an I.C.C. member deeply dependent on Russia for fuel, not only did not arrest the Russian president, Vladimir V. Putin, who is wanted by the court on charges of war crimes stemming from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, it greeted him with an official state ceremony in September.

President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva of Brazil said that there was "no reason" that Mr. Putin should fear attending the Group of 20 summit meeting in Rio de Janeiro this year, though Mr. Putin sent his foreign minister instead.

But Mr. Putin has steered clear of Europe and the United States since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. Mr. Netanyahu, on the other hand, has continued to tour foreign capitals and appear at the United Nations since the Hamas attack on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, and the subsequent war in Gaza.

Europe, which is considered a pillar of the court's support, represents potentially the most problematic region for Mr. Netanyahu. Britain and France reaffirmed the court's standing, though they stopped short of saying they would arrest him if he crossed their borders.

"We respect the independence of the I.C.C., which is the primary international institution for investigating and



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, above, of Israel and the former Israeli defense minister Yoav Gallant, right, have been charged with war crimes by the International Criminal Court. Some countries may hesitate to detain the two, despite arrest warrants.

prosecuting the most serious crimes of international concern," said a spokesman for 10 Downing Street, who spoke on condition that he not be identified by name. Israel, he added, has "the right to defend itself in accordance with international law."

Norway's foreign minister, Espen Barth Eide, said, "It is important that the I.C.C. carries out its mandate in a judicious manner." In Ireland, which has voiced strong support for the Palestinians in the Gaza conflict, the prime minister, Simon Harris, called the warrants "an extremely significant step."

Modern constitutional democracies are expected to restrain lawless behavior by their leaders."

But Mr. Netanyahu has his own political allies among I.C.C. member nations. The president of Argentina, Javier Milei, harshly criticized the court's action, saying it "ignores Israel's legitimate right to defend itself in the face of constant attacks by terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah."

Mr. Milei, who has established close ties to President-elect Donald J. Trump, stopped short of saying Mr. Netanyahu would be protected from arrest if he visited Argentina.

In the United States, the arrest warrants were criticized by the Biden White House, people in Mr. Trump's orbit and longtime critics of the I.C.C., like John R. Bolton, who served as national security adviser in Mr. Trump's first term.

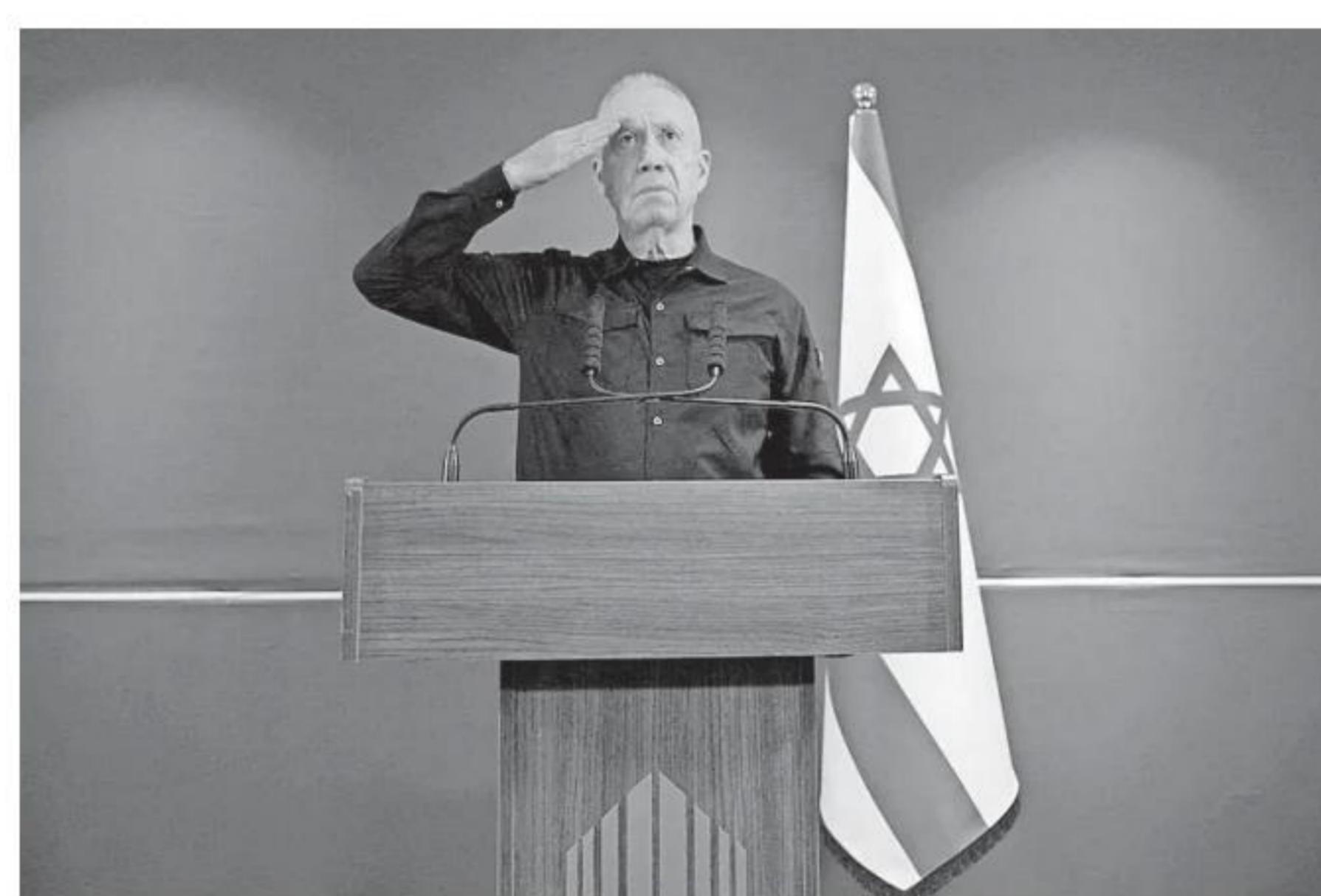
"These indictments prove precisely what is wrong with the I.C.C.," Mr. Bolton said in an email. "A publicity-hungry prosecutor first goes after the victims of a terrorist attack, before going after the real criminals."

Representative Michael G. Waltz, the Florida Republican named by Mr. Trump as his next national security adviser, posted on social media, "The ICC has no credibility and these allegations have been refuted by the U.S. government."

Many in Israel and in the American Congress will judge the warrants as based on politics and not international law, said Daniel Reisner, a lawyer and former head of the international law branch of the Israeli military's legal division.

"Irrespective of what people think of Netanyahu or Gallant, neither of them committed genocide or war crimes, and that the court alleges otherwise is an indication of the travesty of international law when facing highly politicized disputes," Mr. Reisner said.

Still, the world will be a smaller place for Mr. Netanyahu and Mr. Gallant, even with the support of the United States.



The two men will have to plan their trips very carefully, Mr. Reisner said.

Defenders of the court said the symbolism of issuing arrest warrants for leaders of a democratic country was profound.

"Modern constitutional democracies are expected to restrain lawless behavior by their leaders, especially war crimes," said Harold Hongju Koh, an expert in international law who teaches at Yale Law School and served in the State Department during the Obama administration.

The arrest warrants could enhance the reputation of international institutions in the non-Western world, where they are sometimes criticized as tools of

the West. Dahlia Scheindlin, an Israeli analyst and polister, said: "The warrants could prop up the legitimacy of international institutions already damaged from so many failures, and this could revive the sense of some consistent application of the law to Western countries, even those backed by the United States."

But they are likely to face great opposition in Washington, where members of Congress threatened sanctions against the court when its prosecutor first asked for the warrants to be issued.

"The U.S. will go ballistic," Ms. Scheindlin said, "and it could also begin a significant undermining of the court by the world's most powerful nation."

North Korea sends troops. Russia sends two bears.

SEOUL

BY JIN YU YOUNG

The decision by the North Korean leader Kim Jong-un to send troops to join Russia in support of its war against Ukraine has led experts to speculate as to what Russian President Vladimir V. Putin might send Mr. Kim in return.

Mr. Kim's regime, squeezed by international sanctions, needs many things: hard currency, oil, expertise on developing advanced weapons. It probably does not need bears.

Yet Russian state media reported that Russia was sending more than 70 animals to North Korea, among them two brown bears, two domestic yaks and an African lion. The animals — along with 40 mandarin ducks, 25 pheasants of various species and five white cockatoos — are being transferred from the Moscow Zoo to the Pyongyang Central Zoo, according to a report Tuesday from TASS, a Russian news agency.

The Russian Natural Resources and Environment ministry called the gesture "Vladimir Putin's gift to the Korean people," according to the news agency.

That gift is the latest sign of the tightening bond between the two nations, an alliance that has become increasingly visible over the past few months. In June, they revived a Cold War-era mutual defense pledge and, according to the Pentagon, more than 10,000 North Korean troops are in Russia in the Kursk region, where intense fighting against Ukrainian forces has been taking place since August.

Under Kim Jong-un's rule, the humanitarian crisis in North Korea has deepened in the past decade after the expansion of the country's military arsenal led to stricter international sanctions. North Korea also suffered from the Covid-19 pandemic and flooding over the past few years, leaving it in dire need of money and basic goods.

American officials have been concerned that in return for sending his troops to Russia, Mr. Kim might receive military assistance that would enhance the danger his country poses to South Korea and the United States. Experts say improving the range of his intercontinental ballistic missiles is on Mr. Kim's agenda. It is not clear if Russia has provided any aid of that kind or has plans to do so.

Animals have long played a role in reinforcing political ties. China has for decades been presenting pandas to zoos in countries including Finland, Japan and South Korea. In October, two pandas from China were sent to the Smithsonian National Zoo in Washington, D.C. China has sent pandas to North Korea on multiple occasions since as early as 1965, according to Chinese state media, although the most recent time it did so is unclear.

Mr. Kim has also used animals as tokens of friendship. In 2018, he gave a pair of white Pungsans, a breed of dog native to North Korea, to Moon Jae-in, South Korea's president at the time. Mr. Moon received the dogs during a visit to Pyongyang for summit talks, though relations between the neighboring countries have soured since.

The 70 or so animals from Moscow are in quarantine and will move to their new enclosures after they are acclimated to their environment, according to TASS.

CORRECTIONS

• An article on Nov. 8 about sustainability in the watch industry misstated the number of annual sustainability reports published by Breitling. The report issued in September was its fourth, not its third.

• An article on Nov. 13 about deeply discounted sales in Hong Kong's luxury property market misspelled the surname of the chairman of the real estate firm JLL in Hong Kong. He is Joseph Tsang, not Joseph Tang.

• An article on Nov. 14 about how golf courses in arid climates stay so lush referred incorrectly to the amount of water used by all of the golf courses in the United States. It is a half trillion gallons a year, not a half million.

• An article on Monday about the pace of President-elect Donald J. Trump's staffing decisions for key roles in his cabinet misstated when Mr. Trump began announcing cabinet picks for his first term in office. It was in November 2016, not December 2016.

• An article on Thursday about the Danish soft rock band Michael Learns to Rock and its following in Asia misspelled Richel Rose Dupit's role. She is an administrator of a fan page for Michael Learns to Rock, not the president of the band's fan club in the Philippines. The error was repeated in a picture caption.

Trump's vow could leave Kyiv with few options

NEWS ANALYSIS
WASHINGTON

BY RYAN MAC, KATE CONGER,
JACK EWING AND ERIC LIPTON

Two years ago, Gen. Mark A. Milley, then the chief military adviser to President Biden, suggested that neither Russia nor Ukraine could win the war. A negotiated settlement, he argued, was the only route to peace.

His remarks caused a furor among senior officials. But President-elect Donald J. Trump's win is turning General Milley's prediction into reality. Mr. Trump has made clear his distaste for continuing to help Ukraine take back territory seized by Russia, making a negotiated settlement the only real viable option left.

The ascendance of Mr. Trump as Ukraine suffers losses on the battlefield in fact means less room for Ukraine to maneuver.

One of the biggest unknowns for Ukraine is whether the Trump administration and Europe will provide any kind of security guarantees that would prevent Russia from trying to take more territory. Mr. Trump has said he would end the war quickly, though he has not explained how. Vice President-elect JD Vance has outlined a plan that would allow Russia to keep the Ukrainian territory it has taken.

A phone call just after the election between Mr. Trump and President Volodymyr Zelensky of Ukraine shed little light on the question of security guarantees. Aides to both men simply described the tone of the call as "positive."

Some officials in the Biden administration have suggested taking more assertive measures in the remaining two months they have to help Ukraine, such as allowing the country to use U.S.-supplied longer-range missiles to strike inside Russia for the first time.

In recent days, Mr. Biden authorized the use of those missiles, known as AT-



Ukrainian troops near the front line. Some Biden administration officials have suggested taking more assertive steps in the remaining months they have to help Ukraine.

ACMS, for Army Tactical Missile Systems. Ukraine used them on Tuesday to strike an ammunition depot in southwestern Russia, according to Ukrainian officials. On Wednesday, Defense Secretary Lloyd J. Austin III said the Biden administration had approved supplying Ukraine with American anti-personnel mines to bolster defenses against Russian attacks as front lines in Ukraine's east buckled.

On Thursday, President Vladimir V. Putin said that Russia had launched a new intermediate-range ballistic missile at Ukraine in response to its use of American and British weapons to strike deeper into Russia. Mr. Putin also asserted that Russia had the right to strike the military facilities of countries "that allow their weapons to be used against our facilities."

Mr. Putin has frequently wielded the threat of nuclear weapons to try to keep the West off balance and stem the flow of support to Ukraine. But sending an intermediate-range missile with nuclear capabilities into Ukraine and brandishing the strike as a threat to the West ratcheted up tensions even further.

Mr. Biden's last-minute steps to give Ukraine weaponry it has been requesting for years are unlikely to change much on the battlefield.

The U.S. president-elect has said he would end the war quickly.

Ukraine's army, though on a back foot now, has held out for more than two and a half years against a larger, more powerful opponent. "The fact that we went 10 rounds with Mike Tyson is a success," Mr. Zagorodnyuk said.

But the escalation risk of allowing Ukraine to strike Russia with U.S.-supplied weaponry has diminished with the election of Mr. Trump, Biden administration officials believe, calculating that Mr. Putin knows he has to wait only two months for the new administration. Mr. Trump is believed to view Russia more

favorably, and his choice for director of national intelligence, Tulsi Gabbard, has often repeated Kremlin talking points.

Even with additional aid, officials in the intelligence community as well as at the Pentagon say it will be difficult for Ukraine to regain the ground that Russia has steadily seized. Ukraine is losing territory in the east, and its forces in the Kursk region in western Russia have been partly pushed back as North Korean recruits join the fight.

Sagging morale among Ukrainian troops and uncertainty over Mr. Trump also continue to threaten their war effort. The Ukrainian military is struggling to recruit soldiers and equip new units.

U.S. spy agencies have assessed that speeding up the provisions of weapons, ammunition and matériel for Ukraine will do little to change the course of the war in the short term, according to American officials briefed on the intelligence. But speeding up U.S. weaponry in the waning months of the Biden administration could help Ukraine enforce a cease-fire or armistice line if there were to be a settlement, officials said.

The Defense Department is soliciting bids for a small number of contractors who would be far from the front lines and would not be fighting Russian forces, a Pentagon official said.

Pentagon officials are aiming to award contracts before Mr. Biden leaves office, though the process typically takes four to nine months.

Several U.S. companies already have personnel in Ukraine fulfilling contracts for the Ukrainian government.

The administration's decision to allow Ukraine to use the ATACMS missiles to strike inside Russia was a major change in U.S. policy. It came partly in response to Russia's decision to bring North Korean troops into the war, officials have said.

Mr. Biden and his top aides had repeatedly rejected such requests from Ukraine, arguing that the Pentagon had few of the missiles to spare and that Ukraine could more effectively hit targets deep inside Russia with the one-way attack drones it manufactured in large quantities.

Ukraine must also have sufficient firepower in reserve to deter any ceasefire violations, he said, for example with an arsenal of longer-range weaponry to inflict immediate damage if Russia resumes hostilities.

Ukraine's army, though on a back foot now, has held out for more than two and a half years against a larger, more powerful opponent. "The fact that we went 10 rounds with Mike Tyson is a success," Mr. Zagorodnyuk said.

But that was with billions of dollars in U.S. and European weapons. Now that supply is about to dry up, officials on both sides of the Atlantic say.

Metamorphosis of a disillusioned soldier

Pete Hegseth portrays some accused troops as 'heroes.' He may soon be their boss.

BY DAVE PHILIPPS
AND CAROL ROSENBERG

When Pete Hegseth was an earnest, young Army lieutenant in Iraq in 2005, he was cleareyed on how he viewed crimes committed by soldiers in war.

Soldiers in his own infantry company in Iraq in 2006 had shot civilians, executed prisoners and tried to cover up the crimes.

"Those are a no-brainer," he told an audience at the University of Virginia after his deployment. He called the acts of those soldiers, who served in a sister platoon in his company, "atrocities" and added: "Of course that's wrong. No one is here to defend that."

By the end of his Army career, though, he was repeatedly doing exactly that.

As a presenter on Fox News, he portrayed other troops charged with war crimes as "heroes." The military prosecuting them was, he said, "throwing warriors under the bus." The once circumspect officer glossed over crucial details, told his TV audience that troops were just "doing the job they were hired to do" and pushed relentlessly for President Donald J. Trump to intervene.

It was a stark shift for the man President-elect Trump picked this month to lead the Defense Department. Soldiers who served with Mr. Hegseth say the change was driven in part by a string of military deployments — once to Guantánamo Bay, once to Iraq and once to Afghanistan — each of which taught him a new lesson in military dysfunction.

The experience transformed him from a believer in U.S. military might



Pete Hegseth, above, then a young U.S. Army captain, speaking at a conservative conference in 2009. As a Fox News presenter, below left, he emerged as a supporter of soldiers accused of war crimes. Below right, a prison for terror suspects at Guantánamo Bay in Cuba. Mr. Hegseth's service on the island gave him an early view of Pentagon malaise.



JOHN LAMPARSKY/GETTY IMAGES

into an outsider so distrustful of the national security establishment that he repeatedly sided with convicted murderers over Pentagon leadership.

"He's a product of these broken wars, and pretty much our whole generation feels the same way," Mathew Golsteyn said in an interview with The New York Times. Mr. Golsteyn, a former Army Green Beret, was charged with murdering a captive he believed was a bomb maker in Afghanistan, and appeared several times on Fox with Mr. Hegseth.

The military leadership "sent us repeatedly into a hornets' nest with no plan," Mr. Golsteyn added. "They gave us an impossible job, then blamed us when things went wrong."

Mr. Hegseth's confirmation is far from certain, as he faces questions over character. On Wednesday, the city of Monterey, Calif., released a redacted police file containing the accusation of an unnamed woman who said that Mr. Hegseth raped her in 2017, an allegation

that Mr. Hegseth has adamantly said was an episode of consensual sex. In addition, he left the National Guard after another soldier reported him as a possible "insider threat," citing some of Mr. Hegseth's tattoos, which can be associated with white supremacy.

His views on how the military should conduct itself are also likely to be scrutinized during Senate hearings unless Mr. Trump manages to make him a recess appointment. Beyond Mr. Hegseth's divisive perspective on certain war crimes cases, some of his public statements on who belongs in the military and in what roles are outside the mainstream, including positions against allowing women to serve in combat.

Mr. Hegseth, 44, did not respond to requests for comment.

In Washington, many are concerned not only that Mr. Hegseth may be set on politicizing the military, but also that as a former National Guard officer with few managerial skills, he is not qualified

to run a department with nearly three million employees. Representative Jason Crow, Democrat of Colorado and a former Army Ranger, echoed the views of many in a recent video, calling Mr. Hegseth "woefully unqualified."

But Mr. Hegseth's views reflect a disillusionment among some former service members, and a slice of the broader public, about how the military is used. Mr. Trump tapped into that anger, promising a more inward-looking foreign policy and a hands-off approach to prosecuting soldiers.

"LONG, BORING DUTY"

Mr. Hegseth grew up in Minnesota and joined the Army Reserve Officers Training Corps months before the terrorist attacks in 2001, while majoring in politics at Princeton University in New Jersey. Mr. Hegseth was the publisher of the campus conservative journal, The Princeton Tory, where he wrote culture-war polemics on topics like feminism

and homosexuality. After graduating, he was employed on Wall Street when he was deployed in 2004 to Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and led a platoon from the New Jersey National Guard who guarded the perimeter of prisons that held more than 600 terrorism suspects.

He was organized, hardworking and liked by the troops, said Nicholas Forrestal, who was a staff sergeant with the unit.

Mr. Hegseth was, Mr. Forrestal said, "a great soldier, a great leader."

Guarding the perimeter was, Mr. Hegseth later wrote, "long, boring duty." But Guantánamo gave him an

"He's a product of these broken wars, and pretty much our whole generation feels the same way."

early view of Pentagon malaise, as the system set up to hold detainees and prosecute terrorists by military commission congealed into a morass of legal and bureaucratic maneuvering that led to almost no convictions.

Mr. Hegseth lamented that the prisoners sometimes seemed to get better treatment than his soldiers, and later on Fox News called Guantánamo "a prison without a mission."

"It got mucked up very early when

left-wing lawyers and other protections came in," he said. "It could have been a great place to expeditiously interrogate, try and, you know, execute, because we are in a war."

IMPOSSIBLE DECISIONS

After Guantánamo, Mr. Hegseth returned to Wall Street but was there only a few months when reports of increasing violence in Iraq prompted him to volunteer in 2005 for a deployment with the Army's 101st Airborne Division.

Iraq left deep marks on Mr. Hegseth. He arrived after the optimism of the invasion had curled into bloody sectarian fighting. The young lieutenant was thrown into a frenetic schedule of nighttime helicopter raids where, soldiers say, he had to navigate faulty intelligence, contradictory orders and edicts from Washington that often made little sense on the ground.

Soldiers in his company said military lawyers warned that they could not shoot at Iraqis unless the Iraqis were actively pointing weapons at U.S. troops. Conversely, the brigade leadership told them at times to fire on nearly any military-age male.

"It was a nightmare for the soldier on the ground," said Eric Geressy, the first sergeant in Mr. Hegseth's company. "You have conflicting orders, rules that changed constantly and no clear guid-

ance from headquarters. He had to make impossible decisions."

Mr. Hegseth's company was aggressive — so much so that it kept a running tally of kills in its headquarters that, Mr. Hegseth later said, included civilians. But Mr. Hegseth said he actively pushed back against superiors and urged his platoon to use restraint.

EMBITTERMENT SETS IN

Mr. Hegseth left the platoon for an assignment to help create a local town council and build infrastructure in the city of Samarra that could bring stability — realizing, he said later, that it was impossible "to kill and capture this way out of this war."

Still believing that the military was on the right track, Mr. Hegseth returned home and in 2007 helped build an organization called Vets for Freedom, which pushed for increased military involvement that could bring stability to Iraq.

During that time, prosecutions against the soldiers from his Iraq deployment moved forward swiftly.

By 2011, Mr. Hegseth had left Wall Street and returned to Minnesota, where he was a captain in the Minnesota National Guard. He volunteered to go to Afghanistan to train Afghan army officers in counterinsurgency tactics.

In the years after, Mr. Hegseth became increasingly bitter, reflecting the opinions of many veterans of that era, who said the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan were not worth fighting.

His view of war crimes cases changed from "no-brainer" condemnation to a conviction that the execution of the wars was so flawed that only luck had saved him and many of his friends from facing murder charges.

Mr. Hegseth was hired by Fox News in 2014. In many ways his segments there rehashed the same culture-war conservatism he had been writing about since Princeton, but he added a new topic: war crimes.

A SHIFT ON WAR CRIMES

Starting in 2018, Mr. Hegseth repeatedly showcased on Fox the cases of service members he said had been wrongly accused of murder after making quick decisions in the fog of war. "As a war fighter, you assume that your military will have your back," he said in 2019. "Instead, they come after you."

The cases varied, but none involved the split-second decisions he often described. And none involved the four convicted in his own company from Iraq.

Mr. Golsteyn, the former Green Beret who admitted to killing a detainee, said that Mr. Hegseth's championing of the accused sometimes went too far, but that the presenter was one of the few people who questioned his prosecution.

Mr. Golsteyn said in some instances, including his own, the failures of upper leadership had left troops with only wrong choices. In 2010, he had captured a suspected Taliban bomb maker, but requirements from top leadership dictated that the man be released.

Mr. Golsteyn had to choose between freeing a man he thought was likely to kill many other people, or defying Army rules and shooting him. Mr. Golsteyn later admitted in a job interview for the Central Intelligence Agency and on Fox News that he had chosen the latter. The Army charged him with murder in 2018.

On Fox, Mr. Hegseth appealed directly to President Trump to intervene. On at least one occasion, the two discussed the cases in person. In 2019, Mr. Trump stepped in, overruling the recommendations of leaders at the Pentagon in four cases. Murder charges against Mr. Golsteyn were dropped.

In 2021, Mr. Hegseth was barred from a security mission at President Biden's inauguration over concerns in his Guard unit that some of his Christian-themed tattoos suggested he was a white supremacist and potential extremist. He left the National Guard in 2024.

Now he is poised to oversee the military branch that he says forced him out for being a potential threat.

Julie Tate contributed research.



ANGEL FRANCO/THE NEW YORK TIMES

The talent pool for a new cabinet, as seen on TV

The president-elect casts his team for a second term by looking at a small screen

BY MICHAEL M. GRYNAU

After an election in which podcasts and influencers played an outsize role, conservatives were quick to declare that traditional media was dead.

Turns out a lot of it is just moving into the West Wing.

President-elect Donald J. Trump, whose rise was fueled by reality TV stardom, is once again turning to television to recruit the key cast members of his new administration.

One of the latest was Dr. Mehmet Oz, the former syndicated TV host, who was picked by Mr. Trump on Tuesday to oversee Medicare and Medicaid.

Dr. Oz follows Pete Hegseth, who could move straight from co-hosting the weekend edition of "Fox & Friends" to overseeing 1.3 million active-duty troops as defense secretary, and Sean Duffy, a Fox Business host and former star of MTV's "The Real World," who is



HILARY SWIFT/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Mr. Hegseth, whom Mr. Trump considered for veterans affairs secretary in 2018, served in the military but has no experience overseeing a sprawling bureaucracy; the Defense Department is the largest agency in the federal government. Until 2022, Dr. Oz hosted a day-

time talk show; if he takes the post, he will be responsible for providing health coverage to more than 150 million Americans.

Ms. Conway — herself now a Fox News contributor — said in an interview that Mr. Trump prized a "public-facing" State Department spokeswoman.

John R. Bolton, a former ambassador to the United Nations who became a Fox News fixture, became his national security adviser. In recent days, Mr. Bolton has castigated several of Mr. Trump's selections, including Ms. Gabbard.

Omarosa Manigault Newman, a familiar face from Mr. Trump's "Apprentice" days, also briefly held a White House role. It ended in acrimony: She later joined "Celebrity Big Brother" and criticized the administration as "so bad."

The surfeit of Fox News-adjacent personalities poised to join the new administration is an interesting contrast to Mr. Trump's purported anger at the network.

For a five-month period in late 2022 and early 2023, Mr. Trump did not appear on Fox News at all. And as recently as the weekend before Election Day, he denounced the network as "not our friend" and complained about its running pro-Democrat ads.

None of that has prevented Mr. Trump from using the cable channel as a kind of recruitment firm.

Laura Ingraham, the longtime Fox News host, happened to be on-air when the choice of Mr. Hegseth was announced this month.

"Wow, that is pretty cool," Ms. Ingraham said, looking surprised. "Gosh, we're going to miss him at Fox. But that's a gain for the country."

WORLD

No detail too small when Musk slashes costs

MUSK, FROM PAGE 1

"He used to be a deity," said Jim Cantrell, SpaceX's first vice president of business development. "But you know, he's just a business guy. And he wants to cut everything to the bone."

Now Mr. Musk, whose net worth exceeds \$307 billion, is set to take his economizing tactics to the federal government. President-elect Donald J. Trump has named Mr. Musk and Vivek Ramaswamy, another Trump loyalist, to lead a new Department of Government Efficiency. Mr. Trump said the department would drive "drastic change" by making major cuts to bloated agencies across the federal bureaucracy by July 4, 2026, the nation's 250th anniversary.

Mr. Musk appears to relish the mandate, repeatedly posting on X in recent weeks about how inefficient the federal government has been. "The sheer magnitude of government waste is staggering to behold!" he wrote recently.

He has also sharpened his ax. At a rally for Mr. Trump last month, Mr. Musk promised to eliminate \$2 trillion, or 30 percent, from the annual U.S. budget. He recently suggested that government workers should send weekly lists of accomplishments to justify their employment. And he has mused that the government needs only 99 agencies, not more than 400.

The prospect of Mr. Musk's applying his methods to the U.S. government has brought back troubling memories for some who experienced his cuts.

"It was clear they came in with a lot of assumptions about the work force and the value entire teams were bringing to the company," Lara Cohen, a Twitter marketing vice president who was laid off after Mr. Musk's takeover, said of the billionaire and his lieutenants. "They were not interested in hearing from people who had been doing the work, especially if it called their assumptions into question. That led to a lot of mistakes."

Yet while Mr. Musk's approach to budgets has sometimes caused chaos, his cuts may have helped pull back at least one of his companies from the brink of bankruptcy and propelled others ahead of rivals. He built Tesla and SpaceX into leading businesses that dominated their fields, while keeping costs down.

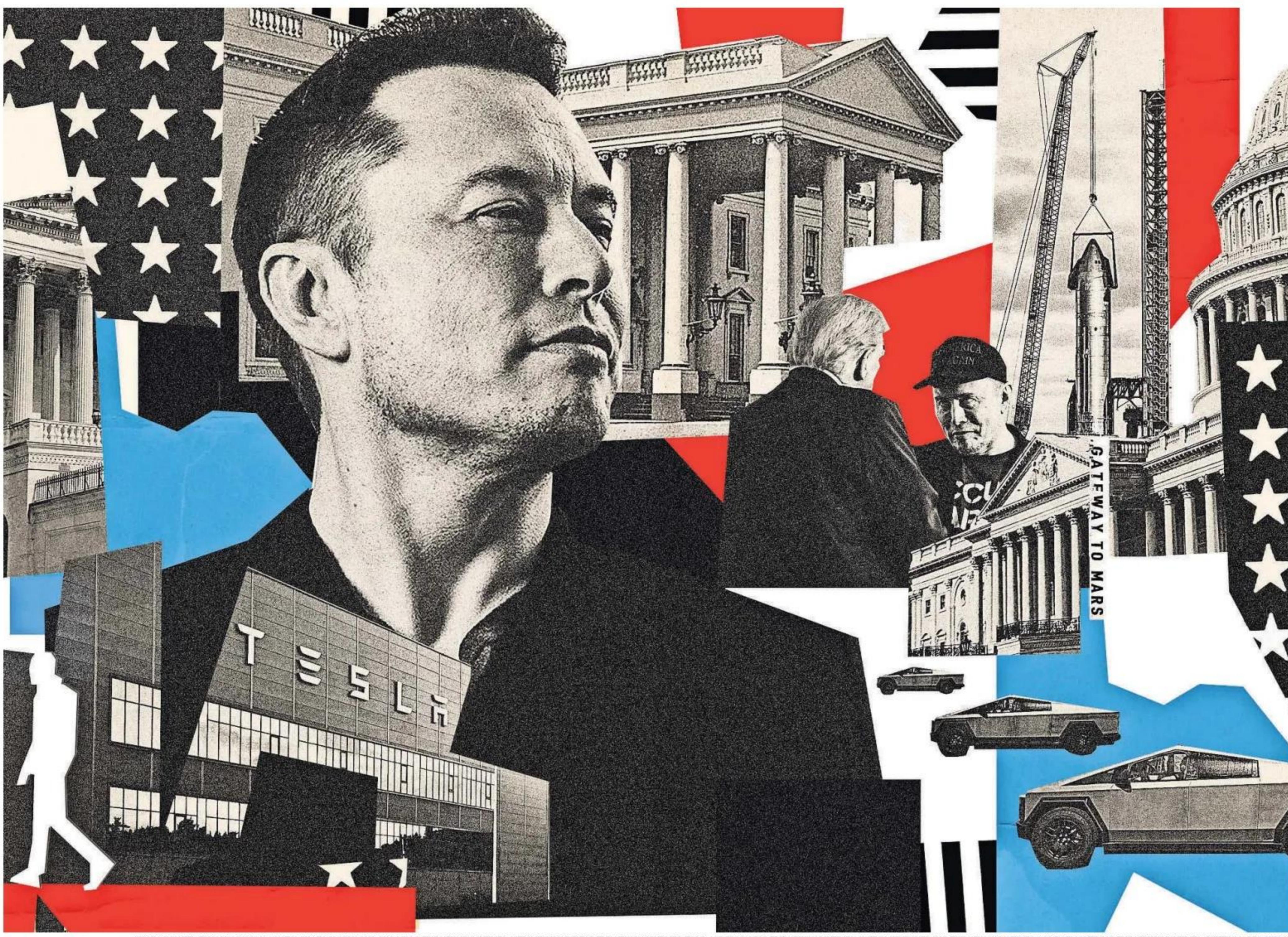
At X, Mr. Musk embarked on a particularly sweeping austerity campaign, conducting mass layoffs, ignoring office lease bills and once personally pulling the plug of a server computer to expedite the shutdown of a data center so he could stop paying rent. Employees, analysts and users predicted that the cost-cutting would crash the social platform — but despite minor failures, it has continued operating.

Still, reducing spending at X, Tesla and SpaceX is not the same as slashing national expenditures, which are subject to a thicket of laws and processes. Congress dictates the federal budget, and any major trims could dip into entitlement programs, causing a backlash from vested interests.

The lack of apocalyptic outcomes from his companies' cuts has nonetheless fueled Mr. Musk's confidence. "I'm pretty good at improving efficiency," he said on a podcast this month. He did not respond to requests for comment.

CHEAPER ALTERNATIVES

From his earliest days as a tech entrepreneur, Mr. Musk was allergic to costs. In 1995, after establishing his first business in Silicon Valley — a software company for newspapers called Zip2 — he slept in the office to avoid paying for an apartment and showered at a nearby Y.M.C.A.



"He used to be a deity. But you know, he's just a business guy. And he wants to cut everything to the bone."

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY LINCOLN AGNEW; PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUG MILLS/THE NEW YORK TIMES; MERIDITH KOHUT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; TODD ANDERSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; KATRIN STREICHER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; LOREN ELLIOTT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES; GETTY IMAGES; ISTOCK

Mr. Musk later founded a company that evolved into the electronic payments firm PayPal, which eBay bought in 2002 for \$1.5 billion. Mr. Musk set aside \$100 million of his share of the windfall for a private spaceflight company, SpaceX, which he founded that same year on the belief that he could manufacture a cheaper rocket than the U.S. government.

SpaceX stripped unnecessary components from rocket parts, simplifying them in a way that made them cheaper and faster to manufacture. Mr. Cantrell said he had once told Mr. Musk that the fuel tanks on the company's first rockets would cost \$1 million or more.

"It so offended Elon," Mr. Cantrell said. "His words to me were, 'If it costs that much I will eat my ball cap.'

Mr. Musk began examining tanks used by trucks and the oil industry to see if they would be cheaper than those that major rocket companies had relied on, Mr. Cantrell said. SpaceX ultimately bought rolls of steel and welded pieces together to build its own tanks for a few hundred thousand dollars.

Chester Crone, an executive at Moog, which makes high-performance parts for spacecraft, said the company had sold mechanical actuators — devices that use power to force a physical movement — to SpaceX for one of its early rockets. But after their first purchase, SpaceX executives asked Moog to radically cut the price of its part.

"We don't want it for \$100,000," Mr.

Crone said he recalled SpaceX executives telling him. "We want it for \$10,000." SpaceX then asked if it could simply buy the design to manufacture the part itself. Moog refused, so SpaceX went elsewhere.

"At the end of the day, if he doesn't like the price point that he's getting from a supply maker, he will figure out an alternative," Mr. Crone said of Mr. Musk, adding that Moog had rarely sold to SpaceX since. SpaceX did not respond to a request for comment.

In 2010, SpaceX launched its Falcon 9 rocket, which costs about \$550 million in inflation-adjusted dollars to develop and manufacture, according to Mo Islam, a co-founder and the chief executive of the space-industry newsletter Payload. The Falcon 9 is used for all of SpaceX's commercial launches. NASA has estimated that the same system would have cost it as much as \$4 billion to build.

Mr. Musk's frugality not only saved SpaceX money but also created a commercial space boom. Getting a kilogram of cargo to orbit today costs about \$2,600, compared with \$65,000 on NASA's now-retired space shuttle.

SAFETY MEASURES

At Tesla, where Mr. Musk became chief executive in 2008, his low-cost tactics helped make the company's electric vehicles profitable, while rivals like Ford Motor and General Motors lose money on every battery-powered vehicle they sell.

Mr. Musk has also used cuts as a motivational technique at the company. When Tesla rolled out its Model X sport utility vehicle in 2015, Mr. Musk removed the free cereal from the company's offices, two former employees said. That saved a few thousand dollars a month and sent a message that Mr. Musk was willing to cut — and cut deeply — to keep the then-struggling company afloat.

At times, Mr. Musk's efficiency measures may have put the safety of Tesla's cars at risk. Since 2021, he has refused to use radar sensors for Tesla's self-driving technology, relying instead on cameras to mimic a human driver's vision. The cost of a camera is one-fifth that of a radar sensor, or less, at current prices.

In contrast, leading autonomous vehicle companies such as Waymo use radar and sometimes lidar sensors in addition to cameras.

Accident victims or their survivors have filed numerous lawsuits, claiming Tesla's technology failed to recognize stop signs, vehicles and other obstacles, leading to injuries and deaths. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration is investigating whether Tesla's camera-dependent self-driving system was responsible for four collisions, including one that killed a pedestrian.

Mr. Musk has refused to budge. Vision "is really how humans drive," he said during an investor call in April.

Tesla, which did not respond to a request for comment, has steadily increased

spending. On Christmas Eve 2022, he flew to Sacramento to shut down Twitter's data center there. He had been angered by rent negotiations with the company that owned the property and demanded that Twitter leave the space immediately, two former employees said.

Against the advice of his employees, Mr. Musk unplugged a server while there to hasten the exit, the people said. That disrupted a tool used to monitor illegal activity on Twitter, forcing employees to work over the holidays to reconfigure the social platform's infrastructure and ship servers to its two remaining U.S. data centers.

Twitter soon experienced several failures. But the changes generated more than \$100 million in annual savings, the company announced a year later. X did not respond to a request for comment.

Mr. Musk has sometimes backtracked on his cuts after slashing too deeply. He tried rehiring some workers he laid off from Twitter. In April, he also brought back some employees of a Tesla unit that builds charging stations, weeks after firing all 500 of them.

In the end, though, no detail was too small to save just a little. In December 2022, Mr. Musk stopped paying for janitorial services at Twitter's offices, leaving trash cans overflowing and bathrooms unstocked. At the company's New York office, one employee took toilet paper to work and hung it in the bathroom stall with a metal coat hanger as a makeshift spool.

U.S. Constitution bars a third term as president

He's floated the idea, but Trump isn't allowed to run again in 2028

BY NEIL VIGDOR

President-elect Donald J. Trump has mused more than once that he might like to extend his next stay at the White House. But can he run for re-election again in 2028 and seek a third term? The simple answer: No, the Constitution does not allow it.

By the end of his second term, Mr. Trump, now 78, would be the oldest president in history.

Here's why the issue has surfaced and what the law says:

WHAT TRUMP HAS SAID

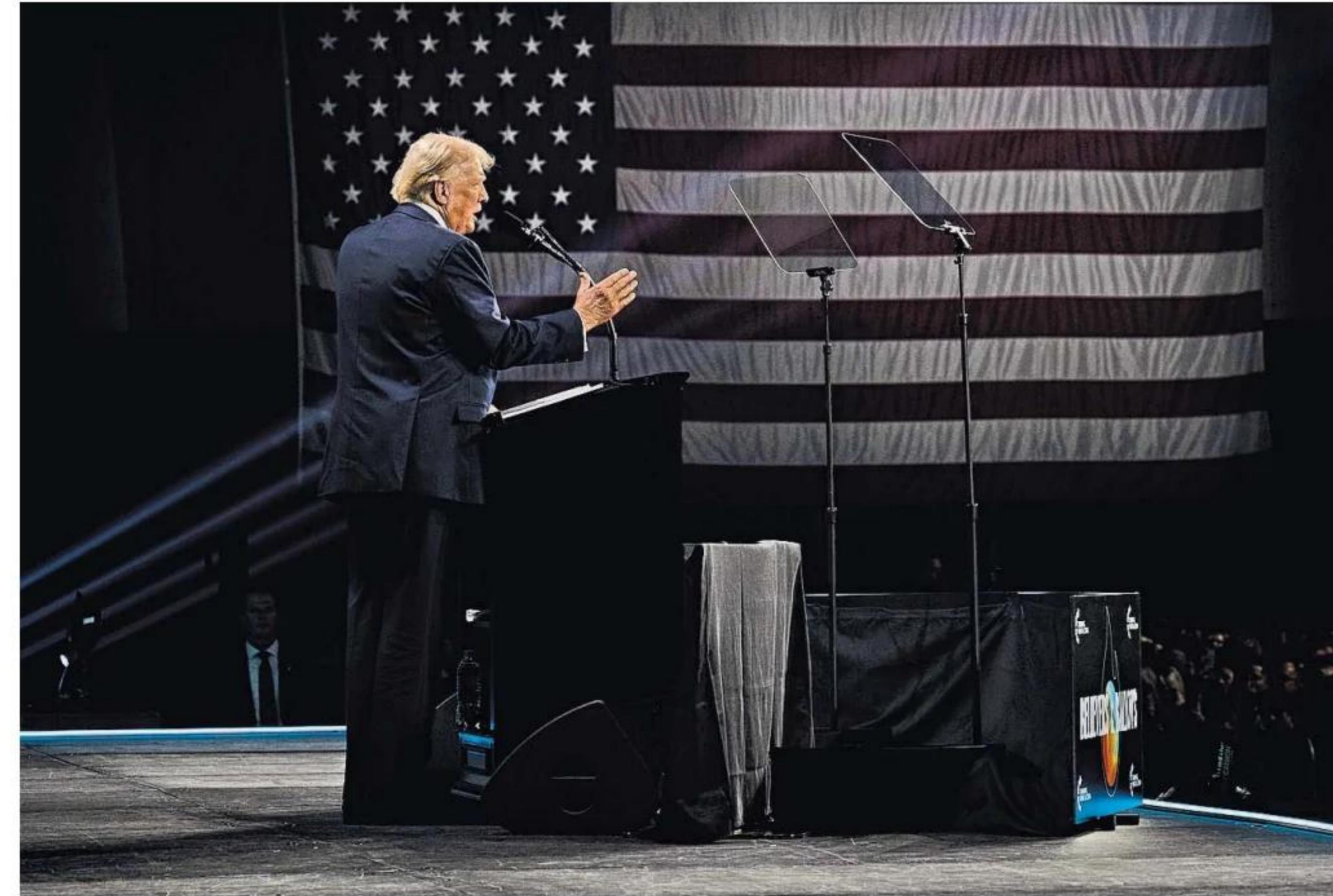
Mr. Trump has occasionally sent mixed and cryptic messages about how long he could stay in office.

While talking to House Republicans recently about clinching the White House and both chambers of Congress, Mr. Trump jokingly hinted that they could help prolong his presidency.

"I suspect I won't be running again unless you say, 'He's so good we've got to figure something else out,'" Mr. Trump said.

In July, at a gathering of religious conservatives, he told Christians that if they voted him into office in November, they would never need to vote again. "Christians, get out and vote. Just this time," he said. "You won't have to do it anymore, you know what? Four more years, it'll be fixed, it'll be fine, you won't have to vote anymore, my beautiful Christians."

Speaking to members of the National



President-elect Donald J. Trump said in 2020 that he would win four more White House years, "and then after that, we'll negotiate."

Rifle Association in May, he said: "I don't know, are we going to be considered three-term or two-term? Are we three-term or two-term if we win?"

And during his first term in office, Mr.

Trump suggested to his supporters at a September 2020 rally in Nevada that

term limits were not set in stone. "We're going to win four more years in the White House," he said.

"And then after that, we'll negotiate, right?"

Yet when Mr. Trump was asked by a New York Times reporter on Election

of the President more than twice." Kimberly Wehle, who teaches constitutional law at the University of Baltimore and wrote a book titled "How to Read the Constitution — and Why," said that the measure left no ambiguity.

"There was a concern about entrenching power in a kinglike manner," she said.

A TALL ORDER

Mr. Trump has effectively demonstrated an ability to bend the Constitution, Ms. Wehle noted, especially in having appointed three of the justices who belong to the Supreme Court's conservative majority. She pointed to the court's ruling in July that Mr. Trump was entitled to substantial immunity from prosecution on charges of trying to overturn the last election.

"Trump managed to move the Constitution by doing things no one thought was possible, and then there's no consequences for what he did," she said.

But amending the Constitution to get around the two-term limit would be a very tall order.

Two-thirds majorities in both the House and Senate are required just to propose an amendment — far more than the slender majorities Republicans hold in both houses now; or two-thirds of the states have to call for a constitutional convention.

Ratifying an amendment is even more onerous: Three-fourths of all state legislatures — or of those state-level constitutional conventions — would have to approve it.

A TRIAL BALLOON?

Representative Dan Goldman, Democrat of New York, isn't treating Mr.

Trump's recent quip as a laughing matter.

Soon after Mr. Trump remarked that House Republicans could help pave his way to a third term, Mr. Goldman introduced a resolution that would reaffirm that the 22nd Amendment applies for presidents who serve nonconsecutive terms.

The measure has little chance of advancing to the House floor for a vote with the chamber under Republican control.

"How he operates is by floating trial balloons that he often claims are jokes, but he's very serious about it," Mr. Goldman, who was lead counsel during Mr. Trump's first impeachment in the House, said on Bloomberg TV. "And he's been talking about staying on past this next term for years."

Representatives for Mr. Trump's White House transition team did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

A PRECEDENT

President Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected to four terms, serving from 1933 to 1945, during the Great Depression and World War II. He died while in office. There was no 22nd Amendment then, but Roosevelt's grip on power became a driving force for setting term limits for presidents.

"Four terms, or sixteen years, is the most dangerous threat to our freedom ever proposed," Thomas E. Dewey said in 1944. He served as New York governor and lost to Roosevelt in 1944 and to Harry S. Truman in 1948.

Michael Gold and Annie Karni contributed reporting.

An Olympian's trail of broken promises

SACRAMENTO, CALIF.

Michael Hyatt charmed a string of women, took their money, then fled

BY MARY PILON

When Kimberlie Reed met Michael Hyatt on Tinder in 2017, she was in awe.

On their first date, after several months of exchanging messages, they sat at a high top table near the bar at a Sacramento BJ's restaurant. Mr. Hyatt, his head shaved and wearing a crisp button-down shirt, regaled her with stories of representing his native Jamaica in table tennis at the 1992 and 1996 Olympic Games.

He was magnetic and accomplished and, to her mind, it made perfect sense that in the June 2014 issue of USA Table Tennis's monthly magazine he had been called "the Usain Bolt of Table Tennis."

Over the ensuing months, the two began a romantic relationship. Mr. Hyatt spoke to Ms. Reed at length about what he said was his passion project: PongNation, a table tennis club akin to SPIN, the Susan Sarandon-connected franchise started in New York in 2009. He walked Ms. Reed through an empty storefront in an industrial pocket of nearby Roseville that he said would soon be PongNation's home, describing franchise agreements he had reached with Puma and Starbucks. By co-signing business loans, opening credit cards and adding some of her own cash, she, too, became part of it.

"Next thing I know," Ms. Reed said, "he fled the country."

Dozens of interviews, court records, text messages, financial statements and other documents reviewed by The New York Times show that Ms. Reed was hardly the first person to believe in Mr. Hyatt and, soon after, regret it.

Efforts to reach Mr. Hyatt, 54, for comment were unsuccessful. Various cellphone and WhatsApp numbers associated with him in the United States and abroad have been disconnected. He did not reply to messages sent to three email addresses and various social media profiles he has used over the years.

His brother, when reached via Facebook Messenger, replied: "Zelle me 2k and I'll tell you anything you want to know." (The New York Times does not pay people it interviews for news articles.) Mr. Hyatt's mother, when reached by phone in August, said that she hadn't spoken to him in "years" before remarking, "I don't know if he's dead or alive."

Then she hung up.

A TARNISHED REPUTATION

Many of Mr. Hyatt's personal and business relationships were built on what people did not know about him.

Despite the impression he may have given, Mr. Hyatt's Olympic career was not illustrious. He finished 33rd in men's singles at the 1992 Games in Barcelona, and 49th at the 1996 Atlanta Games, along with a 25th-place finish in men's doubles.

But he remained a known, and liked, presence in the close-knit table tennis community, where the vast majority of competitors work multiple jobs while pursuing their athletic dreams. In the 1990s, the circuit involved tournaments at recreation centers and church basements, and a hodgepodge of car-pooling and last-minute lodging. Some athletes described how Mr. Hyatt would be the first to lend a couch for crashing during tournaments or paddles or apparel.

Feelings shifted in February 1996, when Mr. Hyatt hosted a tournament in Georgia and failed to pay \$15,000 in prize money, Christian Lillieros, a coach who knew Mr. Hyatt, said.

"It came as a big surprise to me," Mr. Lillieros said. "I couldn't believe he was doing it."

Mr. Hyatt ran into other trouble. He was not permitted to travel with the Jamaican national team in 1999 "due to poor disciplinary records," according to a report in the Jamaican publication The Gleaner, which noted that he had been sent home early from the Central American and Caribbean Games "because of misbehavior."

Mr. Hyatt kept busy in other ways. He started a company called EJAM IT Solutions in December 1998, according to a registration with the state of Georgia, where he had put down roots.

Four years later, at least five schools in Jamaica had ordered 150 computers from EJAM and made down payments of several thousand dollars. But, according to a report in The Gleaner, the computers never arrived, and Mr. Hyatt was nowhere to be found.

In 2003, Mr. Hyatt was charged in Cobb County, Ga., with a felony after being accused of floating a bad check. In December 2003, Mr. Hyatt also faced a charge of fraud, according to court records. That year, the bad check case was dismissed and he paid a restitution tied to the fraud case. In 2005, Mr. Hyatt filed a change of address with the court. He was moving to California.

EMPTY SHELL

In Northern California, Mr. Hyatt met women online, told them of his Olympic past, then began to pitch them his idea for a ping pong facility. Some declined to invest, while others took out several thousand dollars in loans or co-signed loans with Mr. Hyatt, according to interviews with women, friends and colleagues who knew him at the time.

Sandra Blanco met Mr. Hyatt on a dating website in 2005. "I was very impressed with him," Ms. Blanco said. "I'm from Nicaragua, we had some cultural similarities and bonded really well."

Ms. Blanco said that she often saw Mr. Hyatt on the phone and on his laptop. "He always seemed like he was working two jobs," she said. He often paid for meals, groceries and other shared expenses. "I didn't lose a dollar with Michael," she said of their early courtship.

After about a year, they moved in together. But six months after she gave birth to their daughter in 2007, and after two years together, Ms. Blanco and Mr. Hyatt separated.

Ms. Blanco was granted full custody of their daughter. Mr. Hyatt was ordered to pay monthly child support payments of \$1,200, which he did until 2017. For reasons that are unclear to Ms. Blanco, the payments stopped and resumed only in fall 2023. The payments are made via direct deposit, and neither she nor her daughter have had any contact with Mr. Hyatt in more than a decade.

"Lots of things are missing from him," Ms. Blanco said. "He's an empty shell."

In 2015, Mr. Hyatt was barred permanently from USA Table Tennis because of "sexual misconduct," according to the U.S. Center for SafeSport, the nonprofit organization directed by Congress to handle accusations of misconduct in Olympic and Paralympic sports. (As a matter of policy, SafeSport does not disclose details of its cases.)

Yet Mr. Hyatt continued to be involved in the sport, competing for Jamaica in several tournaments, including the world championships in Malaysia in 2016. In an Instagram post, he celebrated Jamaica for winning a bronze medal. However, the team finished 75th.

"This guy is so good at what he does. It makes you feel like you're kind of crazy, but then you meet these women and you think, 'I'm going to be OK.'"

On Dec. 30, 2016, he announced his retirement from the sport.

"Life changes," he said at the time.

"And you have different motivations."

His relationship with Ms. Blanco over, Mr. Hyatt kept dating. Jodi Cummins was working two jobs and driving an Uber to make ends meet when Mr. Hyatt took her on a first date to an elegant dinner in Napa. A single mother living in Sacramento, Ms. Cummins was a "bit cautious" when they began seeing each other but was moved one weekend when Mr. Hyatt took her to a Trader Joe's supermarket and picked up the bill and filled the gas tank of her car. "He was flashy but generous," she said.

Soon, Mr. Hyatt told her that he was looking at homes closer to her in Sacramento. "I was really excited," she said.

DeMylon Vinson, a real estate broker, gave Mr. Hyatt and Ms. Cummins a tour of a four-bedroom, two-bathroom, 1,873-square-foot home in Elk Grove, south of Sacramento. Ms. Cummins thought that she was looking at a home Mr. Hyatt alone would inhabit but, without her knowledge, Mr. Hyatt said in emails to Mr. Vinson that he and Ms. Cummins would be moving in together.

Despite those messages, Mr. Vinson said that Mr. Hyatt then "just disappeared."

One night around the same time, Mr. Hyatt, who was staying with Ms. Cummins because he said a home he was renting nearby wasn't ready to move into, didn't return home when she was expecting him. She learned that Mr. Hyatt had been arrested, apparently over a rental car he had not returned. In going through his paperwork, text messages and communications with others, she learned that Mr. Hyatt had been fired from his job and hadn't paid his rent. He was also receiving unemployment payments at her address and pursuing other women online.

A statement Ms. Cummins reviewed for a credit card that she said had been taken out in her name without her knowledge revealed that, on at least one occasion, he had gone to the movies instead of an office job during the day.

She tried to end things. She filed a restraining order, presenting a judge with evidence that included a text message from Mr. Hyatt threatening to kill her cat. She, her son and the cat moved in with a family member.

Ms. Cummins soon returned to her house and found Mr. Hyatt there. She called the police. "I stood on the front lawn and watched the sheriff carry him out," she said. "It was a nightmare."

Mr. Vinson, who was unaware of what had been transpiring, said he was surprised when several months later, Mr. Hyatt reached out to say he was looking for a house again, this time with his new partner, Elizabeth Toro, a blackjack dealer who also lived near Sacramento.

Ms. Toro and Mr. Hyatt had their first date in February 2018, and "he was over the top right away from the beginning," she said. He drove an Escalade and always wore nice suits, shirts and pants. When she looked him up after the first date, his Olympian past checked out and he seemed well-traveled.

Two weeks in, though, "he did weird things," Ms. Toro said. Once again, he moved aggressively, first trying to move in with her — which she resisted, even as he showed up with a suitcase and a box of memorabilia — and then pitching a chance to invest in his business.

They met with Mr. Vinson and walked



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MATT WEISS/THE GUAM DAILY POST

through a home. Afterward, Mr. Hyatt took Ms. Toro to a furniture store and asked if she would apply for a line of credit for him. That request was too much for Ms. Toro. "Then it all unraveled," she said of their relationship.

Shortly after that, she said, she received a statement for a credit card he had apparently taken out in her name without her knowledge.

In Mr. Vinson's real estate office a few miles away, he received an application for the home with all of Ms. Toro's personal details. "We approved it based on her," he said.

Ms. Toro said she had no idea.

In April 2018, a check from Mr. Hyatt to Mr. Vinson for a lease option for the home bounced. He subsequently took Mr. Hyatt to small claims court.

Mr. Hyatt asked her to help get the tournament going, she said. Mr. Hyatt said that he had an investor who wanted to pay \$1.2 million for a 10 percent stake in the company. But the investor, he said, needed to see that Mr. Hyatt had \$100,000 in cash — and that the tournament was successful.

Mr. Hyatt and Ms. Reed then went to a bank to open a business line of credit in both of their names. They did the same at another bank.

Mr. Hyatt and Ms. Reed visited a Carmax, where she said she signed for a loan for a \$29,000 Toyota Highlander. Mr. Hyatt handed over a check for \$2,000 and said the car would be used for business purposes, Ms. Reed said. (The check bounced.)

On Aug. 4, 2018, Ms. Reed arrived at the venue for the tournament and found only a handful of athletes in attendance.

"It was a joke," she said. Mr. Hyatt returned to her home that night despondent and went to bed.

The next morning, "it was like it hadn't happened," Ms. Reed said. He posted on Facebook that the tournament was a success.

Ms. Reed began receiving statements for other credit cards opened using her personal information that she had not signed up for, including a Capital One card that was maxed out for over \$10,000. An American Express gold card in Ms. Reed's name had more than \$20,000 worth of charges on it.

When Ms. Reed confronted Mr. Hyatt, he continued to reassure her that investors' funds were coming soon. "I think we'll get \$100K tomorrow afternoon and \$400K next Thursday or Friday," he messaged Ms. Reed on Aug. 6.

On Aug. 15, Mr. Hyatt texted Ms. Reed, "I have a check for \$100K and a signed agreement in place." But he dodged her efforts to meet in person. In their back and forth that week, he said "your boyfriend will be a millionaire by years end. PongNation will do about \$16M in 2019 and make over \$4M in profit. Love your man, support him, let him come to you."

Despite the bravado, Mr. Hyatt's world began to cave in on him. On Aug. 30, Ms. Reed went to the hotel where Mr. Hyatt was staying and reclaimed the Highlander that she had bought for him.

Ms. Reed also hired a private investigator to look into the man she thought she was building a life with. Two weeks later, a warrant for Mr. Hyatt's arrest was issued for the alleged misuse of welfare funds, as reported by Ms. Cummins.

SO HUMILIATED

Mr. Hyatt soon surfaced in Guam, a U.S. territory, drawn by a job offer from its table tennis federation.

"I now have a Guam driver's license," he told The Guam Daily Post on Oct. 19, 2018, in an article headlined "Guam Table Tennis Gets an Olympian." He said he had arrived to coach and "I am here to stay."

Within a few hours of the article being published online, the email inbox of the reporter who wrote it, Matt Weiss, filled with messages from Ms. Reed and others who told of their experiences with Mr. Hyatt. Mr. Weiss wrote another article, this one with the headline "Former Olympian on Guam Wanted in California." The table tennis federation pulled Mr. Hyatt's job offer.

He left Guam for Southeast Asia.

He turned up in the Philippines, and assumed a new identity as Anthony Bennett, according to interviews with people there and a copy of the identification he used, which was seen by The New York Times.

Mr. Hyatt continued to meet with women. Several who interacted with him during this time remember him constantly being on his laptop or his phone, moving from one hotel to another, and asking for money. He spoke less of his table tennis past. On a LinkedIn profile, Mr. Hyatt claimed he worked as a vice president of sales and marketing for the food company ADM from February 2018 to May 2021. A company spokeswoman said they did not find "anyone of that name in our records."

Back in Sacramento, Ms. Reed is continuing to improve her credit. She is also in counseling.

"I was so humiliated after this," she said.

She communicates with others like Ms. Cummins who say they were also duped by Mr. Hyatt and occasionally grabs a glass of wine with them. They've compared their timelines, and credit card statements.

All told, Mr. Hyatt now stands accused of defrauding at least 10 people out of a total of several hundred thousand dollars.

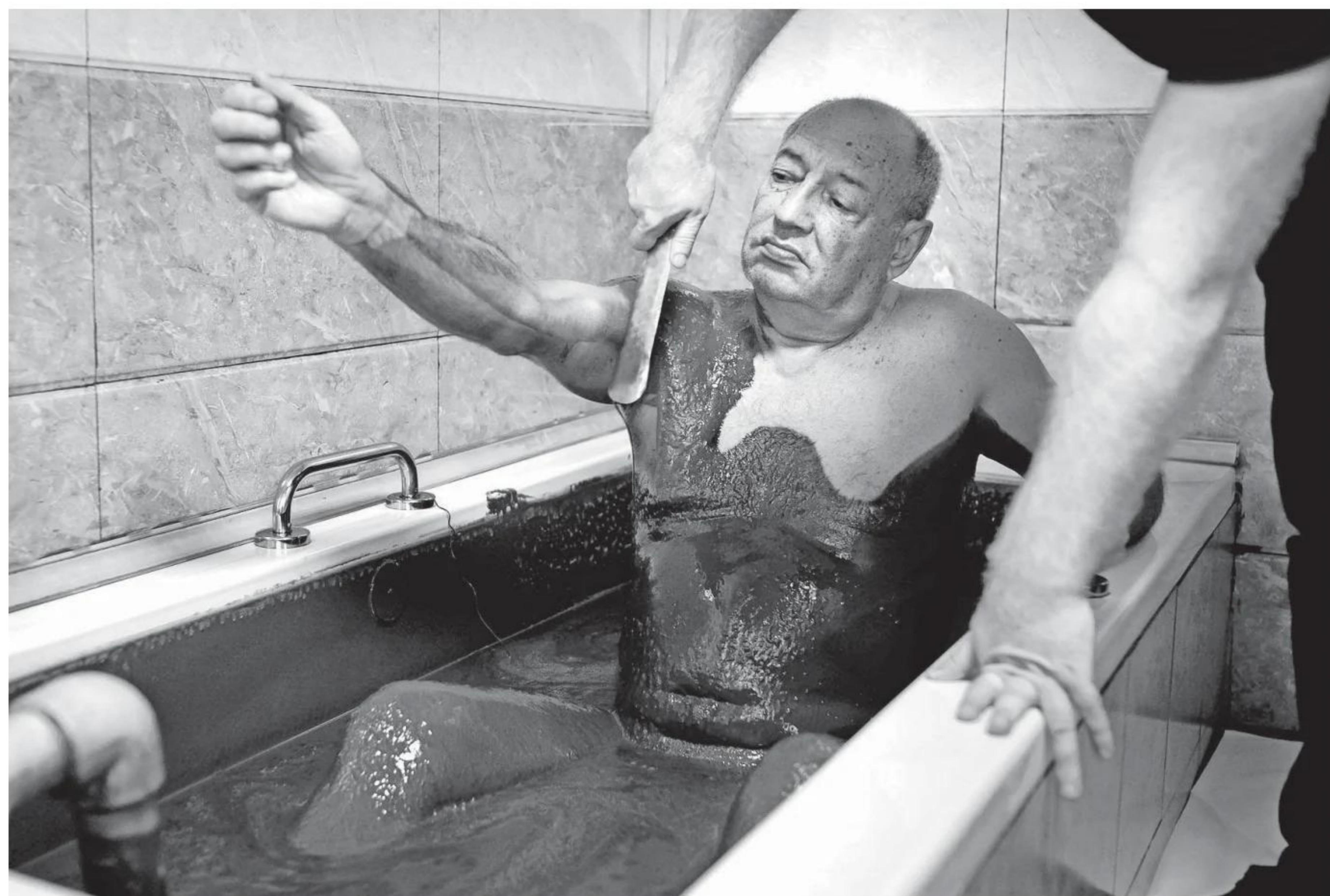
"This guy is so good at what he does," Ms. Cummins said. "It makes you feel like you're kind of crazy, but then you meet these women and you think, 'I'm going to be OK.'"

Ms. Reed has refrained from dating since her time with Mr. Hyatt. She teaches second grade during the day and teaches Pilates in her spare time. And she continues to share her story about her Tinder date with an Olympian that ran amok.

On a recent spring afternoon, she clicked through files on her laptop, her dog, Stella, looking on as the sun set against the shining tiles of the mosaics that adorn the walls of her dining room.

"I have ZERO regrets," one of the last text messages she received from Mr. Hyatt said. "When my time comes to move on from this world to the next I will be proud that I took the road less traveled."

Business



A guest at a resort in Naftalan, Azerbaijan. Bathing in the locally produced oil is believed to help treat a variety of conditions including arthritis, infertility and skin diseases.

A soothing soak in oil

AZERBAIJAN DISPATCH NAFTALAN, AZERBAIJAN

Bath near climate session highlights healing powers, and dwindling reserves

BY ANTON TROIANOVSKI

I bathed in oil during the U.N. climate summit meeting.

It was crude oil from a half-mile underground, pumped into a bathtub at a hotel in Azerbaijan. It crept into every crevice of my submerged body and every fold of my skin. It smothered the hair on my limbs, making me look a little like an animal stuck in an oil spill.

Then came an attendant to scrape it all off.

Just a day earlier, I had been covering the United Nations' annual climate conference, COP29, which was held this month in Baku, Azerbaijan, a place that helped give rise to the modern oil industry more than a century ago, enabling and endangering our civilization.

Much has been made of the incongruity of those fighting to reduce fossil-fuel emissions gathering in a petrostate, but Azerbaijanis are proud of their oil, whatever conference attendees might think of it. For instance, it fueled the Soviet defeat of the Nazis in World War II.

Another point of pride lies beneath the dusty, shrub-dotted hills of Naftalan, a city a four-hour drive from Baku. The oil extracted there doesn't burn. Instead, the locals and Azerbaijani scientists say, it heals. If you bathe in it.

But this oil, like all oil, is a finite resource. Naftalan's recoverable deposits of "medical" oil were already halfway gone as of 2022. So the photographer Emile Ducke and I traveled there for an intimate encounter with the dwindling substance.

"They tell us that we've got reserves for 60 years," said Ayten Magerramova, the head doctor at a Naftalan resort called Garabag. "After that, I don't know."

Once you bathe in crude oil, it's hard to get rid of it. For that reason, the Garabag's towels, bathrobes and bed-sheets are all brown. My bed's headboard had light brown stains.

"The resin itself is a bit toxic," Dr. Magerramova said. "But for skin problems, the resin really helps."

Petroleum's use as medicine goes back millennia. Marco Polo, who



The city of Naftalan, above, is known in the region for its "medical" oil. Guests, mostly from former Soviet countries, visit resorts like Kepez, below, to take oil baths.



traveled through present-day Azerbaijan, described its oil as a "salve for men and camels affected with itch or scab." The Soviets said the unusual molecular makeup of some of the hydrocarbons in Naftalan's oil made it suitable for treating arthritis, infertility, eczema and a host of other medical conditions.

There's little Western research on the risks and efficacy of the oil, but an article published in 2020 in an Azerbaijani science journal reported that the oil has been found to work as an antiseptic and to have a "peculiar hormone-like effect on the function of sex hormones."

At another resort, Nafta, the head

doctor, Zaur Valimatov, said he hoped to preserve the subterranean deposits for future generations by phasing out oil baths, which use copious quantities, in favor of oil wraps, which would use more modest amounts.

"Putting people in oil," he said, "is a bit of a barbaric use of oil."

Naftalan has registered a surge in visitors since 2020, when Azerbaijan recaptured part of the nearby territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, pushing back the line of contact with Armenian forces and making the city safer to visit. A woman from Omsk, Russia, said that more Russians started coming here "after the

sanctions" — a reference to the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The sanatoriums reuse their oil for a few months before getting a new delivery, though they say they filter it after each bather.

Whatever the hygienic concerns, many guests — everyone I met came from a country that like Azerbaijan was formerly part of the Soviet Union — swore by the baths. Damira Vaitsel, 30, an executive assistant from Kazakhstan, said she'd successfully treated her psoriasis after two weeks in Naftalan. Bathing in oil, she said, made her feel like "the best oligarch in the city."

I decided I had to try it, too.

As the oil glugged toward my chest, I grew nervous, remembering what the doctors had said about its toxicity. Finally, the attendant turned off the flow and left me to ruminate on being enveloped in a viscous stew consisting of the remains of primordial creatures.

It was warm and pleasingly heavy, so the nervousness gave way to relaxation. It smelled something like paint, rubber or sour milk, but I grew used to it. And then the weirdness of this substance hit me. Though it looked like molten chocolate, it wasn't sticky — it was slippery. My foot slid across my shin, my hands slid over my hips. It was otherworldly — netherworldly.

When it was time to get out, the attendant had me stand and grip a handle attached to the wall, and scraped the oil off with a long shoehorn. He rubbed me all over with many oversize paper towels that formed a brown pile at my feet. He continued in the shower before handing me a washcloth and directing me in broken and bawdy Russian to clean my more intimate parts myself.

Back in Baku, I sought to process the experience. At the climate conference, which ended on Friday, it was becoming clear we humans are failing to stop the planet's warming to ever more dangerous levels.

So I decided to seek out the place where, in one sense, it all began: a site marked as the world's first industrially drilled oil well, dating to 1846. Nearby, between the Caspian Sea and newly built apartment towers, scores of green-and-red oil derricks still whoosh, creak, rumble and bang.

I stood watching the hypnotic bob of one of them as a worker, Khalid, 54, stood next to me in silence.

"Take it out, sell it," he eventually said. "It's like God sent this to us."

Risks and rewards of a Trump market

STRATEGIES

BY JEFF SOMMER

Markets abhor uncertainty. That bit of Wall Street wisdom helps explain their ebb and flow since Donald J. Trump's victory on Election Day, and even earlier.

Stocks and bond yields began rising early in October, when Wall Street concluded that Mr. Trump would win. The market surge accelerated after Election Day.

Yet for the markets, uncertainty hasn't vanished. It's merely coming from another direction. Because the president-elect's approach to politics and economics is so disruptive and unconventional, markets have been straining to digest the implications of the power transfer in Washington, switching erratically between elation, confusion and occasional bouts of high anxiety.

Aspects of the Trump platform are balm for the markets. He promises lower corporate taxes and less regulation: Those assurances are being widely interpreted as a recipe for fat company profits and a prosperous stock market. The president-elect is also expected to try to extend tax cuts that he signed into law in 2017 and that expire at the end of 2025. Over the short term, these measures are expected to stimulate economic growth.

But not all of his program is positive for growth. Mr. Trump is a self-described "tariff man," calling for sharply increasing tariffs on China and lesser but substantial levies on all other trading nations. Furthermore, he has promised a drastic reduction in immigration and a tsunami of deportations — a disaster for thousands of families, which, in cold financial terms, would reduce the supply of labor in the United States. Textbook economics tells us that adding tariffs and reducing the work force could slow the economy and spur inflation.

Some companies might well benefit from these specific policies. Stocks of private prison firms like Geo and CoreCivic, which can build and operate temporary detention centers, have risen with the president-elect's fortunes, and shares of smaller domestic companies with little international revenue jumped after the election. Also rising, companies that provide services to dentists.

But the S&P 500 has given up ground and bond yields have jumped since the initial election buoyancy. Processing the disparate policy signals from the new administration and incorporating them into broader views about profits and interest rates is no simple matter.

A WIDENING DEFICIT The various Trump domestic programs are likely to widen the already gaping federal budget deficit, which in itself could be inflationary and be disruptive for the bond market. This is a monumental problem, and it's complicated.

First, tariffs would raise some

money but not enough to make up for the revenue reductions from the tax cuts endorsed by Mr. Trump, nonpartisan analysts say. Compared with the size of the economy — actually, as a fraction of annual gross domestic product — this year's deficit is larger than it has ever been in a period without a war or a major crisis: more than 6 percent, and rising. The total U.S. debt is 123 percent of G.D.P., an extraordinarily large amount. And Mr. Trump's fiscal policies seem likely to enlarge these numbers.

It's certainly possible that major government spending cuts will result from Mr. Trump's new, unofficial Department of Government Efficiency — an advisory body headed by Elon Musk, the world's richest man, and Vivek Ramaswamy, a former pharmaceutical executive who sought the Republican presidential nomination.

More likely, I think, is that as long as military spending, Medicare and Social Security remain sacrosanct, as Mr. Trump promises, the commission's recommendations won't be enough to

reverse the widening budget deficit. But they could disrupt major sectors of the government and the economy, if they are enacted. No one likes excessive government regulation, but the safety of food, drugs, water, airplane travel, investing, saving, driving and endless other activities has depended for decades on government regulation.

On balance, then, the budget deficit is likely to increase. This outlook helps to account for a sharp rise in bond interest rates since September — when the Federal Reserve began trimming the short-term rates it controls. Fed officials have begun hinting that they are in no "hurry" to cut further. And the Trump policies could easily induce longer-term rates to keep rising.

CONSUMERS AND INVESTORS

That wouldn't be good for consumers. Mortgage rates, which are in the 7 percent range for 30-year loans, would become higher. In September, the Fed projected that the federal funds rate would drop to 3.4 percent by the end of next year, but reaching that goal has gotten harder.

With the expectation that U.S. interest rates won't fall much further, the dollar has been strengthening — even though Mr. Trump says he favors a weaker dollar. If he goes ahead with his tariff promises, countries hit by the levies would have incentives to weaken their currencies further, to make their products more competitive. A stronger dollar helps Americans traveling abroad, but it hurts consumers at home and big corporations with international operations.

These are just a few examples of a complex analytical problem: The Trump victory may well be associated with a rising stock market because the market gains in most presidential administrations, but it isn't a win-win for the markets.

The Trump victory may be associated with a rising stock market, but it isn't a win-win. Across a broad range of industries, change is coming. Health care stocks have been slumping. But shares of Henry Schein, a New York company that supplies goods and equipment to dentists, as well as

shares of two of its competitors, have been on fire in recent days. Why? Partly because Robert F. Kennedy Jr., whom Mr. Trump says he intends to nominate as secretary of health and human services, wants to remove fluoride from drinking water, a move that may be bad for public health but great for the business side of dentistry. Pronouncements from Trump associates will be swaying the markets.

For most investors, the heightened uncertainty has some essential implications. Stick to basics. Settle on a plan and stay with it. If you're a long-term stock investor — perhaps using low-cost diversified index funds, as I do — try to remain in the market, even if it gets rough. Prepare by holding enough safe investments to pay the bills, and ride out any turbulence.

If interest rates rise, bond prices will fall as a function of bond math, so bond funds may lose money. Short-term Treasury bills, money-market funds and shorter-duration bonds may be a better bet for the cash you may need soon.

Fortunately for investors, Mr. Trump follows the stock market closely and wants it to rise. On this score, he has a great record. Aside from the havoc caused by the pandemic in 2020, the first Trump administration was excellent for the market. While he was in office, the S&P 500 returned more than 81 percent, including dividends. It's prospered under Mr. Biden, too, with a total return of more than 64 percent.

Wherever the Trump administration takes us, remember that the market has done well under most presidents, regardless of party affiliation or policies. Companies like Nvidia, which makes the advanced chips that run artificial intelligence, are turning in strong performances. As long as corporate earnings accelerate, the bull market may manage to keep its swagger.

'Sewage beer' hits the spot with COP29's eco-conscious delegates

BAKU, AZERBAIJAN

BY REBECCA F. ELLIOTT

Food and drink, the fuel that keeps negotiators negotiating and reporters reporting, always gets a lot of attention at climate summit meetings.

At this year's meeting, the Australian delegation was a favorite for its complimentary coffee. Another popular spot was the Azerbaijani pavilion, where the hosts served strong tea from gleaming silver samovars.

And then there were the Singaporeans. They were giving out free beer made from recycled toilet water.

Delegates and observers at the talks, held in a retrofitted soccer stadium on

the edge of Baku, the Azerbaijani capital, didn't seem to mind. In fact, the beer's recycling credentials might add to its appeal among the environmentally minded at this conference, known as COP29.

"At first their eyes widen," said Samantha Thian, one of the leaders of Singapore's youth delegation in Baku. "Then we reassure them. They're usually coming back the next day for another."

A hoppy pilsner called NEWBrew, the beer is part of a collaboration of a Singaporean company called Brewerkz and the country's national water agency. The project is designed to draw attention to, and normalize, Singapore's water reclamation efforts.

Ensuring there is enough clean water for people to drink, grow crops and keep industries like computer-chip fabrication running is a key challenge as global



NEWBrew is made from recycled toilet water in Singapore and aims to highlight the country's water reclamation efforts.

Panel on Climate Change, a United Nations body. And every degree of temperature increase raises the risk of droughts and floods.

As word of the so-called sewage beer got around, some conference attendees stopped by the Singaporean pavilion for a curious taste.

Others, like Pat Heslop-Harrison, a professor of biology at the University of Leicester in England, just wanted a drink that didn't involve trekking out of the stadium.

It was only after he'd cracked open a can, Dr. Heslop-Harrison said, that he

realized he was drinking a cold one made from recycled sewage water.

He liked it so much that he came back the next day. "I'm sure that the technology of Singapore is such that it's second to none," he said.

Some patrons were more sheepish about trying the beer. One taster was glad to share his review — "fresh" and "not so bitter" — but not his name, lest his boss discover he'd been day-drinking at a U.N. summit meeting.

Another, Julian Reingold, an Athens-based journalist, stopped by for a swig as the negotiations seemed to bog down in their second week.

"If we were to drink more of that beer, I don't know how the negotiations would turn out," Mr. Reingold said. "Maybe better. Who knows?"

Toiling under threat of abduction or murder

INDIA, FROM PAGE 1

fear retaliation. But workers' rights groups, the local government authorities, experts and even some mill owners say that kidnapping is not uncommon and that workers have little recourse.

The New York Times and Fuller Project obtained police reports and local government records, interviewed factory owners and collected the firsthand accounts of a half dozen families involved in recent kidnapping cases.

"Some say they will murder you. People say all sorts of things," said Vinobai Taktode, a laborer who reported to the police that her husband had been kidnapped by his employer. "There are so many fears on our minds."

This year, The Times and The Fuller Project revealed that household-name companies and Indian politicians profit off a brutal system that forces children to work, pushes them into underage marriages and coerces women to get unnecessary hysterectomies to keep them working in the fields, unencumbered by menstruation or routine ailments.

All of those abuses can be linked to what is known as bonded labor; a system in which workers are perpetually in debt to their employers and cannot leave.

Bonded labor, or debt bondage, is an internationally recognized human rights violation. It is illegal in India and explicitly denounced by the Western companies that buy sugar from Maharashtra.

Yet worker abuse in Maharashtra is hardly a secret. Bonded labor is endemic across the state, according to researchers, industry officials and workers' rights groups. A court-appointed government fact-finding team found last year that the sugar industry relies on an extensive system of bonded labor, according to a document obtained by The Times and Fuller Project.

Several Western brands that source from Maharashtra either declined to comment or pointed to their published human-rights policies without addressing the issue of bonded labor in Maharashtra.

Far from addressing the problem, the Maharashtra government denies that it exists. A court affidavit submitted this year on behalf of several state agencies said that sugar laborers were "free to move anywhere and they are never imprisoned by the employer."

The mill where Mr. Dutta says he was held, Jaywant Sugars, denied any involvement. The mill has many customers and has supplied Sucden, a major commodity broker that says it commands 15 percent of the global sugar trade.

In response to questions, Sucden said that it had not purchased from Jaywant Sugars since 2020. Sucden said that the mill had signed a code of conduct assuring that no labor abuses were involved in its operations. Sucden said that it would not source from Jaywant again without "clear and documented prior clarification on labor practices."

Debt bondage persists because sugar cutters in Maharashtra are paid through cash advances at the beginning of each season. Almost invariably, according to laborers and contractors alike, it is impossible to repay the money in a single year. The debt rolls over, and families are trapped, typically with no contract and no recourse.

Violence can occur when workers try to break that cycle.

One sugar cutter, Prahlad Pawar, said that his employer told him last year that he and others had not worked hard enough during the harvest.

So the employer ordered Mr. Pawar, his wife and children, and another family to work as his personal servants during the off-season, according to a report filed with a local government agency and interviews with family members. Mr. Pawar and his family eventually escaped, hiking for days toward their village, begging for food and sleeping in fields.

"People in the cities, who drink these cold drinks and eat chocolates, they are



Maintenance workers at Jaywant Sugars in Karad, India. Below left, Vinobai Taktode, a sugar worker, at a relative's home in the village of Alepur, western India. She reported to the police that her husband had been kidnapped by his employer. "Some say they will murder you," she said. Below right, Ms. Taktode's husband, Shivaji Bhivaji Taktode, center.



living their lives and they do not even think of us," Mr. Pawar said. "I wish they, for once, tried working like us."

WOMEN PAY THE PRICE

Ms. Taktode isn't sure how old she is — maybe 30, she said, or 35. As is the case for many female sugar cane cutters, nobody recorded her birthday.

She lives in the village of Alepur, many hours' drive from Mr. Dutta's family. But, like Mr. Dutta's preteen daughter, she grew up among the crops, doing chores for her parents along with her siblings.

Unlike Mr. Dutta, her parents had not sought a way out. When she was in her early or mid teens, she was married to a man who cut sugar cane, too.

In Maharashtra, the crop is generally cut by a husband-and-wife team known as a koyta. Each couple supplies a specific sugar mill but is hired by a middleman contractor who doles out the mill's money every season.

Lump-sum payments allow workers to pay for major costs like home repairs or medical expenses. But most agricultural workers have only oral agreements and no recourse if their contractors change the terms. Sugar mills deny any relationship with the workers or

any responsibility for their treatment.

"Labor is completely invisible, and that invisibility is critical for profit making," said Seema Kulkarni of Makaam, a group that advocates on behalf of female farm workers in India.

Ms. Taktode, her husband and five children struggled financially. She does not know all the details because, as in most farming couples, her husband made all the arrangements with the contractor.

"I was so scared. I could not think, it was as if my head had stopped working."

But her husband, Shivaji Bhivaji Taktode, battled alcoholism. Years ago, he missed two weeks of work while bingeing on a sticky, sweet country wine made from molasses. Every night for days, she said in an interview, the contractor and half a dozen friends roughed up Ms. Taktode's husband for not working.

One night, she recalled, someone beat him with the blunt side of a scythe, the tool used to cut cane. Her husband's back was covered in bruises. Another

night, she said, a man knocked him on the head with a rock, sending him to the hospital.

It was then that Ms. Taktode learned that while the men control the finances, women and children can pay the price. The contractor forced Ms. Taktode and her eldest son to do days of extra work in the sugar fields, she said.

But that still wasn't enough to make up for the lost time.

The contractor told Ms. Taktode that her husband had stolen from him by missing work, she said. She was terrified. They had no records and no way to calculate their labor, their debt or a way out.

She knew they had to escape.

"They used to threaten us," she said. She remembers her contractor saying, "If you leave, we will kill you."

Late one night in 2022, the family bundled up some possessions and slipped away, marching for hours, she said, through "a jungle" of rustling sugar cane until they reached a train station. When her 6-year-old son could no longer walk, Ms. Taktode carried him.

After two years in hiding, they returned home this summer, assuming that things had quieted down.

They were wrong. The contractor

showed up again in late August and forced her husband into a car. A relative recalled having witnessed the abduction and recounted the details, which were also listed in a police report.

The contractor could not be reached, despite repeated phone calls. The mill for which he worked declined a request for an interview.

Ms. Taktode, though, said that the contractor had called her family and demanded money for her husband's release. Then, this fall, Mr. Taktode returned, shaken up and badly injured, his son said. He had escaped, his family said, but details were few. The contractor's mobile phone was switched off.

It is unclear whether that was the end of Ms. Taktode's ordeal. They are destitute. Food is scarce. When it rains, droplets of water seep through gaps in the tin roof of her mother-in-law's home, turning the dirt floor to mud.

If the contractor returns, Ms. Taktode says she has no idea how they will find the money.

A FATHER'S DESPERATION

Mr. Dutta and his wife are desperate to avoid the harsh life of sugar cane cutting for their children. This fall, they decided that they would not migrate for the har-

vest as usual. They were done. Their daughter was finishing primary school and they wanted her to take her classes seriously. Mr. Dutta never got the education he wanted. "I need to educate them. Both my kids," he said.

But by the time they had decided to quit, they had already taken their yearly advance. For most workers, that would be the end of it. They would have to return to the fields.

The Duttas, though, had scratched together some money by farming cotton, millet and lentils in the offseason.

Mr. Dutta arranged a meeting with his contractor. He offered to repay 70 percent of the advance upfront, then return with the rest in a few days.

The contractor, who had been drinking with friends, was furious, Mr. Dutta recounted. He demanded that Mr. Dutta pay back double the advance if he wanted to quit. They argued, and the contractor and his friends turned on Mr. Dutta, beating him up.

Mr. Dutta's contractor did not respond to repeated calls for comment.

"There were eight to 10 people, and they were all drinking. Who listens after drinking?" Mr. Dutta said in an interview, biting his nails as he spoke. "I was alone."

They pushed him into a car, took his phone away and began to drive southeast. It was half a day's drive before they arrived at the Jaywant Sugar mill, he said.

Like most of Maharashtra's mills, Jaywant is controlled by a politically powerful family. The mill's president, C. N. Deshpande, denied that anyone had been held involuntarily at his factory. He said he knew nothing about Mr. Dutta.

But he acknowledged that sugar laborers who refuse to work or cannot repay their advances posed a problem. Ultimately, the mill's money is at stake. "Contractors come and say that laborers have run away," Mr. Deshpande said. They ask what to do, he added. "We tell them we don't know, but we need the money."

DARING TO ESCAPE

Mr. Dutta, weak from hunger and his beating, was taken to a dark room without furniture, he later told a government legal aid agency. Over the next two days, he was let out only to use the bathroom.

Mr. Dutta had no idea when, or if, he'd be freed.

"I was so scared," he said. "I could not think, it was as if my head had stopped working."

After two days, Mr. Dutta's brother discovered what had happened. He phoned the contractor, who reiterated his demand — twice his money back. In response, Mr. Dutta's brother and wife filed a police report.

The contractor told Mr. Dutta that it was time to leave and ushered him to a car. Mr. Dutta was terrified about where they were taking him, he said. At a roadside stop, he made a break for it.

He arrived home about a week later and filed a report with the legal aid agency.

Weeks passed and nothing happened.

When reporters inquired, the police played down the incident and said that Mr. Dutta and the contractor were working things out.

Mr. Dutta said he was afraid that the contractor would return for him. But he and his wife are adamant that they will not return to sugar cane cutting.

Decades of farm labor harms your body irreparably. Mr. Dutta can feel it in his knuckles and at the base of his spine. His wife is no different.

Harvesting cotton and millet for a living will be painful, too. And it had never before generated enough money to live on. But Mr. Dutta said that didn't matter. "In any work, one has to suffer," he said.

He would make sure his daughter stayed in school, he said — whatever it took.

Ankur Tangade contributed reporting. This story was produced in collaboration with The Fuller Project.

U.S. indictment of India tycoon aims at an entire culture

NEW DELHI

Gautam Adani charges strike at key component of country's government

BY ALEX TRAVELLI

Gautam Adani is no ordinary Indian billionaire. Over the past 10 years, he has become in effect an extension of India's government. His conglomerate, Adani Group, builds and buys ports, factories and power plants, often under state contract or license. It operates airports. It even owns a TV news channel.

Mr. Adani's business empire has become central to India during the rise of Narendra Modi, first elected as prime minister in 2014.

As Mr. Modi brought India to the center of the world stage, he brought Mr. Adani in tow. Today, Mr. Adani's flagship company is worth about 10 times what it was at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.

On Wednesday, the U.S. government charged Mr. Adani, one of the world's richest people, with multiple counts of fraud. Federal prosecutors accused him

project this summer. Afterward, Mr. Garcetti declared himself "inspired."

Now, once again, India's corporate champion has been roughed up. Together, the Adani empire's stocks lost about 20 percent of their value on Thursday, or more than \$30 billion, and an imminent bond sale was canceled.

Mr. Adani's current troubles promise a rockier ride: The criminal charges by the U.S. government, brought by federal prosecutors in the Eastern District of New York, along with a complaint by the Securities and Exchange Commission, take aim at Mr. Adani personally.

According to the indictment, the defendants, in keeping track of their bribes to Indian officials, used "code names" for various participants in the scheme. Several of the defendants referred to Mr. Adani as "Mr. A," "Numero uno" and "the big man."

Within India, Mr. Adani's reputation is of a politically connected businessman who gets things done. After the accusations by Hindenburg, India's Supreme Court appointed a panel to look into the allegations but gave up when the country's markets regulator admitted to "drawing a blank" in its investigation.

But after the dust kicked up by Hindenburg had settled, Adani stocks recovered most of what they had lost. New investors made a killing.

Mr. Adani himself also ventured back into public view, posing with Eric Garcetti, the U.S. ambassador to India, who visited an enormous Adani solar

project this summer. Afterward, Mr. Garcetti declared himself "inspired."

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Mr. Adani is "being protected by all the investigative agencies, all the regulators — even by the courts," said Prashant Bhushan, a lawyer who has battled in court against both Mr. Adani and Mr. Modi's government.

Mr. Modi is Mr. Adani's "main person and protector," Mr. Bhushan said, adding that Mr. Adani had hosted the dinner at which his new alliance with the B.J.P. had been hashed out. Mr. Pawar took it

with other politicians, too. "The only person he has not been able to control or get to his side is Rahul Gandhi," a leader of India's opposition Congress party, Mr. Bhushan said.

Mr. Gandhi, speaking to the press on Thursday at Congress headquarters, said that "the prime minister is involved in corruption" and that "Mr. Adani should be arrested."

Sambit Patra, a spokesman for Mr. Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party, or B.J.P., said, "The company will defend itself, and the law will take its course." Mr. Gandhi's allegations, he said, were designed to "bring down the Indian market."

The U.S. indictment implied that enormous sums had been offered to state governments controlled by parties other than the B.J.P. Mr. Adani is known to make deals across the political spectrum.

Mr. Adani is so central to India's politics that he can broker deals between sworn rivals.

This month, Ajit Pawar, a former ally of Mr. Gandhi's who is fighting an election in Maharashtra state, stunned a television interviewer by mentioning that Mr. Adani had hosted the dinner at which his new alliance with the B.J.P. had been hashed out. Mr. Pawar took it

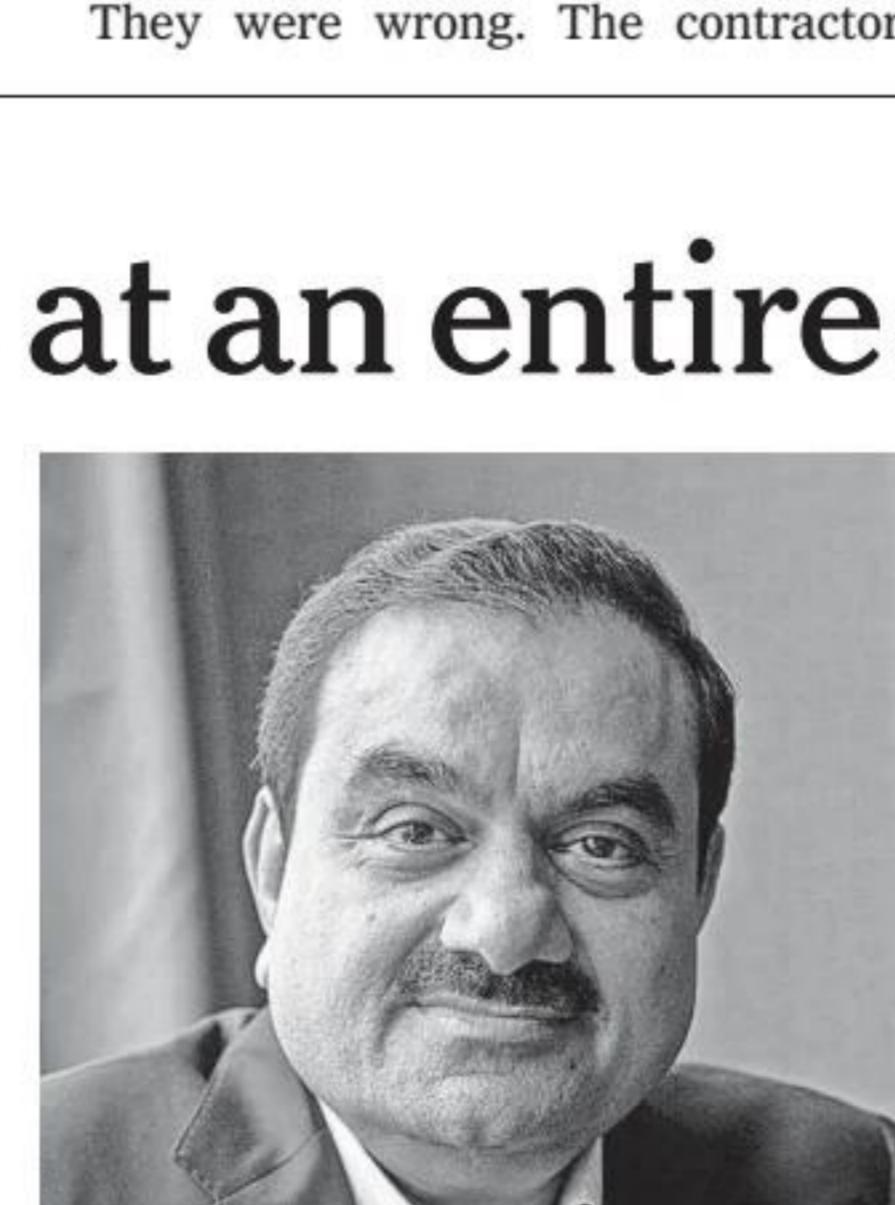
back a few days later, saying he had misremembered.

Rohit Chandra, a political scientist and economic historian at the Indian Institute of Technology in New Delhi, explained why governments like Mr. Modi's find it useful to team up with private companies.

Spending on "infrastructure is great for short-term growth," and hopefully for the broader economy, Mr. Chandra said. And, he added, "as in most of the world, infrastructure contracts are very close to projects like 'solar, highway and ports'" from investors abroad.

The problem is that when you borrow from foreigners, you have to play by their rules," he said. It was because Mr. Adani's assets succeeded in attracting investors at the New York Stock Exchange that he fell under U.S. legal jurisdiction.

Pragati K.B. and Hari Kumar contributed reporting.



M. SCOTT BRAUER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

The U.S. government

Opinion

How Trump got in Americans' heads — and stayed

He excelled at tapping into the information ecosystems where minority and young voters express their identity.



Tressie McMillan Cottom

Everyone is in a tizzy.

That is my official diagnosis of America's post-election hangover in my world. My phone is full of text messages from people I haven't heard from in years, looking for commiseration. I taught my first class a week after the election and it took an hour for my students to process enough grief so that we could talk about cheerier topics like the high price of telecommunications in American prisons. I'm aware that a big part of America is living its wildest dreams. But in my corner of the world, one big question lingers: How did we get here?

The long and short of it is that circumstance and history forced Kamala Harris, a potential change candidate, to run as an incumbent during a global anti-incumbency, pro-authoritarian political wave. The only surprise here is that anyone expected the United States to be exceptional by bucking the global headwinds that favored a conservative populist.

Those headwinds helped Donald Trump grow his support among young voters, Latino men and Black men, among others. For as long as I have been eligible to vote, the line on the G.O.P. has been that it is old, white and boring. Trump's appeal with young people refutes that as much as his success with nonwhite men does.

Trump did not win over these minority and young voters because he figured out how to appeal to their identity. He excelled at tapping into the information ecosystems — social media, memes and the cultish language of overlapping digital communities — where minority and young voters express their identity. That is a meaningful difference.

Trump's rhetoric and agenda may appeal to some voters based on racial identity, but the bigger story of Trumpism is how economic polarization is scrambling and complicating identity politics, especially in online spaces.

When Trump talks, he often sounds like a rambling podcast bro. Trump's political strengths are well documented. He is loud and bombastic. He is illiberal and rude. These characteristics make it easy for liberals to dismiss his demonstrably effective ability to generate affect. He encourages his supporters to lean into their feelings — to feel seen, acknowledged, welcome. That affect is politically powerful, especially in the digital age.

There is a growing body of social science research about the emotionally evocative digital cultures that circulate a lot of nonsense ideas and sell a lot of junk to create influencers. That potent mix of money, influence and emotion was key to the mass proliferation of two ideas that Trump's brand of politics has brilliantly translated into electoral success: men and women are natural categories, and he can bring back the post-World War II economy.

If you are looking to understand Donald Trump's unusual hold on our cultural politics, look to the tradwives, podcast bros and wellness influencers.

Tradwives are the social-media generation's iteration of the 1950s white, suburban, middle-class housewife. They glorify domestic labor and the wealth that makes a single-income nuclear family seem like a respite from the paid labor market for women. With clear, if implicit, echoes of the Make America Great Again movement, a big part of the fantasy tradwives sell is that women can once again enjoy the trappings of upper-class consumption without the dangerous density of urban life or the hard labor of rural life.

The idyllic, impeccably groomed stay-at-home mom is an enduring symbol of the 1950s economy. It is also a fairy tale. As numerous feminist texts have detailed, the few women who did have access to that life were often miserable. But, if the economics of the traditional, gendered division of labor ever worked for a few, it works for even fewer families today. Being a tradwife in this economy is a cruel capitalist fantasy because it is so unattainable; to survive, most families need two incomes. But there is a market for making the fantasy an aspirational commodity if people can buy it. Tradwife lore promises that consumers can retcon the 21st-century economy into a fantasy of the mid-20th-century economy. All you have to do is buy the right skin care product or mill your own flour for home-made bread.

In "The Women of the Far Right," Eviane Leidig describes what she calls "far-right entrepreneurship," a sprawling market of far-right, influencer-promoted goods that make a profit and slowly acculturate people to extremism. Tradwives are the elite vanguard of this economy. They peddle "clean" beauty serums that promise youthful skin and the moral virtue of cleanliness. In the

tradwife's world, a suitable woman manages her body like she manages her home, with performative cleaning. Tradwives offer courses to teach other women how to embrace the idea that men are vehicles to economic security, couching ideas about male breadwinners in lifestyle content branded as "feminine leisure" or "stay-at-home girlfriends."

And, of course, few things in pop culture prepared our palate for Trump more than the endless parade of housewife reality TV programming. After you watch a few thousand hours of competitive wifedom that is scored in creative insults, Trump might sound crass, but

bro sounds like reactionism.

When Trump talks, he often sounds like a podcast bro — rambling between ideas, transgressing bounds of propriety, offering dog whistles coded as jokes. When he is looped constantly on television news, that sort of speech starts to sound like the news to a lot of listeners. That is pivotal to how so many wacky conspiracy theories are reality washed. They sound as reasonable and newsworthy as the character spewing them, once that character makes the podcast bro aesthetic sound legitimate.

The cultural politics of the podcast bro phenomenon is built on gender identity. This is a place where men can

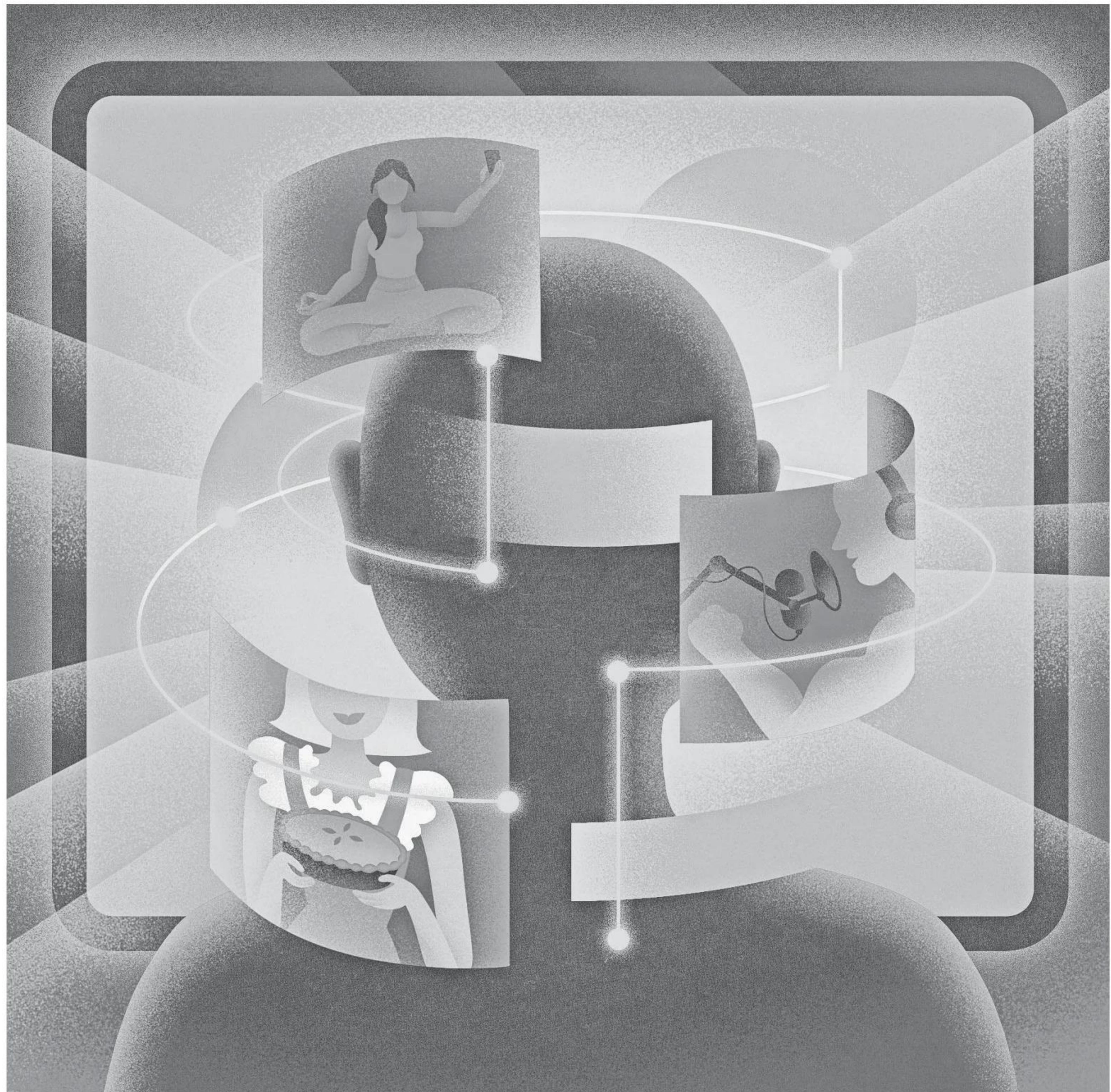
about cleanliness with liberal ideas about independence, from the state and from puritanical shame.

Influencers can claim to be apolitical. But they promote ideas like "doing your own research" and "being a freethinker," convenient gateways to political extremism online. Wellness becomes white nationalist when neat brands nudge people toward the idea that the state is the enemy. Extremists follow that up by telling those people the state is the enemy because it includes "others" like minorities and immigrants.

There is no better indicator of how important the wellness left-right configuration mattered to this election than

promoting very white-identified notions about having as many children as God will allow. Black women's version of the tradwife ethos is pragmatic about waged labor. They don't necessarily stay home but they do maximize leisure and call it the "soft life."

Racial differences like these are flattened at the level of electoral messaging. Trump's simplicity — "I alone can fix it" — allows groups with a lot of real differences to gloss over them. The particulars don't matter because the aesthetics are what is important. It was those aesthetics, as much as populist headwinds, that made Trump America's next president.



he won't necessarily sound offensive. More important, he is promising exactly what your favorite tradwife promises — that you can buy or vote your way back to the economic Shangri-La of post-World War II America.

The podcast bros, the masculine twin of tradwives, deserve an entire library wing. There is no doubt that the podcast ecosystem is now a thriving information environment with its own rules about legitimacy, ethics and audience. The crude economics of the medium defines it. You get paid if you get popular, you get popular if you are already famous.

Joe Rogan is the podcast bros' patron saint, and his brand of infotainment helped create the podcast bro playbook. To be a podcast bro you generally must be marginally famous for some inscrutable reason, make contrarian ideas out to be intellectualism and promote yourself as an "independent thinker" while booking attention-grabbing, politically extreme guests. Then you can monetize your show, looking entrepreneurial by selling a range of junk goods that cozy up to disinformation about vaccines, health, fitness and investing.

To be sure, all podcast bros aren't Republicans or even conservatives. But this isn't about how people identify politically. This is about the politics on which the podcast bro brand is modeled. Even left-leaning and center-left podcast bros have the same aesthetics as right-wing bombastic podcasters. If you tune out their words (and who among us doesn't tune out when listening to a podcast) you are still consuming the cadence and texture of the podcast bro style. If the patter of "Fresh Air" sounds like liberalism, the podcast

be men, with a clear unifying political aesthetic: Be provocative, be brash and be unapologetically male. By mirroring these bros' speech and appearing on their shows, Trump was able to attach himself to their ideas about masculinity while crafting a media environment in which his biggest lies could find a political audience.

Then there are the wellness influencers. They sell diets and lifestyles that make our bodies into secular religions. If I do any more mindful, radical self-care, I am going to exfoliate myself into non-existing. Maybe that's the point — for people like me to disappear. The historian Kathleen Belew calls wellness' radicalizing effect the "crunchy-to-alt-right pipeline," a shadowy space where far left and far right mingle over fad diets and weird politics.

People afraid of lead in their water start following accounts that show them how to buy a water purifier. Algorithms push them deeper into a web of health influencers who distrust the government. That's a short trip to disinformation about how the state is most definitely poisoning our water supply and, oh, haven't you heard that vaccines implant trackers in your arm? That pipeline also builds a lot of community feedback along the way — followers, mutuals and faves. By the time a sensible person gets to the most egregious rhetoric, there are a lot of people around her or him saying that these ideas are totally normal.

There is an underlying white nationalist thread at play here — clean is synonymous with whiteness — and independence is often associated with liberation from a multiracial state. Wellness influencers merge old ideas

Trump's pick of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to head the Department of Health and Human Services. Kennedy embodies incoherent ideas of a social-media-driven iteration of white nationalist ideas about health, such as touting raw milk and junk science about Covid-19 vaccines.

By cozying up to Kennedy, Trump was able to code himself as a standard-bearer for these ideas, even if he doesn't necessarily embody them. Kennedy is one of Trump's biggest cultural ambassadors for the wellness addicted.

If you don't want to go down rabbit holes on tradwife, podcast bro and wellness influencer spaces it is enough to know two things. First, traditional political poles like "left" and "right" don't distinguish these groups nearly as much as those political labels would imply. And second, these spaces are racially, ethnically diverse. That diversity gets lost in how we talk about these communities, but it proved very useful for Trump when he tapped into their narratives.

There is a whole cottage industry of Black men in the podcast bros space. They promote the same kind of ideas about gender essentialism that white podcast bros market, but with a twist. A podcast bro like Jordan Peterson may promote biological explanations for gender and racial differences. A Black podcast bro like Kevin Samuels, who was hugely popular until his death in 2022, took up some essentialist explanations for gendered divisions of labor, without truly taking up insidious ideas about Black inferiority.

The tradwives' analogue is similar. Blond, thin, white women make cooking dinner an anti-feminist identity while

Starting with the Obama campaign's digital strategy in 2008, elected officials mostly engaged with online communities as sincere places, bringing a straightforward approach to political messaging. But the 2024 internet is not the 2008 internet. In 2024, online communities are mostly places where aesthetics of influencing value cheap, shiny branding and reactionary personalities. A candidate like Kamala Harris had little chance of breaking through the noisy online ecosystem.

Donald Trump, on the other hand, is uniquely gifted for this media moment. By all accounts he is extremely online, as young people say. He consumes a lot of digital cultures and news. His instincts for what kind of disinformation and misinformation would resonate with overlapping edges of digital communities plugged him into a diverse audience.

His message may have sounded incoherent to a lot of liberals, but it managed to assemble a constituency of overlapping online communities that, in particular, are listening for archetypes and aesthetics, not policy. Trump gives them plenty. The sexist, racist notions about who belongs in the home, who should have a voice in public and who should be excluded from the state were ready-made to appeal to these communities.

The Trump coalition found people where they toil online. He built them a political home, one rambling speech at a time. Now, conservatives have a cultural advantage. Should liberals ever wish to regain power — or hope to keep it — they'll have to find a way to beat disinformation while also meeting people where they are.

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Black America must wake from this alluring dream

John McWhorter

Since the 19th century, a strain in Black American culture has claimed ancient Egypt as ancestor and inspiration. A fascination with that long-ago land has permeated Black art deeply enough to seem like one of its very foundations. In the early 20th century, the emblem of the N.A.A.C.P. house organ, "The Crisis," looked like a sphinx, and many covers featured beautiful Egyptian motifs. In the 1990s, many thinkers warmly embraced the book "Black Athena" by the historian Martin Bernal, which made the claim — since rather roundly debunked — that the ancient Greeks had stolen much of the glory of their culture from "Black" Egypt. So strong has this current of thought been that it fills an exhibition currently on view at the Metropolitan Museum of Art titled "Flight Into Egypt: Black Artists and Ancient Egypt, 1876–Now."

Beautiful work, make no mistake. But I have always found something problematic about this focus on ancient Egypt as a historical precursor to American Blackness. I'm going to step aside from the controversies over just

what color the ancient Egyptians were. The simple fact is that Black Americans are not on the whole their descendants. They

are the descendants of all of Africa, a vast and endlessly varied continent. Its peoples have warred with and until not so very long ago even enslaved one another, as rampantly as humans worldwide always have. It is home to over 2,000 languages — almost every third language in the world. Preferring and massaging the single halcyon dream of ancient Egypt misses all of that rich diversity, misreading the historical record and depriving us of the true breadth of our heritage.

Most likely not a single enslaved Black person was brought to America from Cairo or Alexandria. They were brought to America from the West African coast, from what is now Senegal down to Angola. Senegal alone is over 3,000 miles across a desert to the southwest of Cairo as the crow flies — about as far as New York City is from Anchorage or Dublin. Black America tracing itself to Egypt makes as much historical sense as would Czechs deciding to celebrate St. Patrick's Day, seek out first editions of James Joyce and favor tartans as an expression of being European.

Sure, all cultures mythologize their past to an extent. Ta-Nehisi Coates in his new book, "The Message," argues that as Black people, "we have a right to imagine ourselves as pharaohs." But we also have a right to imagine ourselves as sultans, maharajahs or New Guinea hunter-gatherers. What was wrong with what we actually were?

This question is especially urgent as the abiding fondness for the Egypt idea tends to sideline the astonishing history of the empires that enslaved Americans actually emerged from and

amid. In the 13th century, the Mali Empire produced a kind of Magna Carta called the Kouroukan Fouga. It was mindful of the rights of women to a degree surprising for any document before, roughly, Ms. magazine, counseling respect for "women, our mothers." It stipulated that a man's insanity or impotence was justification for a woman to seek divorce. European history teaches us to associate ancient empires with the ambition of overseas exploration, and the Mali Empire was no exception. Musa, the grandson of the empire's founder, Sundiata Keita, sent out hundreds of ships to explore the great beyond.

South of Mali in what is today Angola was the kingdom of the Kongo, which was ruled in the mid-17th century by Manikongo Garcia II. The historian Simon Sebag Montefiore has described him as holding "court amid Flemish tapestries, wearing Indian linens, eating with cutlery of American silver in the company of titled Kongo nobles and bishops in red sashes, while secretaries took dictation." His rival was the queen of the neighboring Ndongo kingdom, Nzinga Mbende. She dressed in men's clothes and excelled as a warrior; in off hours she enjoyed male concubines. Surely a ripe source for creative imagination.

In what we now call Benin once stood the Dahomey kingdom. Its capital could boast 12 palaces, festooned with bas-relief carvings depicting the history of the kingdom, every bit as impressive as what visitors see at the Met's Egyptian rooms. King Houegbadja, who ruled in the 17th century, went about with an entourage of female soldiers. All of this is grounds for celebration and creativity that does not require drawing an imaginary line from King Tut to Will Smith.

I suspect that one reason Black Americans are drawn to ancient Egypt is that it may seem grander, more advanced than the West African empires. But that impression is based partly on how well Egypt's monuments have survived in desert conditions. Monuments of the West African empires, hewed from forested regions and long since grown over, can be harder to reconstruct.

The history of ancient Egypt, too, is preserved in more detail than that of most West African empires because Egypt had a writing system. But that doesn't mean that the society was more sophisticated. Enormously complex societies thrived in antiquity without writing, such as the Catalhoyuk in Turkey and the Cahokia in Illinois.

Of course, Black Americans aren't the only ones who fetishize ancient Egypt. In the 18th and 19th centuries, many European and American thinkers participated in an Egyptology craze. It elevated ancient Egypt, with its Rosetta Stone, Cleopatra and such as "civilized" while casting sub-Saharan Africans as dismissible primitives. The philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, for example, was renowned for his contemptuous take on the sub-Saharan region he called "Africa proper" — in effect, the real Africa. For him, this region was "unhis-

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Egypt

PABLO DELCAN

Democrats, it's time to say goodbye to our neoliberal era

Antonio Delgado

In the months ahead, Democratic Party officials and operatives will analyze America's election returns and voting patterns to try to make sense of what happened on Election Day. There will be a push to identify problems that can be easily solved by the same campaign experts who have allowed one of the least popular politicians of our time to dominate politics for three consecutive elections and rewrite the political order in a way we haven't seen since the Goldwater movement laid the groundwork for Ronald Reagan's presidency.

Like Goldwater after 1964, the Democratic Party can seize defeat to establish a new order — but the era of tinkering around the edges is over.

Donald Trump didn't just win. He won big, including longstanding Democratic constituencies. Look no further than solid blue New York: Vice President Kamala Harris had the worst statewide performance for a Democrat since 1988. In New York City, her margin of victory was 17 points lower than Joe Biden's in 2020.

The numbers don't lie: This was a rejection of our party's leadership. How did we get here?

The contemporary Democratic Party emerged from the "greed is good" era of the 1980s in part by co-opting pieces of the Reagan agenda. President Bill Clinton built a coalition — part working class, part Wall Street — that led Democrats back to the White House without redefining the political system. The limitations of this "third way" came to a head during the long recession following the financial crisis, when the party was tasked with charting a new direction. The truth is, it never did.

Faced with a global economic crisis, leaders of both parties worked to perpetuate a neoliberal order that people no longer trusted. Rather than create an agenda intimately tied to the people's pain, the Democratic establishment helped rescue the institutions that had just pushed the economy to the brink of collapse, further cementing the public's view that America's



THALASSA RAASCH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

political and economic system was rigged for the rich and powerful.

Tragically, our party has failed to rescue itself ever since. Mr. Trump's success in 2016 and this month underscored the flaw inherent in the Democratic approach of promising to move forward while looking backward.

To be fair, President Biden sought to reverse decades of flawed economic policy by taking on monopolies, building up our infrastructure, encouraging domestic manufacturing and playing hardball with China. Unfortunately,

much of this good work was drowned out by the crisis at the border and punishing inflation. In the end, he was the wrong messenger for the way forward.

President Biden should never have run for a second term. It betrayed our party's collective will to be bold and fresh.

Clamoring to be the savior of democracy, the Democratic Party engendered disdain from the very people it sought to serve — everyday, hard-working Americans fed up with being lied to

and squeezed out of opportunity.

Mr. Trump wins over these voters because most Americans distrust both major parties. He campaigns like a populist, even though he governs like an oligarch and couldn't care less about the fact that the top 1 percent has more wealth than the bottom 90 percent.

This presents an opportunity for Democrats, but only if we are willing to challenge the systems and institutions that have caused Americans to lose faith in government. Our philosophy must make clear that the real threat to democracy is widening economic inequality and the colossal power of big money in politics. As Franklin Roosevelt said in 1936, "We know now that government by organized money is just as dangerous as government by organized mob."

The Democratic Party must lay out a new vision of economic security and independence for working families. That requires remembering that the interests of labor are the counterweight to the interests of capital and that our role as public servants is to ensure balance between the two. Not all solutions should be based on the market; the market tends to reward greed, and cultivating greed should never be the mission of a democratic government.

This vision also means committing to policies like universal pre-K, paid family and medical leave, expanded community banking, raising the minimum wage and a public option for health insurance. And it means taking on the grotesque concentration of wealth among the very few and price fixing, which fuels the affordability crisis and widens economic inequality.

The prospect of upsetting the donor class, lobbyists and special interest groups must not prevent us from doing right by our principles. Common sense should rule the day. Yes, we have to secure the border and protect American workers from bad trade deals

DELGADO, PAGE 12

Hostility to immigrants will hurt the tech sector



Paul Krugman

Will U.S. business prosper under a second Donald Trump presidency? As far as I can tell, many business leaders are pinning their hopes on the belief that he won't actually follow through on his campaign pledges on tariffs and mass deportation — that they'll be like his border wall, which, for the most part, he never built but claimed he had.

But I believe that such optimism is misplaced. Trump's obsessions with tariffs and immigration go way back, and he probably won't respond well if people ridicule him for not delivering on his signature policy ideas.

If he does not moderate his policies, the damage will be considerable — bigger than even pessimists realize. Hostility to immigrants won't just create labor shortages for many grueling manual jobs that native-born Americans are reluctant to do. It will also undermine American leadership in technology.

As you may know, Trump has declared his intention to declare a national emergency and deploy the military to help round up huge numbers of undocumented immigrants, initially placing them in what Stephen Miller, one of his top immigration advisers, has called "vast holding facilities."

Such actions would be a humanitarian and civil liberties nightmare. But these considerations probably won't deter Trump. If anything, he may welcome an uproar because it would make him look strong and decisive. The economic impact may be another matter. Mass deportations would create shortages and raise prices in industries that employ large numbers of undocumented immigrants (plus workers legally in America who might be caught up in the dragnets), including agriculture, meatpacking and construction.

I honestly don't know how all this would play out, and I doubt that anyone does. Would it be ugly? Or would it be very ugly?

Beyond these near-term effects, however, there's a likely consequence of

Trumpism that hasn't received a lot of attention: the threat that it will pose to American technological leadership.

Our technology sector is the wonder of the world. Circa 1995, the world's major wealthy economies all seemed to be on roughly the same technological level, with similar levels of productivity; if Europe had lower levels of real G.D.P. per capita, one of the main reasons was that Europeans work fewer hours, because unlike us, they take real vacations.

But as a recent report for the European Commission by Mario Draghi, a former president of the European Central Bank, points out, America has pulled ahead again in recent decades. What I find interesting about this U.S. surge is that it isn't broadly based: Europeans do most things about as well as we do. Instead, it's all about America taking the lead in digital technology.

What's driving that success story? No doubt it has multiple causes, not

least the network externalities created by the technology cluster in Silicon Valley, which has incredibly high per capita income. But spend time in America's tech hubs, and it becomes obvious that immigrants — often highly educated immigrants

from South Asia and East Asia — are also a key part of the story.

Well, you may say, that shouldn't be an issue. MAGA's antipathy is aimed at undocumented immigrants taking blue-collar jobs, not tech wizards from India, right?

Wrong. The first Trump administration was clearly hostile to legal, highly educated immigrants as well as undocumented blue-collar workers. It made getting or renewing visas significantly harder for high-skilled foreigners, which is the main way they can work here. And many of these workers fear that these policies will return, only worse.

If you want a sense of what Trump's inner circle probably believes, it's worth looking at a 2016 conversation between Miller and Steve Bannon, a longtime Trump ally who was released from prison in time to campaign for Trump. Bannon declared that legal immigration is the real problem, denouncing the "oligarchs" bringing in



PAUL RATJE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

foreigners to do I.T. jobs he believes should go to Americans. "Well, that was brilliantly stated," replied Miller.

Will it matter that some of these oligarchs, most notably Elon Musk, were big Trump supporters? Probably less than they think. Historically, oligarchs who imagine that they have bought influence with an authoritarian leader discover that they are far more dependent on his good will than he is on their money. My guess is that Musk, in particular, will soon learn that he needs Trump more than Trump needs him.

So I'll be very surprised if the turn against immigrants spares highly

educated workers. Specific policies aside, one reason America has been so successful at attracting the world's best and brightest is the openness of our society; more, perhaps, than any other nation, we have been a place where people from different cultures can feel welcome. That era may come to an end.

For the next couple of years, the proposed raids and detention facilities would probably dominate the news, and rightly so. But a decade from now we may also be acutely aware that by turning on immigrants, we undermined the technology sector, one of the things that actually makes America great.

OPINION

Mass deportations vs. the laws of physics

LIND, FROM PAGE 1
disrupted (and usually more than one, since no immigrant is an island). They matter precisely because the Trump administration will not round up millions of immigrants on Jan. 20. Millions of people will wake up on Jan. 21 not knowing exactly what comes next for them — and the more accurate the press and the public can be about the scope and scale of deportation efforts, the better able immigrants and their communities will be to prepare for what might be coming and try to find ways to throw sand in the gears.

Understand, first of all, that no change is needed to U.S. law to start the deportation process for every unauthorized immigrant in the United States. Being in the country without proper immigration status is a civil violation, and deportation is considered the civil penalty for it. Just as he did during his first term, Mr. Trump will almost certainly issue guidance to Immigration and Customs Enforcement that every unauthorized

Deporting one million people a year would cost an annual average of \$88 billion.

immigrant is fair game for arrest, and that deportable immigrants who happen to get caught up by ICE, even if agents aren't specifically looking for that person, could also be detained.

ICE agents already have authority to conduct enforcement in residential and commercial areas; the reason they usually haven't (even under Mr. Trump) is because those raids take a lot of planning for the frequently low numbers of people they actually nab. It requires far less effort to simply pick up immigrants from local jails, which is why ICE tends to prefer working with local law enforcement. Since some local police are more willing to cooperate than others, this makes deportation risk a matter of geography.

But the arrest of immigrants isn't the same as their removal.

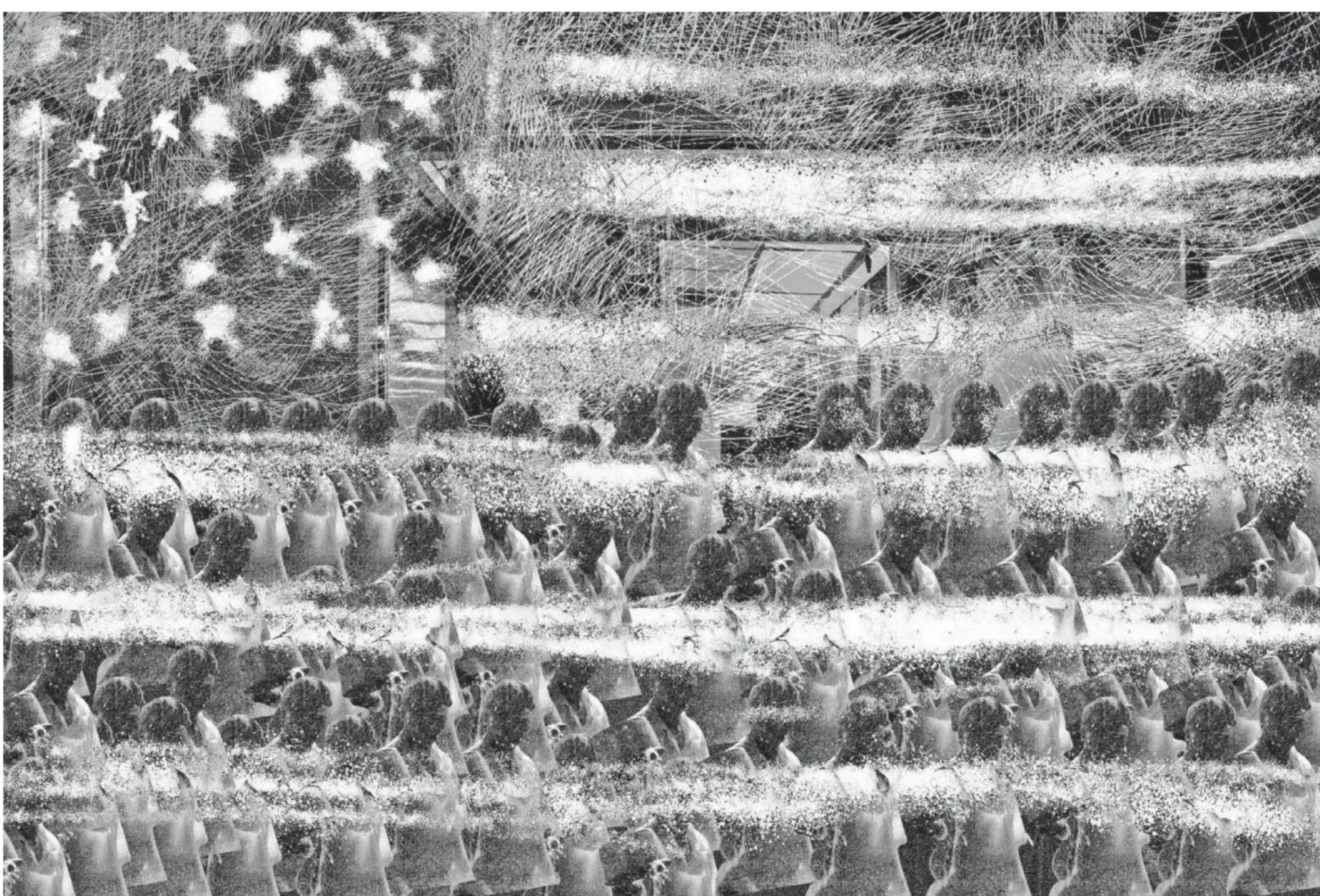
For most immigrants — those who haven't been apprehended shortly after their arrival — deportation isn't a quick process. It generally entails the right to a hearing before an immigration judge, to prove that the immigrants lack legal status and that they can't apply for relief (such as asylum). In the meantime, they're either released on supervision or held in immigration detention.

In fiscal year 2024, Congress gave

ICE the money for 41,500 detention beds. This is insufficient for anything that would constitute mass deportation. Extra holding facilities can be spun up as needed, but not immediately — and at higher cost (because of, say, noncompetitive contractor bids) than building a detention facility the usual way.

Immigration courts are famously backlogged, not least because that's where asylum-seekers end up to present their cases. (An initial screening at the border can weed out some asylum claims, but frequently — especially under the Biden administration — bottlenecks at the screening stage can get fixed by skipping people straight to the no-less-bottlenecked immigration court stage.) As of the end of September, 3.7 million people were waiting for their claims to be resolved. This includes an overwhelming majority of the recent border crossers whose arrival under President Biden so incensed Mr. Trump and his allies. They can try to rush their court cases through faster (though they'll need people, meaning money, to do it), but there's not much juice to squeeze in rounding up people who are already, legally speaking, in deportation proceedings.

The only people who can be both easily rounded up and deported without a court hearing are those who have already been ordered removed from the United States but are allowed to stay if they come in for regular check-ins. Indeed, those were some of the first people targeted in 2017. The problem there — and a problem for any mass deportation operation — is that many of these people were not immediately deported because their countries had not agreed to accept deportation flights from the United States, or had limited the number of deportees they would accept. Mr. Trump has no problem using any diplomatic cudgel available to get other countries to cooperate on immigration enforcement. But it's going to be tricky to argue simultaneously that, say, the United States is in some sort of conflict with Venezuela that would somehow allow for the deportation of its nationals through the activation of the Alien Enemies Act (which requires a declared war or an



Yael Martinez/Magnum Photos

"invasion" or "predatory incursion" by a foreign government), and also that Venezuela must bend the knee and allow large numbers of deportation flights onto its soil.

Who gets targeted first — who is most at risk in the days after a second Trump inauguration — will depend in part on which of these problems the administration tackles first. If Trump officials get a diplomatic breakthrough with a country previously deemed recalcitrant, expect large numbers of people to get arrested at their ICE check-ins and deported under existing removal orders. If they don't, expect deportations to be limited to countries that are generally already willing to take U.S. removal flights (like Mexico, Guatemala, Peru). People with prior contact with the criminal justice system are politically appealing targets, but if they haven't already been deported, it may be because their cases are complicated and will need to be worked out in court. People who have a

form of legal status that has lapsed, or legal protections that the Trump administration might try to strip, such as Temporary Protected Status, may be easy to find but won't be quick to remove.

Many Trump critics are liable to wave off such considerations, because they assume that a second Trump administration will have no problem breaking the law en masse to deport large numbers of people. Even if true, that doesn't exempt them from the logistical realities: beds in detention, seats on planes.

That this mass deportation will happen with no legal restraints, accountability or oversight is by no means a premise to be granted without contest. Because resigning oneself in advance to a maximalist vision of mass deportation helps accomplish the same goal: making immigrants feel they have no choice but to leave the United States.

There are two previous occasions in

which the U.S. federal government can be said to have engaged in mass deportation — around the 1930s and the 1950s. Both entailed horrific conditions for those caught and deported, and the tearing apart of families with claims to both the United States and other countries. But in both cases, the federal government ultimately took credit for "deporting" some people it never actually laid hands on — those who had been pressured or terrorized into leaving.

In the 1930s, high-profile raids in Los Angeles didn't net that many immigrants to deport — the real impact was in sending the message that raids might happen, leading some immigrants to pick up and leave and many more to stay home and out of the public eye.

In 1954 and 1955, the so-called Operation Wetback probably arrested and removed fewer immigrants than had been removed the year before — historians think of it as a retroactive P.R.

campaign for the previous year's efforts, but one that had effects of its own. In the first month of Operation Wetback, one historian estimates, 60,000 immigrants left Texas voluntarily — about as many as the government apprehended throughout the country per month.

For those who believe the United States will be better off if every unauthorized immigrant leaves the country — no matter how many native-born U.S. citizen children they have to take with them to keep families together or how many American communities are surveilled and disrupted for years — making people afraid enough to deport themselves is a convenient and low-cost way to do it.

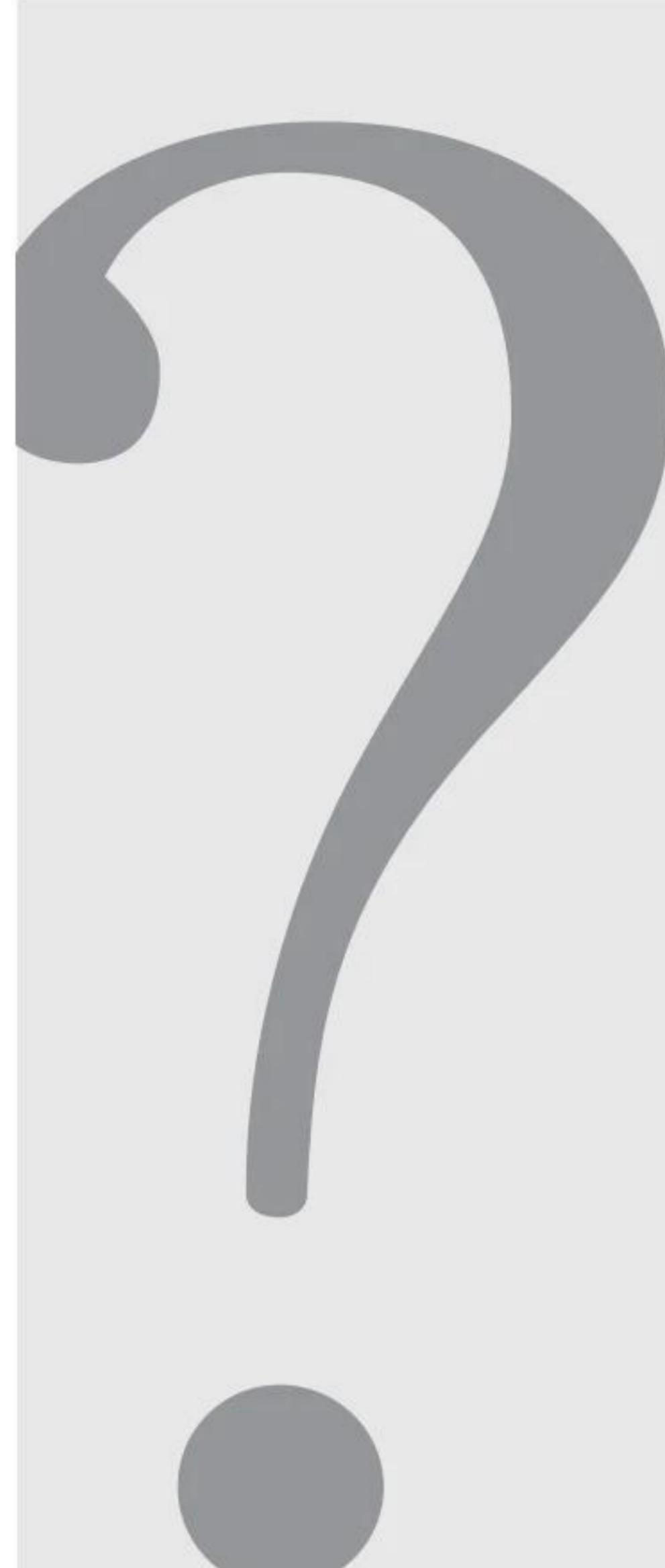
Conversely, those who do not wish to see millions of people leave the United States under coercion during a second Trump administration should do what they can to prevent that reality. That starts with a committed and clear-eyed understanding of what is actually happening, and a willingness to treat abuses of power as a rupture and an aberration — something that can, and should, be fought.

They can document and communicate when the government is breaking the law; pressure state and local officials to refuse to collaborate with federal removal efforts by refusing to share information, and especially by objecting to deployment of the military or National Guard in their states' territory; and support efforts to provide legal representation to immigrants.

This work will require, particularly for those who are not themselves immigrants, a promise not to let pessimism do the Trump administration's job for it. The government will do things that hurt people. It will do things that look scary.

But how many people will be caught up in a deportation machine, and how quickly, is by no means a settled question — and it's one that a public sympathetic to immigrants should continue to care about the answer to.

DARA LIND is a senior fellow at the American Immigration Council.



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The New York Times

Black America's alluring dream

MCWHORTER, FROM PAGE 11
torical" with an "undeveloped spirit"

That attitude lingered. When I was a young language-loving kid, I got a coloring book about the celebration of Christmas in 19 countries. I enjoyed it so much that I still have it. Each entry describes the customs in both English and the country's official language. There was a serious flub, though: The description of Ethiopia's customs was rendered in Swahili, which is not spoken in Ethiopia; its national language is Amharic, a relative of Hebrew and Arabic. By the standards of 1972 when the book was written, including an African country at all was ahead of the curve, but it seems that a residual sense of overgeneralization was still at play. I can't see them as having described Denmark's Christmas traditions in German.

The beauty of modern American Blackness is not a function of sphinxes, Nefertiti and hanging out with ancient Greeks. When creating and burnishing our stories, our myths, our art, we should remember where we really came from.

The evidence is all around us. In the 1930s, the pioneering Black linguist Lorenzo Dow Turner found speakers of the Gullah Creole language on the coast of South Carolina and Georgia who could still sing songs in the Mende language of Sierra Leone. The reason peanuts are called goobers in the South (and in the candy that's popular in movie theater concession stands) is that they were called nguba in the Kikongo language of Angola and other countries.

Kunta Kinte, in the book and later

two miniseries of "Roots," spoke the Mandinka language of the Mali Empire. Mythology is relevant here. Alex Haley, who wrote the novel, claimed that "Roots" was based on historical sources, but it has since become clear that he largely concocted the story of his ancestors, expanding shreds of fact into fiction he later called "faction." OK, "Roots" is legend rather than scholarship. But at least it depicts one of Black Americans' true places of origin.

I wish we could let go of the idea that ancient Egypt is Black Americans' common heritage. My cheek swab

traces me to Senegal and Angola. Preferences will differ on this, but as for me, I get ancestral pride from my relatives here in America, such as the fierce great-aunt I knew as T.I., who could sprint up subway steps without missing a beat at 92, or Mom Springer, who was a more or less out lesbian and jazz saxophonist in the 1920s. If I need some Africa in the mix, the enlightenment of Kouroukan Fouga and the fierceness of Nzinga Mbande do me just fine.

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Part of the exhibition "Flight Into Egypt: Black Artists and Ancient Egypt, 1876–Now," showing this month at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

and using racist tropes and stereotypes to cast me as a threat. No person of color had ever represented upstate New York in Congress, and my district as it was drawn then was one of the most rural in the country and over 80 percent white.

Americans have lost faith in government. In response, I ran a campaign rooted in love, emphasizing how all of us, no matter our party, want to be able to afford homes and groceries, to send our kids to good schools and to leave behind a safer, better world for them than the one our parents left us.

On Election Day, our campaign won by five points, and we won again in 2020 by 12 points. The blue wave of 2018 ushered in a crop of new leaders capable of winning in tough red districts with a message anchored in the needs of con-

stituents and not beholden to party leadership or moneied interests.

We used that winning playbook in parts of New York this year, including where I live in the Hudson Valley. U.S. Representative Pat Ryan was able to hold on to the 18th Congressional District comfortably, and Josh Riley flipped the 19th. Mr. Ryan and Mr. Riley centered much of their campaigns on the economic pain felt by their constituents, caused by a political system corrupted by unchecked corporate power.

In this time of reckoning, Democrats would be wise to pay attention to campaigns and candidates that broke the mold. A new path is both necessary and possible, but we will not chart it with the same politicians telling the same old stories. We are ready for the next generation.

ANTONIO DELGADO is the lieutenant governor of New York.

Say goodbye to the neoliberal era

DELGADO, FROM PAGE 11

made in the name of globalization.

The challenge for Democrats now is to prove we can govern. Republicans will control Washington, but we control cities and states across the country. Let's prove ourselves to be the party of competence by improving people's lives with homes they can afford, quality health care, clean air and safe drinking water, high-performing schools and reliable transportation. Promoting these public goods can be done in partnership with the private sector, but never in submission to the profit motive.

If Democrats lead with a bold, clear-eyed vision for the future, voters will support them. I have seen it firsthand.

In 2017, after Mr. Trump won my home district in the Hudson Valley and the Catskills by almost seven points, I challenged the Republican incumbent. He ran a divisive campaign, attacking my former career as a hip-hop artist

International Homes

Clearing up that clutter in kitchens

Avoid blender rage with these ways to conceal your arsenal of appliances

BY TIM MCKEOUGH

One of the joys of undertaking a home renovation is getting to build the kitchen of your dreams. Once that kitchen is in use, though, clutter often finds a way of spoiling the look of prized counters. Some of the biggest offenders tend to be small appliances — coffee makers, toasters, microwaves.

"Years ago, the kitchen was a place that was tucked away, closed off and not for guests," said Elizabeth Bennett, who with Mallory Robins runs Kobl & Co., an interior design firm in Kansas City, Mo. "But now that the kitchen is usually a showpiece that expresses the personality of the owners, you don't want all the appliances on the counter, looking messy."

Blenders can even be the source of marital strife, added Ms. Robins: "There's typically one spouse who's a heavy small-appliance user and the other says, 'I can't stand to see it on the counter! But somebody still needs their smoothie maker.'

Fortunately, with a little planning it's possible to conceal small appliances while keeping them easy to use.

TAKE STOCK

It's easy to accidentally amass an arsenal of plug-in kitchen tools dedicated to different tasks: immersion blender, food processor, juicer, rice cooker, pressure cooker, mixer, waffle maker, toaster oven, coffee grinder and so on.

The first step in preventing these products from overrunning your kitchen is considering which you really use, and how often, said Sara Swabb, the founder of Storie Collective, an interior design firm in Washington, D.C. "We talk to our clients a lot about what they're actually using and ask if they can cull some items," she said.

Then Ms. Swabb studies how often the remaining appliances get used. Everyday items such as kettles, coffee makers and toasters get priority placement. Appliances that are used a few times a year can usually be stored deep in cabinets.

IDENTIFY SHOWPIECE APPLIANCES

Many small appliances have appealing looks when seen on their own and begin



to look unsightly only when grouped among mismatched gadgets. So consider which appliances you might want to leave out on the counter as decorative elements, suggested Adam Hunter, an interior designer in Los Angeles.

For instance, some espresso machines "look like an art piece," Mr. Hunter said, adding that he especially likes a model from Anza that's made of concrete: "It's so beautiful that it's something you would like to put on your countertop."

The same can be said for many teakettles, which are routinely transformed into pieces of countertop sculpture by product designers.

BUILD THEM IN

Another way to take pressure off kitchen counters is to build additional functions into cabinetry, much like wall ovens. Mr. Hunter, for one, often uses

built-in microwaves, which sometimes come as drawer-based models or have drop-down doors that lend them a more integrated look.

Caren Rideau, the principal of the Kitchen Design Group in Los Angeles, occasionally uses built-in coffee machines to reduce the number of small appliances on counters. "It's one machine that consolidates," she said, noting that it can grind beans, froth milk, brew coffee and provide hot water for tea. "It gets all those tasks off the counter."

PARK THEM IN A GARAGE

An increasingly popular way to store small appliances while keeping them available is to park them in an appliance garage. Typically, that's a cabinet that sits on a kitchen counter, or at one end of the counter, and opens to reveal the appliances inside. Some also have pullout shelves.

Ms. Swabb now often designs kitchens with various types of appliance garages, depending on the layout of the room. In one home she designed, the garage is integrated into a wall of cabinetry and opens onto one end of the main kitchen counter. In another home, the garage is a tall, stand-alone countertop cabinet. In yet another, it is part of a storage wall positioned across from the kitchen island.

Many appliance garages use pocket-door hardware that allows the doors to slide back into the sides of the cabinet when open, so they're not in the way. They're almost always equipped with multiple outlets that allow appliances to remain plugged in and ready for use, and some include in-cabinet lighting.

CONCEAL A LARGER AREA

Some designers are building larger, floor-to-ceiling concealed areas that

Kitchen magic

A cupboard, above left, with a counter for small appliances; above, a kitchen with a built-in coffee machine in a corridor. From far left: two kitchens with appliance garages; and a cabinet opened to reveal an area for appliances.

DEVOL

serve as supersized appliance garages, where tall cabinet doors open and slide back to reveal a stand-alone counter for appliances, as well as shelves and drawers for dishes and supplies.

"We call it a bento box," said Robert Edmonds, who runs Edmonds & Lee Architects in San Francisco with his wife, Vivian Lee.

The couple has designed such spaces for clients, and in their own kitchen. "It's essentially a cabinet that can be opened for day-to-day use but is easy to close up when we're having company and entertaining," Mr. Edmonds said.

"We love secret doors," added Ms. Lee, "because it's a great way to maximize space. In our kitchen, in addition to the bento box, we hid the powder room behind one of the door panels."

The British company deVol Kitchens frequently does the same, even with traditional-looking cabinets, by concealing a counter and storage shelves behind regular swing doors.

FIND A SEPARATE AREA

If you don't have room for an appliance garage in the kitchen, or simply desire a place to spread out more, it might be possible to borrow space adjacent to the kitchen. Both Ms. Swabb and Ms. Rideau, for instance, have designed dedicated coffee bars in corridors running off larger kitchens.

A walk-in pantry is another option. "The back pantry used to be where we did floor-to-ceiling open shelves, where you could put a lot of bulk food and extra pots," Ms. Rideau said. "But I find that people don't necessarily stock the bulk items they maybe did years ago, so we're adding countertops, and it becomes a place to put the toaster oven or coffee maker."

Many small appliances have an appealing look when seen on their own, instead of being part of a group of mismatched gadgets.

WHAT YOU GET | ROXANA POPESCU

\$2 million homes in the Cayman Islands



North Side

1.65 MILLION CAYMAN ISLANDS DOLLARS (\$1.98 MILLION)

A four-bedroom Balinese-style retreat with a guesthouse

With its pool and Jacuzzi, koi and turtle ponds, and a separate apartment for staff or guests, this two-story home from 2010 is designed for serenity. The Balinese-inspired architecture comes across in the materials and the seamless transitions from inside to outside.

Situated on the more sparsely populated northern side of Grand Cayman — the largest of the three Cayman Islands — the property is about 20 miles (32 kilometers) from the capital, George Town. Nearby, Old Man Bay has a few restaurants and bars, this region is decidedly less developed than the island's bustling south and west. Natural attractions abound: Queen Elizabeth II Botanic Park and the Cayman Crystal Caves are all a short drive.

SIZE: 6,000 square feet (560 square meters, includes the interior, garage, covered patio and covered deck)

PRICE PER SQUARE FOOT: \$328

INDOORS: The front door opens to a courtyard with a covered walkway that shades a koi pond. Doors from several rooms access the courtyard, making it



Seven Mile Beach

1.59 MILLION CAYMAN ISLANDS DOLLARS (\$1.91 MILLION)

A three-bedroom Caribbean-style ranch home close to the beach

This three-bedroom, two-bath house is designed for indoor-outdoor living, with double doors leading from the living areas to open-air spaces. These include a dining patio, an ample lawn and a pool deck with a cabana.

The Seven Mile Beach corridor, on the western coast of Grand Cayman, is home to coveted residential neighborhoods, restaurants, resorts, vacation amenities and the island's famed white-sand beaches and clear blue waters. Seven Mile Beach is a short walk from the home. Camana Bay, a commercial development with shops and restaurants, and the National Gallery of the Cayman Islands, are both a short drive, as is the capital, George Town. Owen Roberts International Airport is about a 10-minute drive.

SIZE: 3,108 square feet (288 square meters)

PRICE PER SQUARE FOOT: \$612

INDOORS: From the driveway, a broad porch with white columns opens to the foyer. The living room and adjoining family room, with built-in bookshelves and cabinets, create two spaces that

can be enjoyed together or separately. Both rooms have recessed lights, and the living room has a ceiling fan. Off the living room, the kitchen has white cabinets and stainless steel appliances. A roomy island with storage seats six under three pendant lights. An office with views of the surrounding greenery is tucked behind the kitchen.

The family wing is reached through the living room or through double doors that connect to the garden. The primary bedroom has a closet enclosed in white shutters, recessed lights and a bathroom with two sinks and a walk-in rain shower. Two more bedrooms share a bathroom.

OUTDOOR SPACE: Several sets of double doors from the kitchen, living and media rooms open to the lush garden. The 0.35-acre (0.14 hectare) lot includes a pergola-covered patio with a table for al fresco dining. The swimming pool, off the living room and the primary suite, has a shaded cabana and an assortment of foliage.

COSTS: Property insurance, gardening and pool maintenance total around 14,300 Cayman Islands Dollars a year, or almost \$17,500.

CONTACT: Sheena Conolly, Cayman Islands Sotheby's International Realty, +1-345-525-3333



George Town

1.55 MILLION CAYMAN ISLANDS DOLLARS (\$1.86 MILLION)

A four-bedroom house with a pool in a gated community

This contemporary four-bedroom home is in a gated community in George Town's upscale South Sound neighborhood. Built in 2012, the house sits on a corner 0.3-acre (0.12 hectare) lot with an in-law suite and a two-car garage. The community's amenities, including a pool, a clubhouse, a gym and a tennis court, prioritize fitness and outdoor activities.

George Town is home to the Cayman Islands' financial-services sector and tourism industry. Travelers arrive by cruise ship or at Owen Roberts International Airport, which is about five miles northeast of the gated community. The South Sound neighborhood has access to both the bustling heart of George Town and the road that leads to the island's eastern and northern coasts. Activities near the home include snorkeling, sports and leisure at tennis and rugby clubs, and taking in sights from the boardwalk.

OUTDOOR SPACE: The 0.29-acre lot includes a swimming pool and a spacious pool deck. In front, the driveway leads to a two-car garage and a pathway that winds to the front door. The grounds are landscaped with grass, palms and fruit trees.

COSTS: Annual costs for insurance, an HOA fee, gardening and pool maintenance total 22,200 Cayman Islands dollars (\$26,483).

CONTACT: Karina McDermott, Cayman Islands Sotheby's International Realty, +1-345-925-3800

INDOORS: An entrance hall proceeds to

a great room with vaulted ceilings and a media center. Doors open to the pool deck. Arched openings from the entrance hall and the great room lead to the dining room, which adjoins the kitchen through a third arched opening. The kitchen, separated from the great room by a tiered counter, has KitchenAid and LG appliances, an induction cooktop and a dining area.

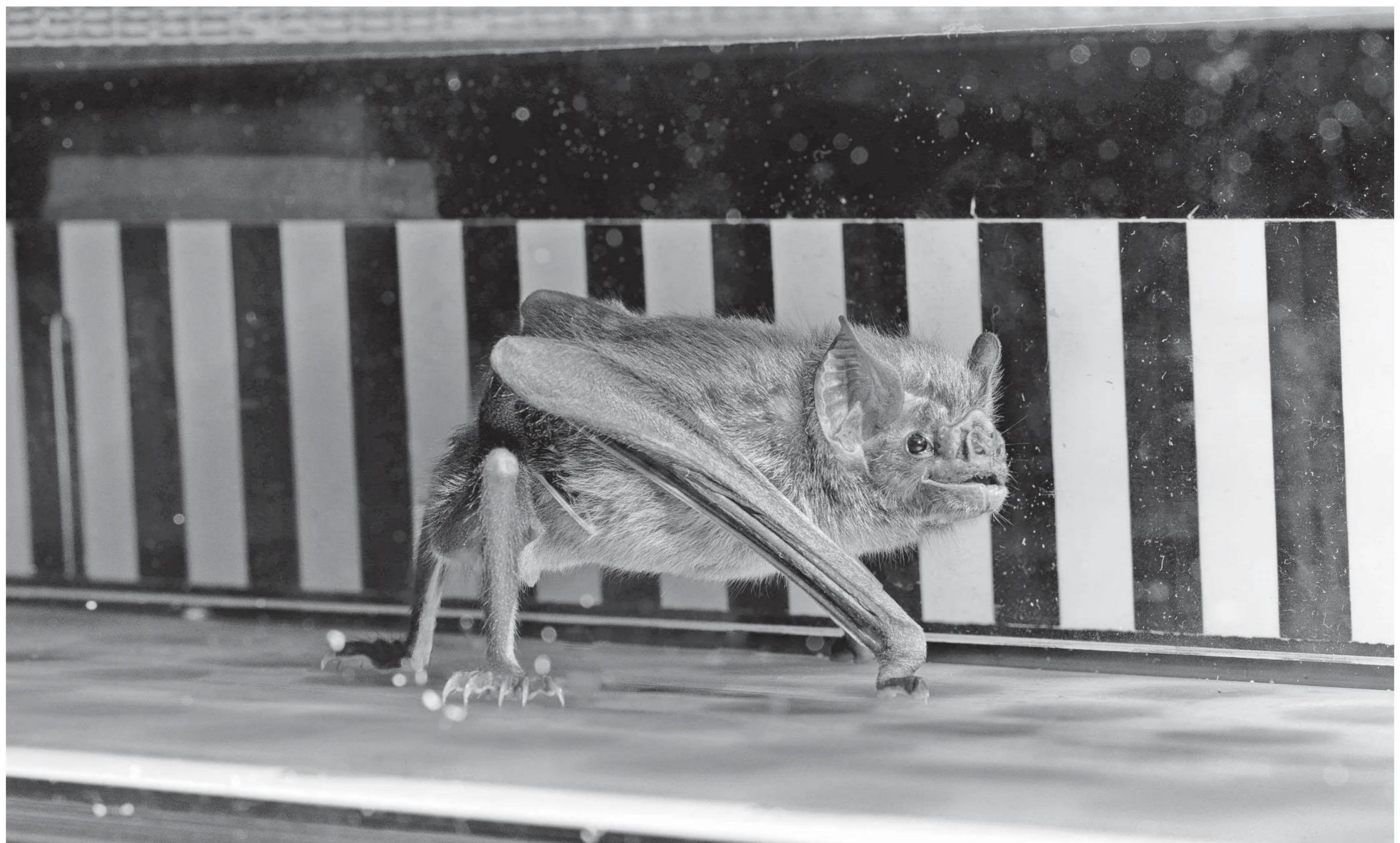
The bedrooms are on opposite ends of the house, with the primary suite near the kitchen and two guest bedrooms near the great room. The primary bedroom has a work station, and its bathroom has a shower, a soaking tub, a double vanity and a toilet room. Stairs near the garage lead up to another bedroom.

OUTDOOR SPACE: The 0.29-acre lot includes a swimming pool and a spacious pool deck. In front, the driveway leads to a two-car garage and a pathway that winds to the front door. The grounds are landscaped with grass, palms and fruit trees.

COSTS: Annual costs for insurance, an HOA fee, gardening and pool maintenance total 22,200 Cayman Islands dollars (\$26,483).

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SCIENCE LAB



KENNETH WELCH AND GIULIA ROSSI

VAMPIRE BAT WORKOUT

Sure, they want your blood. But they have a thirst for exercise too.

With gargoyle-like faces, razor-sharp fangs and a thirst for blood, vampire bats are nightmare fuel. And that's before they start running. Unlike most bats, which largely avoid the ground, vampire bats are capable runners, using their folded wings to propel them forward. This helps them stalk livestock — and occasionally unsuspecting humans.

These pursuits of prey can drain a lot of energy. And the palm-size bats' blood-based diet is lean on carbohydrates and fats, which most mammals rely on to generate energy.

Because vampire bats can't load up on carbs, they seem

to rely on the proteins in the blood they slurp up. In a paper published in the journal *Biology Letters*, Kenneth Welch, a biologist at the University of Toronto Scarborough, and his colleague demonstrated that vampire bats rapidly generate energy by burning protein-building amino acids.

To conduct the research, Dr. Welch's colleague, Giulia Rossi, helped collect two dozen vampire bats in Belize.

The team then fed them cow blood from a local slaughterhouse. Then the bats were placed on a miniature tread-

mill. As the bats sprinted, samples of their breath were used to measure the intake of oxygen and the expulsion of carbon dioxide. By analyzing the exhaled carbon dioxide, the scientists could pinpoint traces of the amino acids from the blood the bats had ingested.

The breakdown of both glycine and leucine from the treated blood samples was responsible for as much as 60 percent of the total energy production during the bats' runs, showing they can turn amino acids into usable energy very quickly. **JACK TAMISIEA**



REDISCOVERED

This 'ghost' fish seemed extinct, but it had other ideas

The Mekong giant salmon carp is so elusive — recorded only 30 times by scientists — that they nicknamed it the "Mekong ghost" for the Southeast Asian river that was its habitat.

The evolutionarily distinct carp species, which is not a salmon, but has a salmon-like appearance, had not in fact been spotted by anyone since 2005. Researchers feared the species, which can grow to four feet long (1.2 meters) and weigh 66 pounds (30 kilograms), was extinct.

But one man kept looking: Chan Sokheng, who had a nearly 30-year career in the Fisheries Administration in Cambodia, and died last year. In 2020, according to conservation colleagues he worked with, he received the call he had been hoping for: A fisherman in northern Cambodia had captured a fish with a sleek silver back, a bolt of yellow across its eye and a pronounced curved jaw. It was the Mekong ghost.

That fish was sold to traders in Vietnam, but other fishermen in the same part of the country reported their own sightings in 2022 and 2023. Mr. Sokheng was able to collect those two animals for study, which were found farther downstream in the Mekong watershed than the salmon carp had ever been discov-

ered before, according to a paper published in the journal *Biological Conservation* informed by Mr. Sokheng's work that announced the species' rediscovery.

"It was his dream to see that fish, and his dream came true," said Zeb Hogan, an aquatic ecologist at the University of Nevada, Reno, and an author of the paper.

The news of the Mekong giant carp's survival has become "a call to action" for the fishery conservation community in Cambodia and greater Southeast Asia to begin efforts to find and protect the species, he added.

"We've only ever seen this fish in field guides," said Heng Kong, director of the Inland Fisheries Research and Development Institute in Cambodia and an author of the study. "We'd like to identify areas where this species is still present, and then work with local communities to get their strong participation in conservation."

Originating in China and winding through 2,700 miles (4,300 kilometers) of Southeast Asia, the Mekong River is the world's third most biodiverse waterway. But like many other freshwater ecosystems, it faces threats, like upriver dams in China, Thailand and Laos as well as overfishing and pollution. **RACHEL NUWER**



GRAY MATTERS

How do you clean an elephant? Just give her the water hose.

To stay cool, and protect their skin, elephants wallow in mud, bathe in dust and use their trunks to spray themselves with water. Now, an Asian elephant named Mary, who lives at the Berlin Zoo, has developed a more advanced technique, using a large hose to give herself a shower.

Mary's hose-wielding appears to be the latest example of tool use by animals, researchers say in a paper that was published in the journal *Current Biology*. "Mary is so superb at showering," said Michael Brecht, a neuroscientist at Humboldt University of Berlin and an author of the paper.

Another elephant also proved handy with a hose. A young elephant named Anchali developed two techniques for interrupting the flow of water through the hose — and thus, Mary's showers.

The observation raises a provocative possibility: By disabling the tool Mary was using, Dr. Brecht thinks, Anchali was engaged in a "kind of a sabotage behavior."

The study provides more evidence that elephants can manipulate objects in sophisticated ways. Other studies have shown them peeling bananas and using branches to swat flies away.

Lena Kaufmann, a doctoral student in Dr. Brecht's lab and an author of the paper, said that an elephant might have "a somewhat intuitive understanding for a hose, because it's super similar to the trunk."

Ms. Kaufmann initially noticed Mary's showering skills while watching the zookeepers make their rounds, using a hose to rinse off each elephant. But when they got to Mary, they simply handed her the hose. **EMILY ANTHES**

"I'm looking for the leaders of the science agencies to be scientists."

Sudip Parikh, chief executive of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, commenting on the choices the incoming Trump administration makes regarding the leadership of agencies like the National Institutes of Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Sports

The Aaron Rodgers-led Jets are hard to watch

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.

Their season has become a series of slow starts and late-game collapses

BY ZACK ROSENBLATT
THE ATHLETIC

New York Jets players and coaches often talk about how they can't resort to finger-pointing, even when things are at their worst.

There was a play late in the fourth quarter of last Sunday's game against the Indianapolis Colts, a coverage bust that fit perfectly into a season of misery and befuddlement. But that play had been set up by a decision made on the other side of the ball a few minutes earlier.

It felt like a game the Jets were going to win. They stole momentum back at the start of the second half, with a take-away on forced fumble and then a Breece Hall touchdown a few plays later. They went up, 24-16, on a Kenny Yeboah touchdown reception early in the fourth quarter. The Colts cut it to a 2-point game, and then Aaron Rodgers worked the offense up the field, killing the clock and getting them to the Colts' 25-yard-line with 3:30 left.

On fourth-and-2, Rodgers went to the line of scrimmage. Jets cornerback D.J. Reed thought they were going to go for it. Instead, Rodgers tried to draw the Colts offside. It didn't work, so the Jets called timeout. Anders Carlson converted a 35-yard field goal. Jeff Ulrich, the Jets' interim coach, considered this a show of confidence in a Jets defense that many times over the past two seasons did its job at the end of games.

"When we saw the field-goal team go on, we were all happy, like: Let's do what we do," Reed said. "The last three years, that's what we did."

That's not what they did on Sunday. This is 2024.

On the second play of the Colts' subsequent drive, quarterback Anthony Richardson aired it out for Alec Pierce down the right sideline. Jets cornerback Sauce Gardner passed the route off to safety Jalen Mills, who was supposed to be in position to prevent Pierce from catching the ball, possibly even intercepting it. Instead, Pierce caught it easily for a 39-yard gain.

At the end of the play, Gardner ran over and pointed at Mills. Literal finger-pointing. Twice.

"It's a play that shouldn't have happened," Gardner said.

A few plays later, Richardson ran for a 4-yard touchdown. The Colts didn't convert their 2-point conversion, but it didn't matter. The Jets' offense, without any timeouts, fumbled on the first snap, then killed the clock on second down.



ADAM HUNTER/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jets quarterback Aaron Rodgers, above, has looked unwilling or unable to throw the ball down the field. On Tuesday, the Jets fired their general manager, Joe Douglas, left. Asked if he would return next season, Rodgers said: "Yeah, I think so."



DENNIS WASZAK JR./ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rodgers was sacked on third down, and the clock ran out. The Jets, in embarrassing fashion, lost another game they should have won.

Final score: 28-27. The Jets' record: 3-8. The Jets' season: in the toaster.

The blame for the lost season was placed at the feet of the general manager, Joe Douglas, who was relieved of his duties by the owner Woody Johnson on Tuesday. Phil Savage, a senior football adviser, will be the interim general manager for the rest of the season.

Douglas was in his sixth season, and the team had a 30-64 record during his tenure. During his tenure, Douglas, who was in the last year of his deal, didn't oversee a winning season.

While Douglas had engineered the trade for Rodgers, Johnson had taken control of decision making this season. Johnson unilaterally decided to fire Coach Robert Saleh after five games

and also pushed through the trade for wide receiver Davante Adams.

The Jets are at the point of the season when their offense is being booed off the field at their home stadium in the first quarter. The point that when fans do cheer, it's typically in a mocking tone — as when, on Sunday, the Jets' offense converted its first first down just as the first half was about to end, or when Gardner made an impressive tackle in the second quarter after struggling for weeks to get opponents on the ground.

This team was supposed to combine a winning defense with one of the National Football League's greatest quarterbacks to become a bona fide playoff contender. Instead, since Saleh was fired and replaced by Ulrich, the defensive coordinator, the defense has looked like one of the league's worst, allowing 26.2 points per game, failing in fundamentals and crumbling in key moments.

"I have noticed that," Reed said. "The last couple games, we haven't played to our standard on defense. We've given up touchdowns, or given up explosive plays. I can't really account for what it is. Coach Ulrich does have a lot on his plate, but he's a grown man and he can handle it. I just think it comes down to executing and playing our role. I feel like we're not executing what we're being told to do, we're just not executing on the field."

Then there's the Rodgers part of it all. Earlier in the week, he was asked if he still planned to return in 2025, as he stumbles through the worst season of his career. He responded, tepidly: "Yeah, I think so."

Sunday's showing did nothing to make it feel as if Rodgers's returning to the Jets would be a good thing, for team or player. The 40-year-old didn't surpass 100 passing yards until the third quarter. He has looked unwilling or unable to throw the ball down the field.

Over the past two weeks, Rodgers is 1 of 6 on passes thrown more than 10 yards downfield, the one completion coming on a nice sideline throw to Xavier Gipson in Sunday's fourth quarter.

Rodgers simply doesn't look like Rodgers anymore, even if no one around the Jets organization wants to admit it publicly.

Those moments have been few and far between, and the Jets' offense has somehow become less explosive since trading for Adams. Rodgers finished Sunday with 184 yards on 29 pass attempts.

Ulrich was asked if Rodgers is holding the Jets offense back. He deflected in his response.

"We'll take a hard look at the tape," Ulrich said. "There's an element to, of course, injury is going to hamper anybody in these types of situations, but it never comes down to one man. It comes down to protection, receivers, running backs, the running game, all those things. So, I know Aaron would love to be playing better, but it's not just him, it's all of us."

Rodgers simply doesn't look like Rodgers anymore, even if no one around the Jets organization wants to admit it publicly.

"Yeah, I mean, it wasn't my best performance," Rodgers said. "I felt like I did a few good things, but unfortunately in this game sometimes you have to make a decision and pick a side and sometimes you pick the right side and sometimes you pick the wrong side."

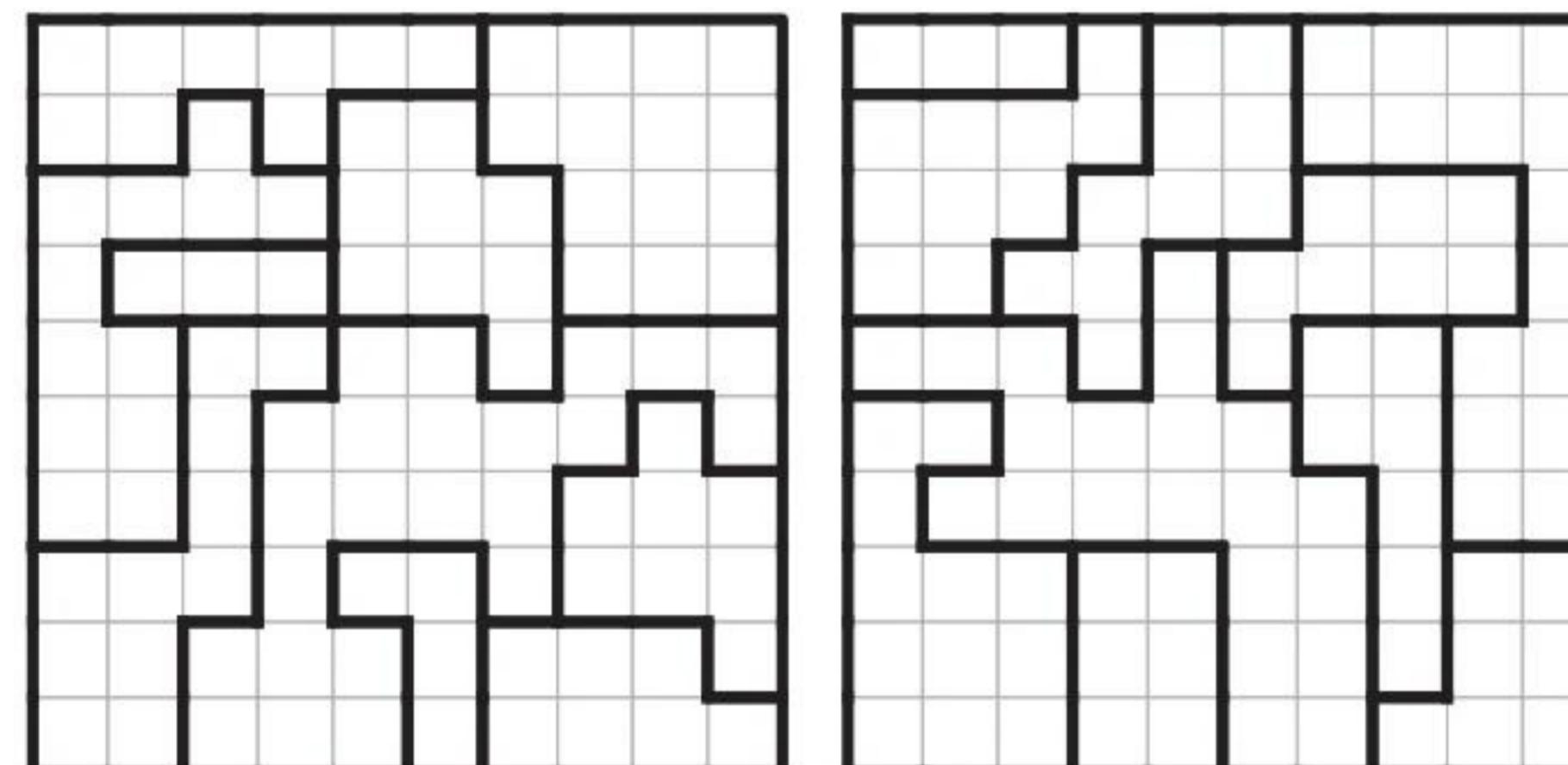
The Jets' playoff hopes, if there are any, range from one to four percent, depending on your source. There is plenty to be frustrated about. And none of it is pretty.

"It's very hard to fathom," Reed said. "I'm still processing it right now."

The Mini Crossword



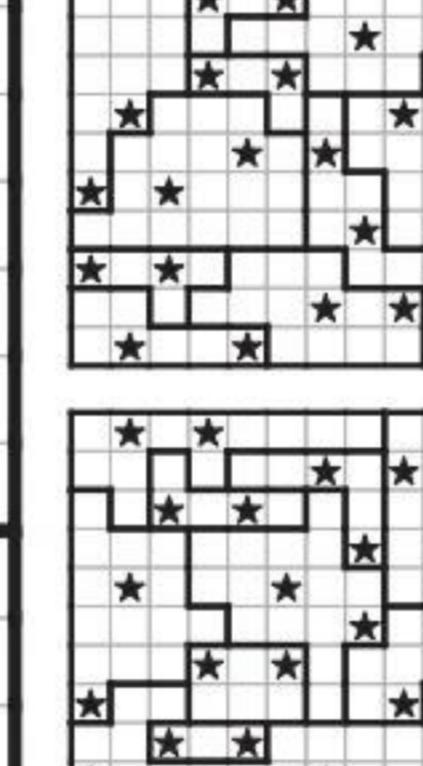
Two Not Touch



Put two stars in each row, column and region of the grid. No two stars may touch, not even diagonally.

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ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES



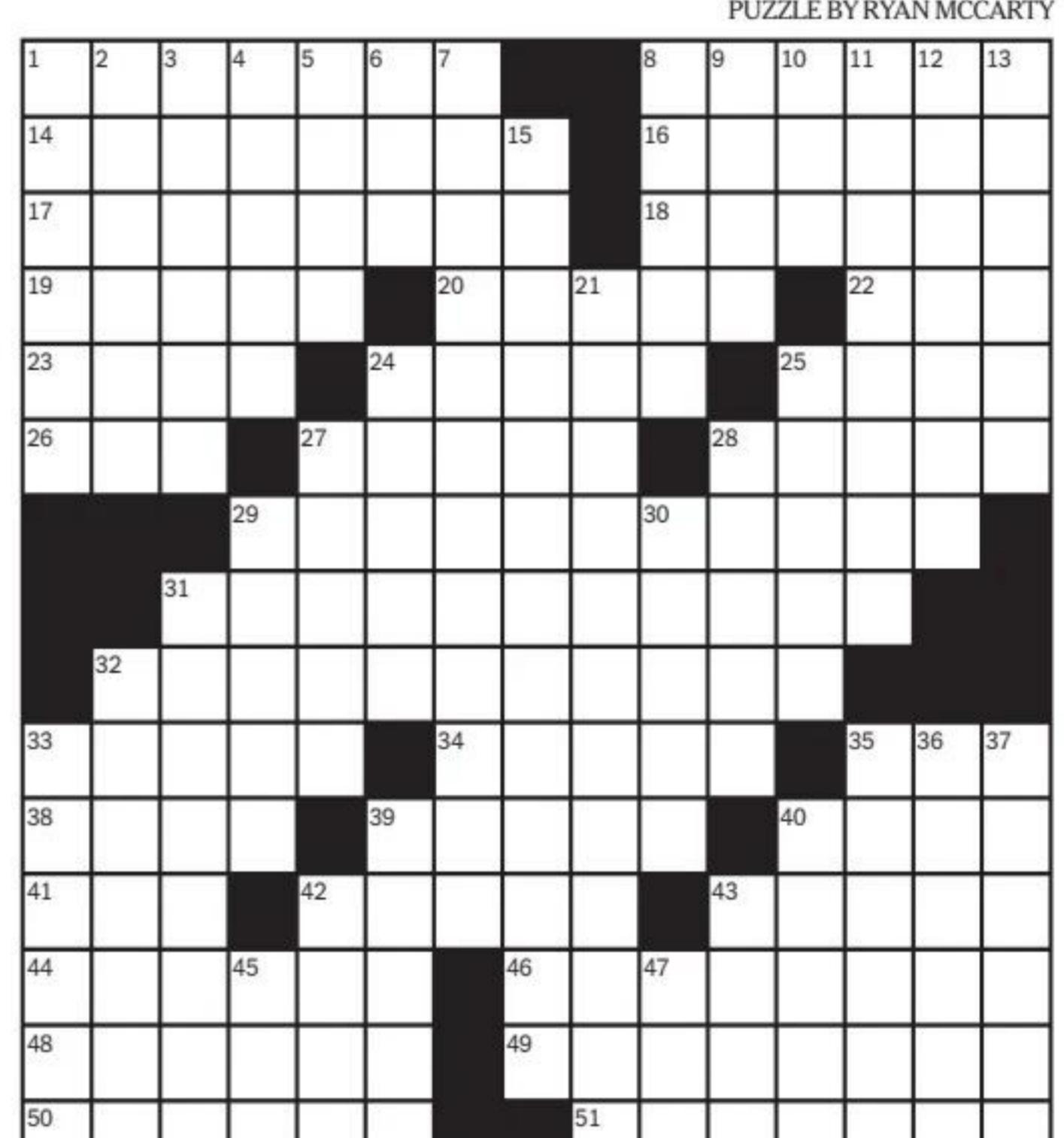
Crossword | Edited by Joel Fagliano

ACROSS

- 1 In need of a trim, say
- 8 Superficially attractive
- 14 Romance language?
- 16 Something that may be passed down in a family
- 17 Reclusive emperor who succeeded his stepfather Augustus
- 18 Restaurateur and humanitarian José
- 19 Immature pigeon
- 20 Bonkers
- 22 "Tropic Thunder" setting, for short
- 23 Hearty kiss
- 24 Substances in culture dishes
- 25 Alert to prejudice
- 26 Notwithstanding
- 27 Like many a dad joke
- 28 One of football's Kelce brothers
- 29 "I wouldn't count on it"
- 31 Bad person to take a cue from?

DOWN

- 1 Remains unmoved
- 2 Theater kids, e.g.
- 3 Full-bodied, as a wine
- 4 Places for irises
- 5 Disney Channel pal of Phineas and Ferb
- 6 "Just a heads-up ..."
- 7 Not acting one's age, in a way
- 8 Ganja
- 9 Winner of the Mark Twain Prize for American Humor in 2014
- 10 Condition that may be treated with cognitive behavioral therapy, for short
- 11 Private rejection?



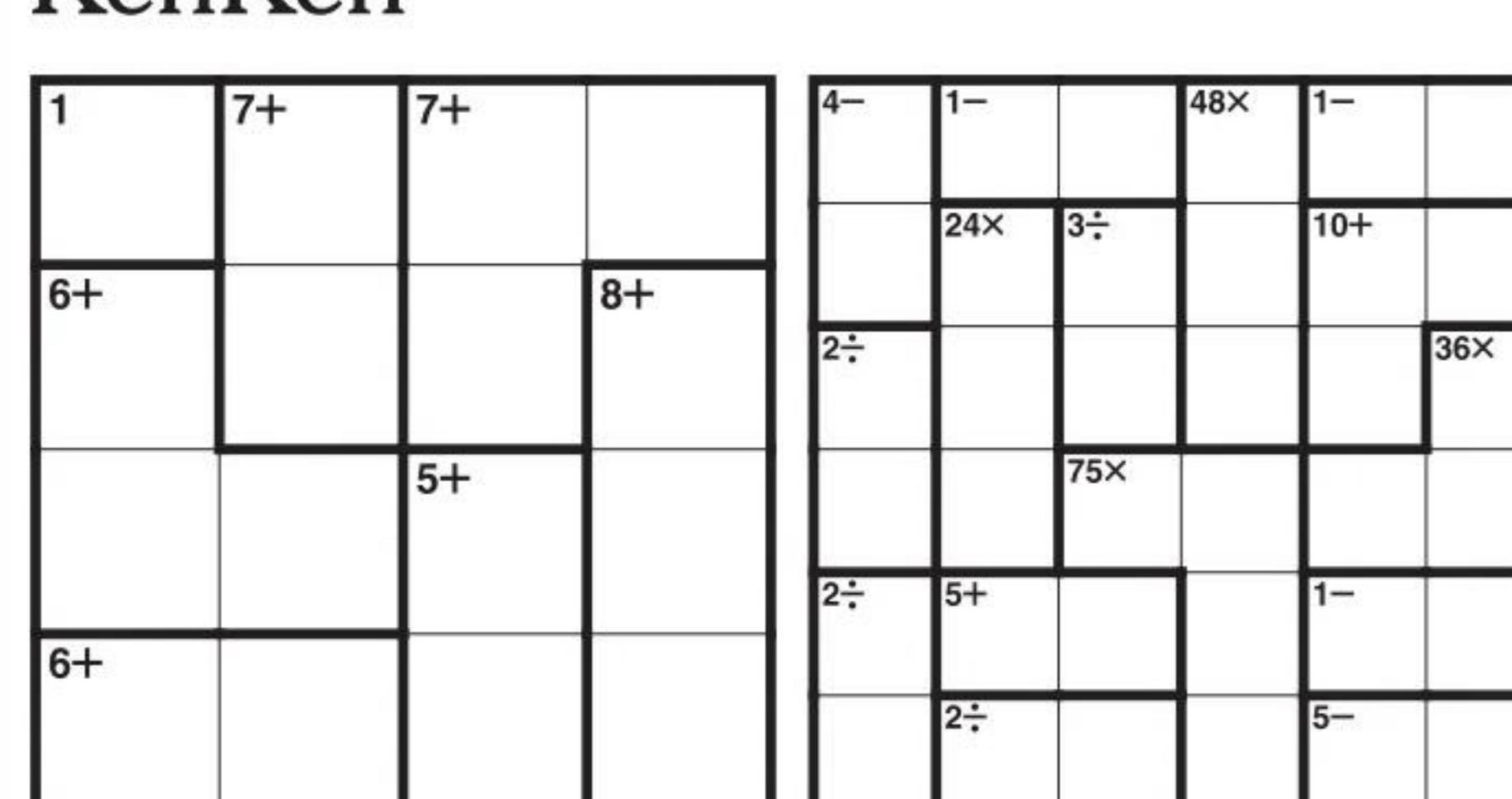
11/23/24

ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE



- 13 Bootlicking sorts
- 32 Nocturnal flier with a distinctive screech
- 33 Affirmed as much
- 35 Gives the quick and dirty
- 36 Get something through hard work
- 37 Holiday character with a "button nose"
- 39 Full of pluck
- 40 Anchor, e.g.
- 42 CNN anchor Bash
- 43 Sushi roll wrapped in seaweed
- 45 More than tear up
- 47 "I'm good, thanks"

KenKen



ANSWERS TO PREVIOUS PUZZLES



ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE



Fill the grid with digits so as not to repeat a digit in any row or column, and so that the digits within each heavily outlined box will produce the target number shown, by using addition, subtraction, multiplication or division, as indicated in the box. A 4x4 grid will use the digits 1-4. A 6x6 grid will use 1-6.

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Weekend

Bodies that are older revisit the past

Original cast members revive a work that Pina Bausch created five years after she conceived the Tanztheater Wuppertal

BY ROSLYN SULCAS

Toward the end of Pina Bausch's "Kontakthof," a woman stands alone onstage, eyes cast down, disconsolate. One by one, men approach, gently caressing her shoulders, tweaking her nose, stroking her hair, rubbing her legs and stomach. Slowly, the relentless accumulation of these gestures transforms them from affection to assault; tenderness has mutated into aggression, pity into victimization.

"Kontakthof" — the title refers to a courtyard, originally in a red-light district — was created in 1978, five years after Bausch became the director of the Wuppertal Ballet in western Germany, and renamed it Tanztheater Wuppertal. The three-hour "Kontakthof" set to German songs of the 1930s, jazz and tango, was a pivotal piece for the company, entrenching the potent mix of drama and movement that Bausch called Tanztheater, and leading to broader recognition for her work. (She died in 2009.)

In the 46 years since its creation, "Kontakthof," with its themes of loneliness and longing, desire for love and fear of rejection, has remained a mainstay of the company's repertory. And it has also been performed by the Paris Opera Ballet as well as by amateur casts of teenagers and older adults.

Now it will have another incarnation: "Kontakthof — Echoes of '78," opening on Tuesday at the Wuppertal Opera House. Conceived and directed by Meryl Tankard, it features nine of the original dancers, including Tankard. The performers, ages 69 to 80, will dance the roles they created while footage from that first production, filmed by Rolf Borzik, plays alongside them onstage.

Salomon Bausch, the choreographer's son and chairman of the Pina Bausch Foundation, said he had at first imagined a version using as many of the 1978 cast members as possible, with newer dancers to fill out the cast of 20. But Tankard offered another idea.

"I had asked to watch some early footage," she said in a video interview, "and it struck me how simple and honest we were, and that it looked quite contemporary. Rolf was Pina's partner, they worked hand in hand, and the filming is really through his eyes and subjective, not like an archive recording. I thought, we could use this footage, keep only the original performers, and dance with it."

Salomon Bausch loved the idea. "It's a strong and beautiful idea that also gives



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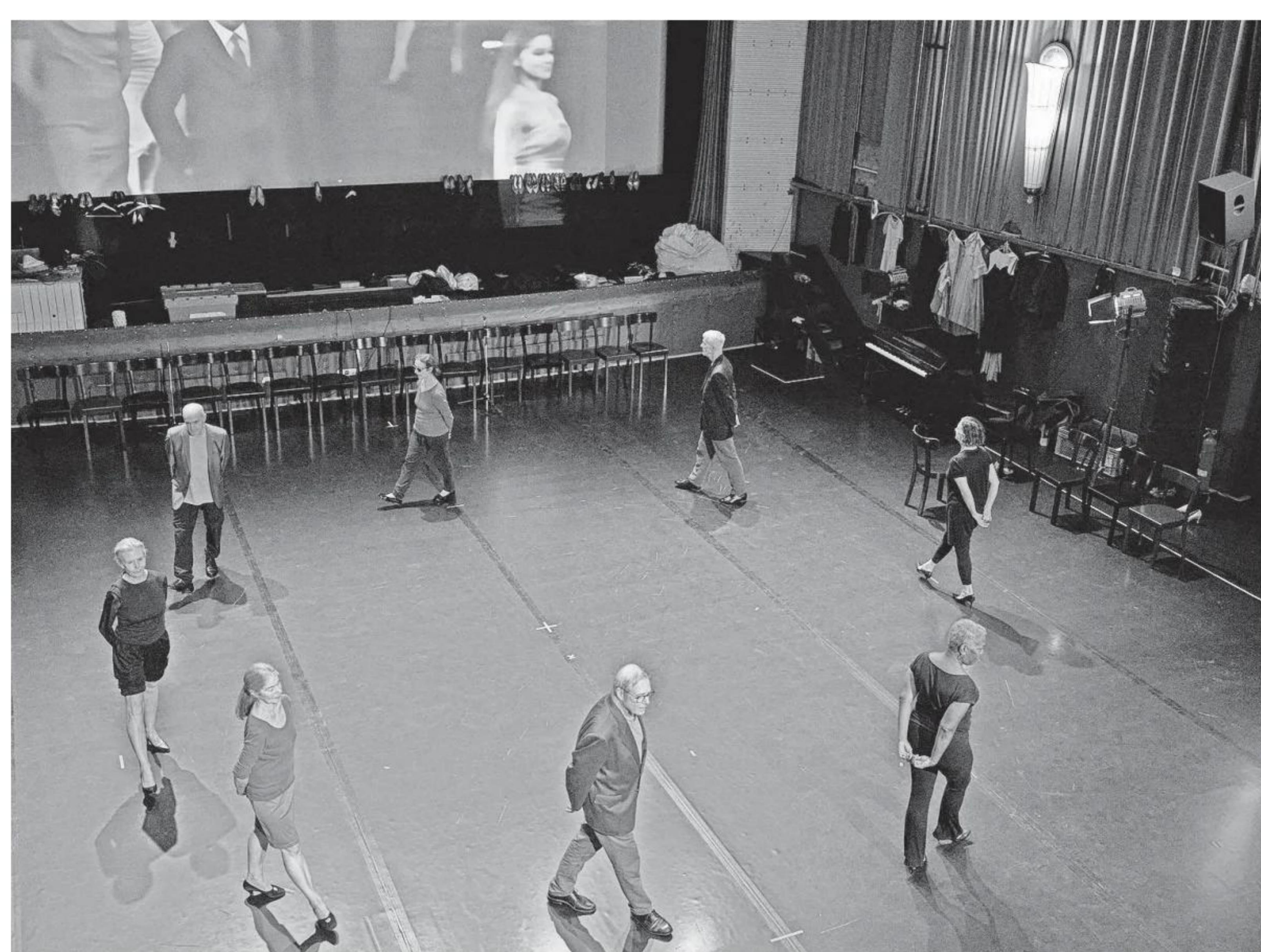
Josephine Ann Endicott, left, one of the dancers returning to a role in "a work I have been close to my whole life." Below, Meryl Tankard conceived, directed and dances in the new version. Below left, Elisabeth Clarke and Ed Kortlandt.



You see a whole life, the young dancer to this elderly person, their memories, the passage of time.



Kontakthof — Echoes of '78 incorporates the original production in part through archival recordings.



space to those who are not physically there," he said. Six original cast members have died, and some others weren't able to participate.

Alastair Spalding, the artistic director of Sadler's Wells, which is producing "Kontakthof" with Tanztheater Wuppertal, said, "You see a whole life, the young dancer to this elderly person, their memories, the passage of time."

In video interviews, five members of the original cast who are performing in "Kontakthof — Echoes of '78" talked about creating the piece and the experience of coming back to it nearly five decades later. Here are edited excerpts from the conversations.

MERYL TANKARD

When Salomon and Sadler's Wells got all excited about my idea, I thought, I'm mad! It was already May, with performances scheduled for November. I had done a script-writing course years ago and decided I had to construct the show like a film script and be very precise, because there wouldn't be time to try things out.

A big part was working out what to cut. The others would say, "We can't do three hours onstage!" Now it's about half that. I selected parts from about 20 hourlong tapes — an enormous amount of editing. Even though many scenes are shortened, I think the essence is there.

The transformation of the dancers has been amazing. The first week, I was a bit, Arrrgh, is this going to work? But their energy and physicality, their brains and bodies all kicked in. What's funny is that not only the physical things come back to us now, but also the emotion. I felt, Oh, we are all so old. But those

feelings in your body come right back. In a strange way I feel we have more confidence now, even though our bodies are older. We have got nothing to prove. This is what we can do now — but hey, didn't we look cute then?

The material brings back so many memories. I had just joined the company, straight from the Australian Ballet, and I was very obedient. I was always watching Pina very closely, and I realized she choreographed vulnerability. She didn't want you to make it clean. And that direct looking at the audience, it gave you a power onstage that I had never felt before.

LUTZ FORSTER

When Salomon approached me about this, I said, "It's a stupid idea, we are too old." Then Meryl told me her thought about using the footage, which I think is really special.

In the beginning, with Pina, she worked a lot on movement, without music, just tiny little steps. She was also asking simple questions, like, "Show me six gestures of tenderness or aggression." It's incredible what she could do with very little material, with one little sequence that goes throughout the piece in different contexts, dynamics, attitudes.

You never knew where a piece was going; it was open to what the dancers had to offer, what happened during rehearsals, and other things. Once I was in the car with Pina and Rolf, driving to Bremen, and Rolf was playing a 1920s song. Weeks later, we were rehearsing a scene in "Kontakthof" and she suddenly said, "Bremen, Bremen, the song," in a low

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Making a musical he would not hate

The director Jacques Audiard explains his path to the unorthodox 'Emilia Pérez'

BY CARLOS AGUILAR

The French filmmaker Jacques Audiard is known for hard-hitting crime dramas with incisive social commentary. He doesn't often enjoy musicals and doesn't speak Spanish. Yet his latest work, the offbeat "Emilia Pérez," which began streaming Wednesday on Netflix, is a Spanish-language musical set amid Mexico's drug wars.

He lifted his protagonist from the pages of Boris Razon's 2018 novel, "Écoute," about our hyperconnected, perpetually online world. One chapter features a ruthless Mexican cartel boss seeking a gender transition who hires a lawyer to help with the logistics.



SHANNA BESSON/PAGE 114, WHY NOT PRODUCTIONS, PATHÉ FILMS AND FRANCE 2 CINÉMA

Left, Jacques Audiard. Below, from far left, Karla Sofía Gascón as the title character in "Emilia Pérez," and Audiard on the set with Zoe Saldaña and Gascón.



PAGE 114/WHY NOT PRODUCTIONS, PATHÉ FILMS AND FRANCE 2 CINÉMA

For the titular role, Audiard, 72, cast the Spanish actress Karla Sofía Gascón (a trans woman herself), and changed the attorney in the book from a man to a woman, played by Zoe Saldaña. To write the movie's many tracks, he enlisted the singer Camilla Dalmais and the composer Clément Duclos.

Shot almost entirely on soundstages in Paris, the film debuted in May at the Cannes Film Festival to mostly positive reactions that praised the film for its way of "testing the limits of character sympathy as well as shifting tones and moods," as The New York Times's chief critic, Manohla Dargis, put it, though some reviewers expressed reservations about the portrayal of Emilia Pérez herself. In the end, the film's four stars — Gascón, Saldaña, Selena Gomez and Adriana Paz — shared the best actress award, while the film won the jury prize (essentially third place).

Speaking through an interpreter during a recent video interview while in the United States, Audiard explained how he came to try his hand at musicals with this timely subject.

These are edited excerpts from the conversation.

"I think the musical has been chasing me for a long time."

What was it about the character in the novel that sparked your interest?

One chapter set in Mexico featured a very violent cartel boss who wanted to transition. What struck me was this person, representative of pure violence, of machismo, of the most absolute patriarchy, having a desire for femininity. It was that paradox that drew me. What interested me also is the endemic violence that Mexico deals with and the tremendous amount of people who have disappeared.

Why did you decide to make it a musical as opposed to a drama?

If we had had this conversation three or four months ago, I would've said that it just landed on me. But actually, that's wrong. I think the musical has

been chasing me for a long time. Already with my second feature, "A Self-Made Hero," the composer Alexandre Desplat and I had thought of making a small opera but lacked the courage to do it.

After my film "A Prophet," [co-writer] Thomas Bidegain and I thought about doing a musical set in the world of narcotics, a love story amid the drug trade. But it didn't happen. When it came to the character that eventually led to "Emilia Pérez," I knew that I could do it and immediately wrote a short opera in the form of a libretto.

Have you always been a fan of opera?

I've long loved opera. Now, I'm not an assiduous spectator. Sometimes I'm quite bored. But I have a deep curi-

osity for this total spectacle. Maybe my desire to do an opera came from my own feeling as a spectator that what's missing is contemporary opera.

Were you hesitant about approaching the visual language of musicals?

I didn't have any hesitation. I wasn't hampered by an excessive love for the musical genre. I don't actually like that many musicals. It's a little pretentious to say, but maybe I had the pretension to try to make a musical that I would like from my perspective as a viewer.

Are there any examples of movie musicals you feel work to your liking?

I have a great passion for Bob Fosse's "Cabaret": It's a great musical. I also really liked "The Umbrellas of Cher-

bourg," and I like "Hair." All these films have both a political and a historical background, and maybe that's why I made "Emilia Pérez."

Did you first write the screenplay without the songs, only dialogue, and then the songs emerged?

When the screenplay really started to exist as a screenplay, and not as a libretto anymore, we knew that some scenes would be sung or sung and danced. For instance, the opening, "El Alegato," I knew in the writing that it would be sung. But then along the way, desires would come up for certain things to happen because the characters were changing as we went along. I became obsessed with the idea that there should be a sun duet between Emilia and Jessi [Emilia's wife, played by Gomez], which as if by chance, came along at the very end.

I'm interested in the writing process for the lyrics and the music.

In the United States you have a real culture of the musical. In France, it's a different case. If one were to publish a history of the French musical, it would be a very slim volume. With the musicians, we really had to start from scratch. We had to learn together in a very empirical manner. They would write lyrics based on the dialogue. We'd listen to demos together. Many songs they wrote wound up in the garbage. We really had to learn by doing.

The Spanish spoken in the film sounds rather colloquial. How did you achieve that?

Camille worked with a great translator, Karla Aviles, who's Mexican. But throughout the shoot we had problems, for instance, with Selena's accent in Spanish. She is Texan. Karla Sofía Gascón speaks Castilian Spanish. She's from Madrid. Given that I don't speak Spanish, the nuances of the Mexican accent versus the Castilian were lost on me. We had all these problems with accents, but we fixed them in the edit. We did a lot of dubbing.

Age cannot wither these dancers' spirit

BAUSCH, FROM PAGE 16
voice. I sang it, all out of breath, and that stayed in the piece. It's a good example of how she worked. The choreographic machine was never turned off.

"Kontakthof" was the start of a new audience in Wuppertal — theater people. Every director of a certain quality, great actors, all came. The car park was suddenly full of registrations from all over Germany.

ELISABETH CLARKE
The first thing I remember about "Kontakthof" is Pina saying she wanted to do a piece about the circus. We started working, and I didn't really get how it was about the circus. Now I can see the connection, how we are also performers doing tricks in an arena.

I loved the freedom and confusion of just doing stuff without having to understand what it would become. Just staying curious. Pina never explained anything — anything. Nor did she judge.

I remember questions like: What would you do if you wanted someone to notice you? Or you wanted to get attention in a public place? People would take turns to get up and show a response, and there was no right or wrong. But you couldn't pretend or show a picture of an emotion.

We learned how to be there with all

our vulnerability and silliness and unattractiveness. That's a big thing for dancers, who always want to be beautiful. For me, it was constantly daring myself to be that honest.

When Salomon approached me [for the new production], I thought, If my body will do it, I'm all for it. Let's get the band back together! To be back rehearsing in that same room is insane, like science fiction. The wonderful thing is that people are very much like they were then. Perhaps our idiosyncrasies are stronger.

I have been quite surprised by some things, physically speaking — that I can walk in high heels for one thing. But emotionally it feels different. I don't take myself so seriously anymore. This is what it is!

JOHN GIFFIN

It was our first time working in the Lichtenburg [in 1978], an old cinema that became our rehearsal studio, and the way it looked became almost the exact set of "Kontakthof," with a screen at the back, black chairs, a piano. We worked on gestures of tenderness — the whole range — from adolescents coming together to something more adult and erotic, and past that to aggression.

Pina had an amazing ability to see what was lurking underneath the sur-



KSENIA KULESHOVA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

"There was always the understanding that we were not going to compete with our younger selves who are there on the film," the dancer John Giffin said.

face. We would rehearse in this way for two months and there would be no piece, and then one day she would come in and the compositional part began. She held the memory of two months of work and would put small moments together, like a quilt, but without a pre-existing design.

This project isn't about reproducing "Kontakthof," but showing something different. I have found it quite physically

hard. But you have to do what you can; a lesson in humility isn't a bad thing! We have all laughed so much doing this.

There was always the understanding that we were not going to compete with our younger selves who are there on the film. We are them, but we aren't them either. I don't have the same dancer ego I had then. Of course, the emotions of the work are still resonant: problems with showing tenderness, with relationships,

communication. They are part of everything that makes life of value.

JOSEPHINE ANN ENDICOTT

I think the fact that both Meryl and I were Australian had a big effect on "Kontakthof." The themes of loneliness, leaving everything behind, searching for love: All of this became very present. We also had a humorous side, so Pina brought all these new colors into the piece. She was amazing at organizing the material, putting blocks together, chopping and changing until it felt right. You never had the feeling she was lost.

For me, it was a tough piece. I had very little time offstage and so many costume changes. But I loved showing everything, from being young to being a diva, to screaming and dancing. And being onstage in those beautiful satin dresses and high heels, with elegant hair, gave you a feeling of being special. At the same time you had to be yourself.

I have been teaching "Kontakthof" since 1999, to teenagers, to the Paris Opera, to the company. It's a work I have been close to my whole life. But it's another thing to be onstage performing it again. Some days I feel 100, and other days, I feel, Oh I'm cute again, like a teenager!

Age is a strange thing; the work keeps you young and alive somehow. After a week of rehearsal, all my colleagues also started to look 10 or 15 years younger. It's a magical thing that we are going to do this, with our younger selves, and with those who are not there anymore — their presence is almost more important than we are.

In praise of Adele in long black dresses



By Vanessa Friedman

UNBUTTONED

This weekend, Adele's Las Vegas residency comes to an end and with it what may have been the most striking series of LBDs since Audrey Hepburn stepped out of a cab in "Breakfast at Tiffany's" wearing Givenchy. Those initials don't just stand for little black dress anymore.

By the time the artist takes her last bow, she will have worn more than 50 long black dresses in Vegas (to say nothing of her concerts in Munich and London, where she also wore LBDs) — a different one every weekend. She started in an off-the-shoulder velvet Schiaparelli, with a long satin sash caught up by a gold buckle speckled with nipples (you read that right). She wore David Koma with crystal roses on Valentine's Day 2023. She channeled Morticia Addams on Halloween that fall in Arturo Obregon. She got Loro Piana to make its first va-va-voom gown this month.

She has worn, in no particular order, LBDs from Stella McCartney, Dior, Carolina Herrera, Harris Reed, Prada, Vivienne Westwood, Robert Wun, Proenza Schouler, Armani, JW Anderson and Ralph Lauren, to name but a few. All were custom-made. She has worked with names from across the industry and rarely repeated a designer.

The only guidelines, according to Fernando Garcia, the co-creative director of Oscar de la Renta, who made the glittery sunburst number she wore for her Christmas 2022 performance, were that they be black, long, cut on the

curve to show off her waist and with enough give to let her lungs go.

Adele has fancied the LBD for almost as long as she has been in the public eye (see the night-sky Armani LBD she wore to the Grammys in 2012). But the sheer number of black gowns she has worn during her residency, the variety and the consistency of her presentation, marks a new milestone in what may be the most timeless garment in the fashion pantheon.

In a city that effectively invented the rhinestone X games and at a moment when the gravitational pull exerted by social media means that it is often the most outré outfits that are rewarded by the attention economy — Most colorful! And crazy! And fringed! And feathered! — Adele's wardrobe has been a riposte to the status quo. Hers is essentially a one-woman campaign to remind the world of the power of elegant understatement.

"When everything is about being seen," choosing a different approach is, ironically, "one way to stand out," said Sarah Collins, the associate chair of fashion marketing and management at Savannah College of Art and Design in Georgia, which in 2012 held an exhibition called "Little Black Dress."

In the physics of fashion, in which for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction, the pendulum may be swinging Adele's way — just in time for the holiday season. According to data from Tagwalk, the fashion search engine, there were more than 800 percent more black dresses in the fall 2024 collections than in 2023.

At Valentino, the then-designer Pierpaolo Piccioli offered 63 variations on the black dress, 45 of them extending from below the knee to the floor. Black, he said, was "interesting because it's the color of these times, and it's very universal but very individual."

He was talking about the sense among some of dark days upon us, but the LBD has always transcended its era.



Adele performing onstage at Caesars Palace in January in a dress by Dolce & Gabbana.

The long black dress, the more formal variation on the little black dress that Coco Chanel made famous in 1926, actually preceded that particular garment in notoriety by centuries. Its power was immortalized in the 17th-century court portraits of Diego Velázquez, and by John Singer Sargent's portrait of Madame X (actually Virginie Amélie Gautreau), which was unveiled at the 1884 Paris Salon and scandalized the world with its juxtaposition of skin, cleavage and black velvet.

Ms. Hepburn gave the LBD a boost when she teamed up with Hubert de Givenchy, whose "Breakfast" LBD, cut to expose her shoulder bones, was both minimal and provocative. A few decades later, Elizabeth Hurley did it again when she walked the "Four Weddings and a Funeral" red carpet in a Versace LBD with safety pins protecting her modesty. When the Museum of Modern Art held its 2017 "Items: Is Fashion Modern?" exhibition, dedicated to identifying the garments that defined the 20th century, curators included the LBD in the assemblage along with jeans, loafers and

the hoodie. Indeed, it opened the show.

At this point, you can read into black what you will — revolution, existentialism, goth, sophistication, mystery, magic, power, grief, solemnity, formality — which means that the LBD can be all things to all people. "It means that many things go together," Yohji Yamamoto once told The New York Times. "You need black to have a silhouette. Black can swallow light, or make things look sharp."

Either way, what it does, unquestionably, is put the focus on the person wearing it. As Paola Antonelli, the MoMA curator who organized the "Items" show, said, "the LBD allows one to control one's presence in a room or in the city, a fine-tuning of the whole attitude."

There are a variety of theories about why Adele loves black. (She herself is not explaining.) In 2013, her former stylist, Gaelle Paul, said that her decision to wear black was an ode to Johnny Cash, otherwise known as the man in black. But while it may have started out that way, Jamie Mitzrahi, Adele's current stylist, who worked closely with each designer to create

the custom looks for Las Vegas, offered another interpretation. It is about "déjà vu in the right way," she told The Wall Street Journal at the beginning of the residency.

It is about the multitudes of references, the history, much like Adele's music.

As a result, Ms. Collins of Savannah said, "it fits her." Literally and artistically.

The black dresses center her on the stage, acting as a backdrop to her music. The length hides her feet, which are often bare (or in sneakers) for comfort's sake. And, like her peers Taylor Swift and Beyoncé, she works with designers across the industry, rather than one in particular, so the result is less redolent of marketing than creative mind-meld. When she wore Gaurav Gupta at the end of October — a couture LBD with an off-the-shoulder neckline that resembled wings and took 93 hours to make — Mr. Gupta called it "a defining moment."

For Christopher John Rogers, a designer known for his bright colors, "it was a fun challenge to figure out how to C.J.R.-ify her signature." His solution, which Adele wore for Pride Day last year, was a crepe and silk dress with a train of rainbow stripes.

"There's something very old-world and sculptural about black," Mr. Rogers said.

Yet, despite the fabulosity, the LBD translates relatively easily into the everyday, which is also part of the appeal. "It's democratic — everyone can wear it," Ms. Collins said. "It's sophisticated. It focuses attention on the silhouette."

"And it is timeless," she continued, pointing out that while colors go in and out of style, black is eternal. That means it is a good investment.

"I think we'll still be looking at Adele's residency 10 years from now as a master class in how to dress up," Mr. Garcia of Oscar de la Renta said.

That is not impossible, as all of Adele's LBDs are being archived, preserved for some point in the future. Even if she does take a long break from music and public appearances, as she has said she plans, these looks could go on: into an exhibition — or a book.

"So much is about streetwear and casual wear today," Ms. Collins said. "But sometimes, you just want to be glamorous."

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DIOR

WEEKEND

MUSIC

BY JOHN LELAND

On a September afternoon in his East Village apartment in New York, Jesse Malin was learning to stand up in front of a microphone. He pressed his right hand on his knee and grabbed a mic stand with his left. A physical therapist stood behind him in case he started to fall. He wore a yellow T-shirt emblazoned with a Lion of Judah, a Rasta symbol that gave him inspiration.

At the count of three, he lurched forward and up, clinging to the stand for balance.

"Let's get me down," he said. "I'm scared."

Malin, 57, has been standing at microphones for 45 years, first as a 12-year-old punk pioneer, later as leader of the '90s glam-rock band D Generation and for the last two decades as a touring singer-songwriter.

But on this day, he was preparing for a concert like no other in his career. On Dec. 1 and 2, he will perform in public for the first time in a year and a half, after a rare spinal stroke that left him paralyzed from the waist down.

Joining him at the Beacon Theater in Manhattan will be some of the friends he has made over his career: Lucinda Williams, Rickie Lee Jones, the Hold Steady, J Mascis, Fred Armisen and a host of others. The proceeds will go to his medical bills and expenses.

He eased his body gingerly back into a chair. "Let's do that again," he said.

So he did. And then again.

In the New York rock world, Malin has been a fixture for so long that it is hard to imagine the scene without him. His teenage punk band, Heart Attack, made what is considered the first New York hardcore record. He slam-danced on "Saturday Night Live" in 1981.

He has toured incessantly, building a modest but ardent following — sometimes opening at arenas for bigger acts, sometimes performing solo in people's homes to pick up a little money.

And he is a partner in a handful of East Village bars and rock clubs, including Niagara and Bowery Electric, that have become essential places of connection for local and touring musicians. Martin Scorsese even cast him as a nightclub doorman in "Bringing Out the Dead."

"He's been a great, genuine connector of people," said Eugene Hütz, leader of the gypsy punk band Gogol Bordello, whom Malin helped get a recording contract and a major tour spot.

Steven Van Zandt, who signed Malin to his Wicked Cool label, said simply, "He does seem to know everybody."

In the first half of last year, all of that seemed to be coming together for him. He played a successful overseas tour and a sold-out show at Webster Hall in Manhattan. He was in great physical shape, jumping off bars or stages at his concerts, running five miles several times a week. He was writing a memoir of his early years.

"I felt like my career was getting bigger, and my voice was getting better," he said.

On May 4, he organized a dinner and party to commemorate his friend Howie Pyro, the bassist in D Generation, who had died a year earlier, after a liver transplant. Midway through the night, he started to feel a stabbing pain in his hips and back.

Finally he had to lie down on the restaurant floor.

"Everybody's standing above me like in 'Rosemary's Baby,'" he said. "I'm like, 'Go over there and eat.' So they're eating the rest of this fancy meal. It's cash only, and I threw the thing, so I'm on the floor paying the bill."

His friend Jimmy G, from the veteran hardcore band Murphy's Law, helped him crawl outside for an ambulance and rode with him to the first of several hospitals and rehab centers that would keep him over the next few months.

He never again set foot in his East Village walk-up apartment.

A SPINAL STROKE RESULTS from a blockage of blood to the spinal column. It is exceedingly rare — less than 1 percent of all strokes, by some measures — and can be maddeningly hard to trace. Malin's doctors told him they did not know what caused his or whether he would ever walk again.

"They didn't offer a lot of optimism," he said.

At the hospital, friends rallied around him. Bruce Springsteen — with whom he had performed at several benefit concerts and who sang on one of Malin's albums — called regularly and visited when he was in town. "He put all the nurses on the guest list and took pictures with everybody," Malin said. "Just walked right in, no guards, no hoopla. Sat down, brought me a book, had a banana off my hospital food tray."

Laura McCarthy, one of his partners in the bars, threw herself into searching for alternative treatments. "What I learned is that most doctors don't know anything about spinal strokes," she said. She talked to 40 doctors, by her count, before settling on a clinic in Buenos Aires that offered stem cell treatments for spinal traumas, with the aim of rebuilding neural pathways.

Malin had insurance, but it did not cover all the physical therapy and care he needed. Argentina had the virtue of being both cutting edge and cheap.

He went for three months, navigating airports in wheelchair, not speaking the language, staying in hotels not set up for people with disabilities.

After decades on the road, he was confined to a bed or a chair, dependent on others. Though friends visited, he was

often lonely and homesick.

"My view of myself and where I was supposed to be started to look really different," he said. "I felt like some crippled guy in a wheelchair who should be thrown into the East River. I guess I didn't feel secure and cool."

His former manager Diane Gentile helped organize a benefit album, "Silver Patron Saints," corralling luminaries from his circle — Springsteen, Billie Joe Armstrong, Elvis Costello, Bleachers — to record his songs. Each time one finished a cut, she'd send it to Malin in Argentina.

"I'd be really down sometimes, or in pain, and suddenly the email would come, and it'd be Counting Crows doing 'Oh Sheena,' and I'd put it on. It really was an emotional and spiritual boost," he said.

The album, which came out in September, is quintessential Malin: 27 songs of urban ghosts and battered dreamers, lonely hotel rooms and charmed nights in the city, spread across different genres and styles.

"What makes me smile the most is that it has Agnostic Front and Bruce Springsteen on it, and has Murphy's Law and Lucinda Williams," he said. "It's a world I want to live in. Any day, I'll take those people."

He and Williams share a particular bond. She produced his 2019 album, "Sunset Kids," and when she suffered a stroke the next year, he wrote songs with her and played guitar for her, something she could not do.

"I just love him," she said, from a tour bus somewhere between Tucson and Oklahoma City. "We trade stories: Are you still having trouble with that or that? Are you using the walker or a cane?"

She was on her own path back, learning to walk again, to perform seated when she couldn't stand. "I like to think he gets inspiration and encouragement from me," she said. "I think now he's been in recovery long enough to realize that he can still be the same guy he was before, just with a few limitations. But the essence of who he was is still there."

THROUGH DAILY PHYSICAL THERAPY, Malin has started to gain a little mobility. The upcoming concerts give him a goal to work toward.

The writing, though, has been difficult. "So much of my creative process was based on the energy of just being out walking, and then coming in and picking up my guitar, and stuff would just pour out of me," he said.

"I guess I felt unworthy," he added. "I'm trying to figure out what I have to say, what the narrative is, how I fit in the world. I get down on myself. I like downbeat music, but I always wrote songs that had that kind of melancholy thing but were hopeful in some way."

In September, I accompanied him on his first walk outside using canes rather than a walker. He reached the corner, ducked into a store, then walked home.

It was a perilous journey, even with his physical therapist holding on to a belt around his waist. Any sidewalk shopper could have knocked him over without noticing it. "You got me on a good day," he said. "I'm not stinking up the joint."

Earlier in his recovery, he organized a benefit concert for his friend H.R., the singer in the punk band the Bad Brains — heroes from his hardcore days. It was the kind of gesture his friends have come to expect of him.

"If you needed money, he'd give you money," said Jimmy G, a friend since their teen years. "If you needed a place to stay, he'd get you a place to stay. If you were hungry, he'd feed you. If your band was having a problem, he'd get you the equipment or give you a room. Anything you needed, that guy would do for you. Anything."

But it has been harder for Malin to accept help from others. "I like to be the guy setting stuff up and putting things on, and it's just hard to receive," he said. "I don't know who to call when I'm upset. I only know how to take the call."

In early October, he invited friends over for movie night, one way he's been able to maintain some social life, and read them a chapter from his almost-finished memoir. It described his days as a rigid 16-year-old anarchist, holding marathon discussions of Guy Debord's "The Society of the Spectacle" and letting a friend harangue him into selling all his sexist albums. "Not the Iggy," he pleaded. Yes, the Iggy. (He later bought another copy.)

"This was just the beginning of us young anarchists becoming judgmental jerks," he read.

It was funny and candid, a slice of a downtown past as gritty as his songs.

For the Beacon show, Malin plans to stand for at least one song. His doctors don't know how far his recovery will go, whether the nerves will reconnect or he will have to adjust to a permanent disability.

With his arms, he pressed himself up from his wheelchair, something he does frequently to avoid pressure sores. "I keep trying to go back to what I always preached at a young age, which was that positive mental attitude," he said. But some days, it's hard.

The night before, he had dreamed of walking around in a fall coat and cap. So he made a point to wear the hat. "Even though I can't run or go for a walk or get in a car, I still feel driven every morning," he said. "I still wake up hopeful," he added.

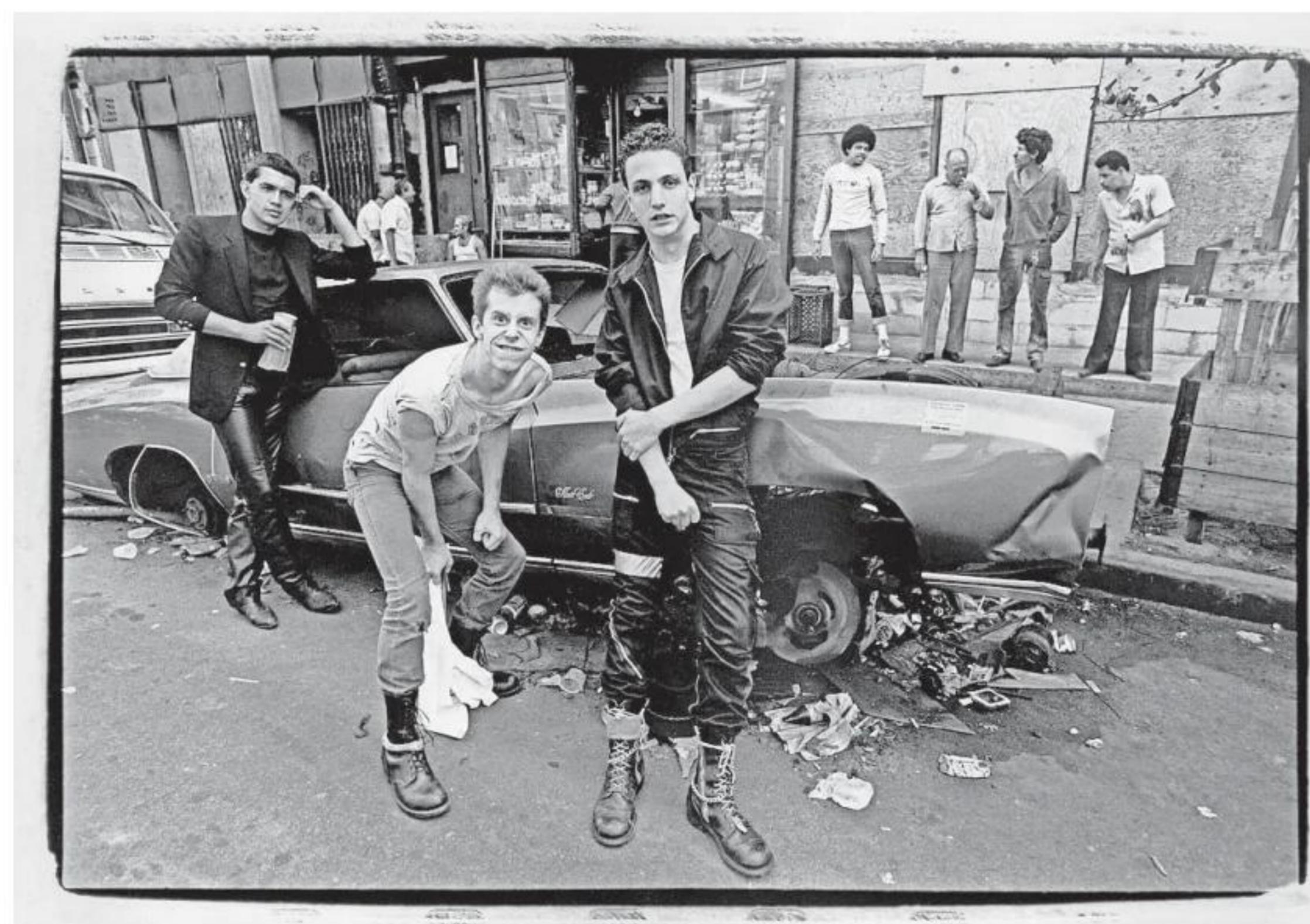
"And I think of the people that I lost, the friends that didn't have an opportunity to live and be part of this. And I want to beat the odds."



GRAHAM DICKIE/THE NEW YORK TIMES

Ready to stand on his own again

The New York rock stalwart Jesse Malin suffered a rare spinal stroke last year. Now he's planning a concert.



LAURA LEVINE



GRAHAM DICKIE/THE NEW YORK TIMES



VIVIAN WANG

"I don't know who to call when I'm upset. I only know how to take the call."

Above, Jesse Malin in New York in September. Above left, Malin at 14 with the band Heart Attack, with Javier Madariga, left, and John Frawley. Left, Lucinda Williams and Malin, who helped her make music as she recovered from a stroke.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEORGE STEINMETZ



Left and above, harvest season in Lancaster County, Pa., where much of the work on Amish farms is done with horses and mules, along with a lot of family and communal labor. George Steinmetz's new book, "Feed the Planet," has about 300 such photos.

Seeking a telling image in Amish country

PARADISE, PA.

George Steinmetz tries to photograph the essence of the global food supply

BY WALKER MIMMS

In his mug shot, the photographer George Steinmetz doesn't seem especially threatening. It captures some of the inquisitive humanity that Steinmetz, a tall and direct people's person with a John Malkovich mien, conveys in life.

On a recent drive through rural Pennsylvania, he told me how he had gotten himself jailed. It was 2013, and he was photographing wheat fields in Kansas from his motorized paraglider. Although airspace in America is not privately owned, after an hour of shooting he landed and was met by a furious farm manager and a sheriff with handcuffs.

"Photographers ask themselves a question," Steinmetz said with a chuckle from behind the wheel of his Tesla. "Do we ask for permission or forgiveness?"

The sunrise had been too good, and too brief, for him to find consent.

Indirectly, Kansas brought him here, to Lancaster County, on a hot September afternoon. Though the charges were dropped, his assignment that year for National Geographic — to document the increasingly global nature of the world's food supply as the overall population nears 10 billion — has become a decade-long obsession, requiring contacts on six continents, repeat visits, much rejection and permission.

His new book, "Feed the Planet," with text by Joel K. Bourne Jr., features the voluminous results: some 300 photos, most of them aerial, depicting a staggering variety of ways to produce food across 40 countries. Thai crocodile farms, high-tech aeroponic labs (where roots hang suspended), armies of Indian shrimp shellers, crop circles in Kansas. (And the consequent mug shot.)

"I try to make the most visually complete portrait of where our food comes from, and I find aerial photography to be the most visually interesting way to cap-



JUSTIN T. GELLERSON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

ture it," Steinmetz said. "It communicates the task of feeding all these people." Having spent 1997 to 2012 shooting hyper-arid deserts for National Geographic, Steinmetz, now 67, has swapped the glider for a photographic drone.

Of his many food destinations, this corner of Pennsylvania, which is among the most productive nonirrigated farmland in the United States, has stayed with him. He returned in September to see if he could get a better shot. The prize — and the challenge — was the stews: the Lutheran separatists known as the Amish, whose persistence in antique technologies, agrarian ethics and deep insularity illustrate some rich paradoxes of our ever-expanding yet persistently local agricultural needs.

Jams and preserves go to local tourist shops, pumpkins to Connecticut, and milk and cattle to buyers around America. Stein-

On the dashboard navigation screen of the car, patches of farmland slid past. Steinmetz tapped on a promising one, then plotted a course toward it, a process that he calls, quoting geophysicists, "ground-truthing."

Not long after, he spotted a horse-drawn mower down in a valley. He steered to the farmhouse and marched up a ridge of alfalfa, grown for the farm's cattle feed. Steinmetz introduced himself and his project to a sweaty and weary hospitable young farmer. The man, Mark, considered the pitch for a while then decided, "It would be nice if you didn't get our faces."

Steinmetz unsheathed a four-winged mechanical bat and sent it skyward with a video-game-style controller. But only one mohawk of alfalfa was left. With his eyes glued to the controller's screen, Steinmetz rapidly snapped the farmer shaving the crop, who turned out to be a 16-year-old boy named Aaron. Stein-

metz inched his drone up and back for a downward diagonal view on Aaron and his animal, until Mark returned. "I think that'll be enough for today," he said.

Elsewhere luck ran thin. In a cornfield near the town of Vintage, we met Jonas, a shy polite man with a red beard, who said, "We don't like any publicity." Outside the community of Kinzers, Stevie held a toddler in his barn and said flatly, "I'd rather decline." Near a pumpkin patch, two little girls said, "Well, you can't."

In the afternoon, Steinmetz spotted a familiar farmhouse and pulled up to it. Out came Anna, 37, in a kopp hat and apron. Three years ago, he photographed her silage corn and received a rare lunch invitation.

Her eyes lit up. "Very interesting to see you again," she said. "The last time I saw you, you were doing our dishes."

There was no activity to shoot, so a daughter, an angelic girl named Miriam, brought milk from the cow house, as her mother and Steinmetz talked about the shifts in this way of life. "Dad farmed 50 years ago," Anna said. "They didn't really have a problem making a living with dairy cows."

But even with 40 cows and a corporate buyer, the upscale brand Organic Valley, Anna observed that today "little farmers are an endangered species," a hint of pride in her voice. "The big guys with their big equipment can do it so much faster and cheaper."

Encroachment is not lost on Steinmetz. On one page in the book, a grid of shrimp ponds in Indonesia stretches where mangrove forests recently stood. On another page an elderly farmer in Fujian Province, China, struggles under a shoulder yoke of watering cans. He is dwarfed by high-rises: a reminder of the pressures on China to protect food self-sufficiency amid rampant development.

The light was dying. As Steinmetz thanked Anna, she sized me up. "I would have imagined someone from The New York Times would come here with a suit and a tie," she said. "You'd fit better on a farm."

Prowling a new road, Steinmetz said with a sigh, "We might have to cut our losses." Through the corn, sunset strobed into the car. Then, down the hillside across a field, he saw it: four horses and their driver mowing a harvested field flat. A giant dust plume shrouded them in amber. Four more minutes of light, if that.

Braking hard, Steinmetz popped the trunk, clipped together a bigger, stronger drone, and set it on the asphalt. The craft beeped awake, arched its hawklike shoulders, and whined off into the valley. As Steinmetz snapped photos, the horseman looked up from his mower, spotted the drone and rerouted to the barn. Out came a larger farmer. The man bellowed at the hovering camera, shaking a stick. Steinmetz squinted at the controller screen. A broom? No, a shotgun.

Steinmetz zipped the device back to the roadside, and dismantled it. By the time he had shut the trunk, the farmer was pounding toward us on a push-scooter — unarmed. Steinmetz blinked. "I'm not running from this guy," he said.

"I don't appreciate you infringing on our privacy," the farmer said, panting, as he met us by the Tesla. Steinmetz explained himself: his interest in agricultural diversity, the pressures of dwindling sunlight for photographers. He opened a copy of the book.

The farmer, a bespectacled man named Mark, melted. Then the two men laughed. Sometimes animal activists come snooping around, this second Mark said. "We do things differently, and some people don't understand," he

said. The Amish are pacifists, he hastened to add. He keeps the gun for birds.

Mark is 36. He raises 40 cows for milk and 40 beef cows, which he will sell to slaughterhouses in Pennsylvania and Denver. Eighty acres of corn silage keep the herd fed through winter. As he flipped through "Feed the Planet," he found a giant V formation of combines collecting soybeans in Brazil. "That is inefficient," Mark pointed out. "They'll have to all turn back at once." He paused. "We're harvesting in the morning. You'd be very welcome to come watch how we work."

Over crab cakes at a diner in Kinzers, Steinmetz reviewed the day's shots. He waffled. Dusty and a little lonely, they don't capture the Amish communion, he said. "I need to get the human context while also showing the scale of it. Tomorrow could be great."

Drones are an improvement from his paraglider days, when his engine might cut out midair, forcing a landing. (Though he stayed accident-free.) They gave "Feed the Planet" many beautiful, and conveniently achieved, landscapes: velvet hillsides of almonds in California, paint palettes of multicolored salt ponds in Senegal. "It's fantasy time for photography," Steinmetz said.

But drones' espionage and warfare connotations take their toll on the process. "Talking about food transparency," he said, "I have to be transparent with the people I'm shooting."

Especially when seeking the "partial aerial," as he calls it, just above the human head. This difficult angle allows him to ask more pointed questions about consumption and labor. For instance, in the book's most powerful query on meat,

a seemingly infinite river of goats files into a converted car carrier in Somaliland in Africa, bound for the annual Muslim hajj pilgrimage, where millions of animals are sacrificed.

"I need to get the human context while also showing the scale of it," Steinmetz said. "I don't intend to tell anyone what to do," Steinmetz said, swiping ketchup with a fry, "but the takeaway for me has been to eat less meat and dairy," two very resource-intensive products.

At sunrise, we returned to the second Mark's property, where we were welcomed warmly. Soon, neighbors arrived in horse-drawn teams, their steel wheels screeching on the gravel. There was a motorized combine for mulching the corn, a wagon to catch it and another wagon to relieve that one. Before long they disappeared into the field.

From our perch in the driveway, the arm of the combine bobbed faintly like an antenna. But as on the controller's screen it was vivid, spewing a column of green into the air. Around it, the farmers maneuvered their forecasts like Roman charioteers.

The two corn paths soon widened into a crossroads. Steinmetz hissed, "Yes!" He snapped like crazy when the teams converged, spun around and traded off. "Walter Looss Jr. would line up the shot first, then wait for the play," Steinmetz said, referring to the renowned sports photographer.

By 11 o'clock, the sun was in full roast, the batteries dead. Mark's son Matt, 13, the one we spooked the night before, came up from his horses. Steinmetz showed him the shots. Recognizing himself on the screen, Matt smiled widely, flecks of green dotting his sweaty face. He and Steinmetz talked baseball (Matt backing the Phillies, Steinmetz the Yankees), until Mark called the boy back to the silo to help guide the corn mulch up the conveyor belt.

Below, from left, a community kitchen in Amritsar, India; the CP Group's chicken processing plant in Jiangsu, China; and fishing boats in the African country of Mauritania.



WEEKEND

LIVING

The cost of being unmarried was too high

In an increasingly uncertain world, a marriage skeptic comes around

Modern Love

BY KARISSA CHEN

In February 2022, a few days after Russia invaded Ukraine, I sent my partner a panicked text: "Maybe we should get married."

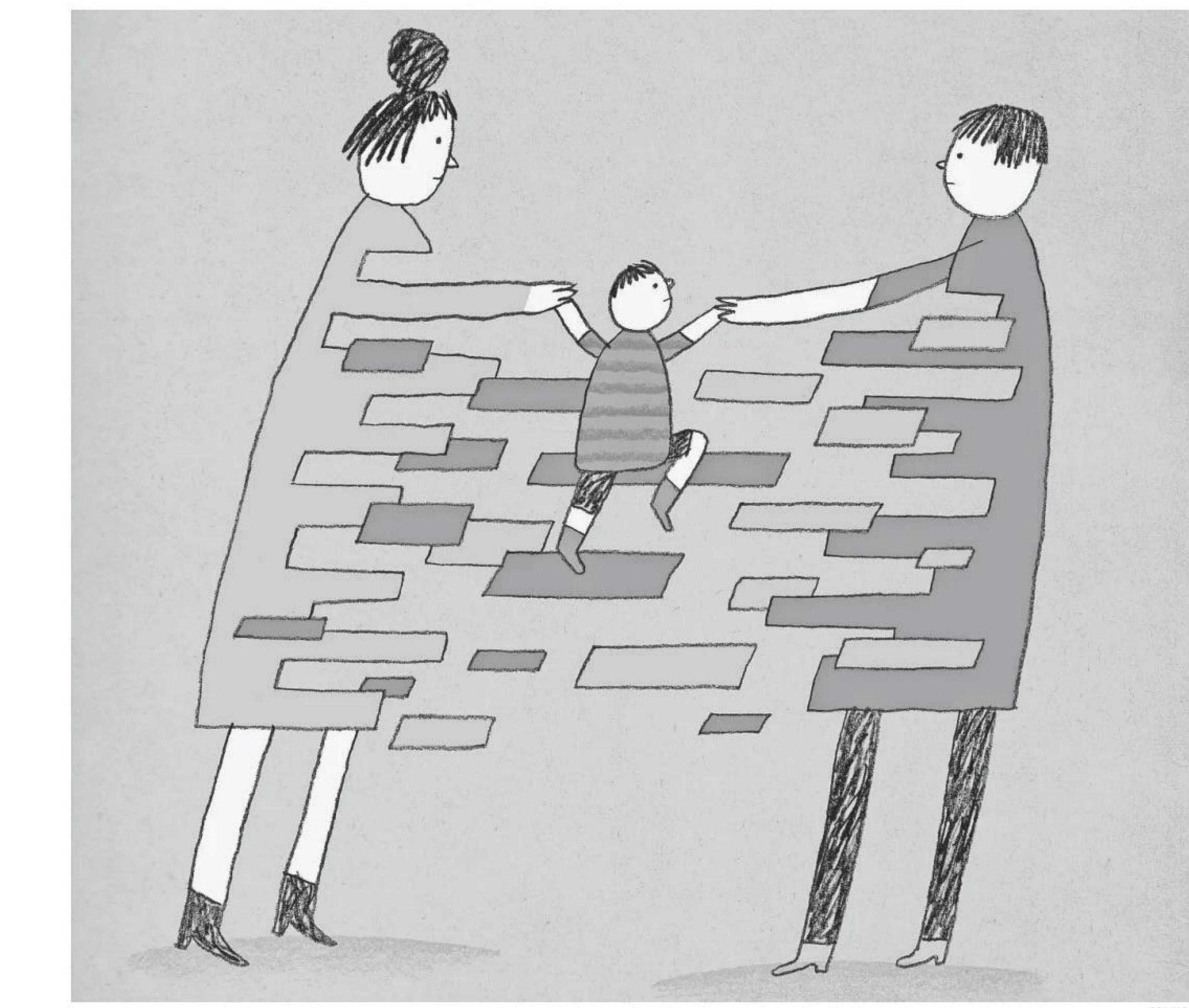
He thought I was joking. For years I had told him I wasn't sure I ever wanted to get married, despite him having made clear that he wanted to marry me. I am the child of divorced parents; I was skeptical of the utility of marriage. At best, marriage was an (often expensive) expression of love — love that could be expressed in other ways that didn't involve a change in legal status. At worst, I feared, marriage was a social and legal prison.

But that was before Russia's invasion, before pundits and op-eds in Western media outlets began asking: Will this embolden China to invade Taiwan? Within a day of the attack, I began receiving messages from friends and family asking if I was sure it was safe to stay in Taiwan. Maybe it was time to move back?

I had been living at least part-time in Taipei for more than six years. I had moved here on a Fulbright program, fully intending to return to New Jersey once the 10-month award period was over. But at the end of the fellowship, I wasn't ready to leave.

Now I had a life here: a path I jogged, orchids I watered, friends I went out with. Most importantly, I had a partner I loved, a good man who reminded me to bring an umbrella if it looked like rain, who left me love notes and cut fruit on days depression weighed me down, who took me on impromptu trips to see fireflies in the mountains.

The problem was that my partner is Taiwanese. I don't mean Taiwanese-American, like me. I mean local Taiwanese, someone who had never spent much time around Americans, fluent in Mandarin and Taiwanese and nothing else. I have joked with him that most



BRIAN REA

Taiwanese who date foreigners improve their English. With us, I improved my Mandarin.

I have worries about our different backgrounds: if my mediocre Mandarin and his nonexistent English would stifle our communication; if our different food preferences might cause friction; if we might someday disagree on where to raise children; if he could learn English well enough to move to America someday; if the sum of our differences would leave me feeling lonely and never fully understood.

One thing I never used to worry about, because it never occurred to me, was what to do in case of war.

But that day, the barrage of ominous media coverage and texts from friends finally got to me. I started to think about the scenario in which Taiwan was invaded by China, and I evacuated to America. If we weren't married, would I have to leave him behind?

"I don't want to be separated if something happens," I said to him. "I want to know that if I go back to America, you can come with me."

After a long pause, he texted, "But I'd be worried about leaving my mother."

"Maybe we can bring her with us."

"She'll never leave," he said. "She has too many relatives and friends here." And what he said next nearly

What would happen if Taiwan was invaded by China, and I evacuated to America?

broke my heart. "If I leave, what if I can never return? What if I regret it for the rest of my life?"

I understood too well that fear. I had the same fear when, on March 18, 2020, I boarded the last flight from New York to Taipei that would arrive in Taiwan before the country closed its borders to foreigners without residence permits. I hadn't been sure I was making the right decision.

As my mother waved goodbye to me at the departure gate, I felt a wave of nausea. I didn't know how the pandemic would unfold, if I would ever see my mother again, if I was making a choice that I would spend the rest of my life regretting. And yet I boarded that flight, in part because I didn't want to be separated from the man waiting for me back in Taiwan.

That night, two years after the flight, my partner and I sat on the couch, somber and serious, and discussed it again. Should we get married? Would he come with me to the States if war broke out?

"Couldn't you convince your mother to come?" I asked.

No, he said, she would never be convinced.

"What if we had a child?" I asked. We had planned to try for a baby in the next month. Despite my misgivings about marriage, I had always known I

wanted a baby. I'd even told him it mattered more to me that we had a child together than for us to be legally bound.

He paused. "If we had a child," he said, "then of course I would go. I can't let our baby grow up without their father."

"So I'm not enough but a child is?" It was an unreasonable question, a touch petulant. It wasn't that I didn't understand his dilemma, his rationale. I wanted to know what to expect from him.

"It's my mother," he said.

I nodded. Of course. What is a woman you have only known for a few years compared to the one who birthed and raised you?

"What would you do if you were me?" he asked.

"I don't know," I said, because I didn't. We were at a stalemate. His response had rendered the question of marriage moot — after all, even if we got married and he could come with me, he'd said he probably wouldn't.

We didn't discuss it again and China didn't invade Taiwan. And then a month later, I discovered that what I thought was a three-day hangover was a baby.

Even after I learned about the pregnancy, I was wary of marriage. I had

heard the laws in Taiwan often favor the husband, that non-consensual divorce is hard to attain, that child custody cases historically favored the father.

But as the little bean inside me grew, I began to reconsider. I thought about how much more difficult it would be for our family, bureaucratically, if my partner and I weren't legally recognized as a unit. We had already missed out on certain government subsidies for pregnant women because we weren't married; if we remained unmarried, my child's birth certificate wouldn't name his father.

It was also more than that. Now, with a baby, my partner and I were inextricably tied; we weren't just two people who had chosen each other because we liked each other. We had become a family. It was no longer a matter of not wanting to be separated. Now a forced separation would be a tragedy in our nascent family story that would alter the course of my child's whole life.

We got married that July, a muted civil affair at the household registration office in Taipei with two of our friends serving as witnesses. My partner wore a suit; I wore a cheap white dress. After we signed our marriage papers, we exchanged \$20 rings we had bought at the night market the day before. Inscribed on the edge of my husband's ring is an aphorism: "Joy is joy doubled, sorrow is sorrow halved."

A few months later, I gave birth to our son, both of us nearly losing our lives in the process. It was the first time I saw my husband weep. For days, he cared for us with patient tenderness, without complaint despite his sleeplessness. I watched him cradle our baby against his bare skin, his eyes hollow with dark circles, and thought: How lucky I am to be married to this man.

Our son is nearly 2 now. We research preschools even as my family in America continues to ask when we're moving back. They say China will likely attack Taiwan by 2030. I nod and listen but, like many Taiwanese, push those thoughts away. I must plan for the near future, one that assumes my son will go to school in Taipei and his paternal grandmother will live 10 minutes away.

My husband and I don't talk about what will happen if war breaks out. We don't talk about what it would mean to leave his mother behind or for him to adjust to a country where he doesn't speak the language. We know where our marriage papers are, both the original certificate and its English translation, in a drawer next to our passports.

We take our son to the playground and eat noodles and have dance parties to "Baby Shark." Even as speculation swirls, even as we pray to never face an impossible choice, we live our lives here. It's all we can do. And take solace in the knowledge that, whatever comes next, we'll face it together.

Karissa Chen lives in Taipei, Taiwan. Her first novel, "Homesick," about two lovers separated by war, will be published in January.

Can I lie about what interests me to the college I'd like to attend?

The Ethicist

BY KWAME ANTHONY APPIAH

I'm a high school senior. As a good student with strong extracurriculars, I'm applying to a few of what are considered top colleges. My dream school is one of them, and the major I intend to pursue is very competitive; choosing it might make it more difficult to get in.

I have considered applying instead as a linguistics major, because I have a stronger background in that field, especially with the extracurriculars I have pursued. I do love linguistics (I founded the Linguistics Club at my school), but it is not my passion, and if I got in somewhere for linguistics, I would switch to something else.

This strategy is very common, as far as I know; most people I know who got into extremely selective colleges last year chose a less competitive arts or humanities major as either their primary or secondary interest. I am quite certain that some of them don't actually want to pursue those fields.

I don't judge them at all, but I am not sure if I should follow them. For one thing, everyone else who will get into the university having declared the major that I'm interested in probably worked hard all through high school to have a strong background in that academic area, unlike me. Additionally, although I doubt these schools have exact quotas to fill for each major, I may be taking the place of another student who is genuinely passionate about linguistics and depriving an already small department of that student. Also, I'd be lying, which some people might consider to be wrong on the face of it.

On the other hand, isn't there something wrong with a college-admissions process that rewards students who know exactly what they want to do from the beginning of high school and pun-

ishes those who are honest about a change in their interests? What do I owe such a flawed process, and what do I owe other applicants? — Name Withheld

ADMISSIONS IS INDEED a flawed process — but maybe not so flawed as you fear in the respects that concern you. First, though you write of applying "as a linguistics major," the sort of colleges to which you're applying anticipate that your interests may change. You think you know now what you'll major in. But lots of students change their majors, many more than once. In fact, a great virtue of an American liberal education is that it allows you to make decisions about your academic focus after you've had a wider exposure to a range of fields. Don't treat declaring a major as a commitment; the college won't.

Still, applicants often indicate what majors they're contemplating, and given a college's desire to spread students across all its majors, it can seem strategic to signal that you have an interest in a less popular major. This won't ever be the only reason you get offered a place. But in a competitive environment, every additional point in your favor can help.

And students do all sorts of things to make themselves look attractive to admissions officers. Some people with athletic talents spend more time on high school sports than they otherwise would have. Others, for the same reason, become mathletes or model-U.N. participants. A version of Goodhart's Law — when a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure — applies here. Once it's known that colleges take something to be an indicator of a property they value, that property is likely to be less closely correlated with that indicator.

Of course, the admissions folks are wise to this. They know the system creates incentives for tendentious self-curating, and read applications



with a gimlet eye. At the same time, part of what colleges signal by looking with favor on certain developed capacities is that they believe those capacities are worth developing. Having a language requirement puts pressure on parents and schools to foster programs that teach children second or third languages. Sports can develop teamwork and grit; you have to spend all those hours in practice doing things that are not intrinsically very rewarding, and life is full of challenges that require just that. Model U.N. develops habits of thought and communication that are the mark of a responsible and effective citizen. As it turns out, feigning interest in something to gain advantage can turn into the cultivation of genuine skills.

None of this argues for misrepresenting yourself in an effort to game the system. You wonder whether someone who has a deeper attachment to linguistics — and who, presumably, would otherwise be a less attractive admissions candidate than you — might be displaced by your deception. That strikes me as a rather remote possibility. The basic question here isn't so much what you owe the process or your fellow applicants; it's what you owe yourself. Very politely, you say that lying is an activity that "some people might consider to be wrong on the face of it." It's obvious that you're among them; that's why you're so unhappy about what you're contemplating. The honest thing to do

is to report your strengths in linguistics and to be candid about your current interests, while acknowledging that you may change your mind later.

In fact, you should be prepared for the painful possibility that — once you discover how rewarding college-level linguistics can be — you might actually want to major in the subject. Rather like somebody gently letting down a suitor, you're saying that you love it but you're not in love with it. I'm not convinced that you know enough about the wildly various work that's currently going on in the field to judge whether it will get its hooks into you. No shame in that. You're hearing from someone who went to university to study medicine and ended up writing a dissertation in semantics. One critical thing we can learn in higher education is what it is we most want to learn.

Not long ago, my daughter-in-law, sister, cousin and I were waiting for a table in a family-style restaurant, close to the exit. A middle-aged man had been eyeing my daughter-in-law. On his way out, he paused as he passed us, and said to her, "With all due respect, you are very attractive." Feeling both protective and offended, I said to him, "That is wholly inappropriate, sir."

My cousin snapped at me that it was only a compliment. My sister got mad at me for upsetting my cousin. My daughter-in-law appreciated my reaction but said that she has had "way creepier men say way creepier things to

her." I responded to them all that a stranger has no business commenting on the looks of a person, good or bad, and that this man would never have said a word if any man had been standing with us. Who is right? — Name Withheld

IN OUR SOCIETY, it was once thought gallant for men to remark on the appearance of women they found attractive. That custom reflected sexist ideas about the relations between women and men. It presupposed, for example, that women should care about whether male strangers, in whom they have displayed no interest, found them attractive, and be pleased when they did.

There are obviously social contexts in which flirtation is generally considered appropriate — e.g., at a singles bar or a college "mixer" to stick to the meat-space world. But in ordinary settings? It's now widely understood that expressions of sexual interest are something you work up to only if the other party has given you reason to suppose that they might be appreciated. In such settings, invoking someone's attractiveness, as an opening remark to a complete stranger, is discourteous and wrong.

The middle-aged fellow of your story evidently had some awareness of this. We typically say "with all due respect" in contexts where what we are saying would otherwise be presumed to be disrespectful. Your telling him off created a moment of embarrassment for him that might lead him to reflect on whether he ought to do this sort of thing again. If what you said embarrassed your cousin, too, this may be because she still inhabits the world in which such remarks are considered a gift, not an imposition. And though your daughter-in-law responded gamely to the incident, she was setting a low bar with her reference to the "creepier things" she'd heard. The way to reduce such remarks is to make it clear when they're unwelcome.

Kwame Anthony Appiah teaches philosophy at N.Y.U. His books include "Cosmopolitanism," "The Honor Code" and "The Lies That Bind: Rethinking Identity."

TRAVEL

WEEKEND

A vanguard of culture and dreams

New parks and expanded arts offerings add to city's time-tested tourist charms

36 Hours in ... San Francisco

BY FREDA MOON

Built on a gold rush, San Francisco has an outsize place in the popular imagination. A small, glittering city at the edge of the Pacific, this micro metropolis of 800,000 has always been a vanguard, a place where culture and industry happen first and growth happens furiously. In recent years, the city has taken a reputational hit for its post-pandemic challenges. But San Francisco is as beautiful as ever, developing more enticing public parks and green spaces, creating entire neighborhoods from whole cloth, and expanding arts institutions — including the new Institute of Contemporary Art San Francisco, which moved to a significantly larger space downtown in October.

FRIDAY

3:30 P.M. | VIEW THE GOLDEN GATE
Fisherman's Wharf is San Francisco's most unabashed tourist trap, but the area's Pier 45 is worth a visit for the near-century-old Musée Mécanique (free admission, coin-operated machines), a collection of antique arcade games, amusement park artifacts and mechanical musical instruments. Then walk west toward the Golden Gate Bridge, popping into the San Francisco Maritime National Historic Park Visitor Center on the ground floor of the swanky Argonaut Hotel. This free museum offers a surprisingly in-depth and nuanced history of the city's working waterfront. Afterward, stroll to Aquatic Park, where swimmers brave the frigid San Francisco Bay and the park's bathhouse, now the Maritime Museum (free). Take in its striking Streamline Moderne Art Deco exterior, even if you don't make its 4 p.m. closing time.

6 P.M. | SLURP UP CIOPPINO

Stop into the only-in-San Francisco Long Now futurist society at the lively Fort Mason Center for Arts & Culture. Part cocktail bar, part science-centric museum to the future, the Interval at Long Now has an eight-foot-tall orrery (a mechanical model of the solar system, the equivalent of nearly 2.5 meters tall), artwork by the musician Brian Eno and bottles of spirits hanging from the ceiling. Then, for novelty's sake, hop a Waymo — the self-driving taxis that are, for now, operating in only four U.S. cities — over some of the city's steepest hills to the Castro District. Put your name on the list at Anchor Oyster Bar (no reservations, open until 8 p.m.), a 47-year-old seafood institution (you can have a glass of wine at Swirl, across the street, while you wait). Anchor's rendition of cioppino, the Italian immigrant fisherman's stew that is one of the city's classic dishes, comes in two sizes, large and larger (\$55 and \$75), complete with bibs.

8 P.M. | TAKE A CLASSY BAR CRAWL

Take MUNI along Market Street and walk to Lower Nob Hill's Propagation, an exceedingly welcoming, queer-owned cocktail bar that feels like stepping into a lush, Neverland jungle with plants looming overhead. Then take in some live jazz at the Dawn Club (the original club of the same name operated here in the 1930s and '40s). No door fee. For a nightcap, take the elevator to the 21st floor of the historic Beacon Grand hotel for sky-high cocktails with a 360-degree view. Overlooking Union Square, the Starlite — the reincarnation of a locally loved historic bar that opened in 1928 and closed during the pandemic — reopened in February, serving showy cocktails like the Cable Car Redux (\$22), which is served with forest-dried dry ice as a tribute to Muir Woods and the city's unofficial mascot, "Karl the Fog."

SATURDAY

9:30 A.M. | DO THE WIGGLE

Unlock a Bay Wheels bike (\$4 for 30 minutes, day pass \$15) to cruise the Wiggle, a bike route that winds around (instead of over) many of San Francisco's famous hills. Head through Golden Gate Park, the city's 1,000-acre (400-hectare) central park, to cut north at Park Presidio Boulevard to reach Breadbelly, an Asian American bakery founded by alumni of the three-Michelin-starred restaurant Atelier Crenn, which has attracted devotees since its days as a pop-up. Pick up the kaya toast (milk bread with coconut-pandan jam, \$10) or an egg-salad sandwich with Japanese mustard greens, panko-fried summer squash, curry mustard and yuzu chile seasoning on a subtly sweet Filipino bread roll, for \$15.25. Order ahead online to avoid a wait.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY JIM WILSON/THE NEW YORK TIMES



10 A.M. | GO COASTAL

After riding west to Lincoln Park, stroll to the Legion of Honor, a 100-year-old fine art museum within the park that's a replica of the Palais de la Légion d'Honneur in Paris. Eat your picnic on the lawn beneath the bronze statue of El Cid, the medieval Spanish knight. Then walk the Lands End Coastal Trail, one of the country's most spectacular urban hikes, along the rugged cliffs from Eagle Point (at Camino del Mar) to Point Lobos, named by the Spanish for the "sea wolves" (sea lions) that occupy its rocks, to the Sutro Baths, a former public swimming complex. Retrieve another bike and cruise downhill to the white sand Ocean Beach and the Great Highway, a two-mile oceanfront promenade that is pedestrian-only on weekends. Ride back through the car-free roads of Golden Gate Park from its western edge, passing windmills, a newly rehabilitated lake, the park's famous bison, and Hippie Hill and Spreckels Lake, where model boats ply the waters.

12:30 P.M. | RAMBLE THE RICHMOND

From the park's northeastern edge, take the Arguello Boulevard bike lane back up to the Richmond District's Clement Street, a bustling strip of Asian supermarkets, aquarium shops, Irish bars and art house theaters. Stop into Fleetwood, a screen-printing studio and a shop selling all things San Francisco: black-sesame shortcake from Mojo Bakes, California poppy-decaled wine-glasses and hyper-local neighborhood T-shirts. The Richmond has arguably San Francisco's most exciting, varied and affordable food scene, which includes a half-dozen quality dim sum options and the passion projects of awarded chefs (Brandon Jew's Mamahuhu, a Chinese American fast-casual restaurant, is worth a visit for its soft-serve sundaes alone). Stop at Lou's Cafe for a sandwich for the road. The Risky Business (\$13.85) includes hot pastrami, crab salad and a special sauce on the only bread more quintessentially San Francisco than sourdough, a crusty Dutch crunch roll.

2 P.M. | HIT A MUSEUM TWOFER

Dip into the park one last time to visit the California Academy of Sciences (admission \$43 adults, \$34 children), one of the country's most innovative natural history museums, which has had many iterations in its 171-year history. Visit Claude the albino alligator and gaze at octopuses and colorful clown fish at the



Steinhart Aquarium, and wind your way through a tropical rainforest in the Academy's four-story biosphere. Among the newest CAS exhibits is a Shake House that allows visitors to experience a shake equivalent to San Francisco's two most recent major quakes. Then walk across the grassy concourse to the de Young Museum's 144-foot Hamon Observation Tower for sweeping views and to take advantage of the fine art museum's free admission the last 45 minutes of each day, beginning at 4:30 p.m. (permanent collection only).

5:30 P.M. | STROLL IN THE MISSION

For an eclectic mix of shops and galleries, stroll Valencia Street in the Mission District. Start at the hole-in-the-wall Luna Rienne Gallery (closes at 6 p.m.), a neighborhood mainstay since the 1990s. Drop into the graphic novel and comic shop Silver Sprocket, which specializes in socially progressive and queer works, and books readings and events like figure drawing and patch-making classes. For oddities of life and death, visit Paxton Gate, where you'll find miscellaneous fossils and mineral stones, butterfly wings in a jar (\$25), creative taxidermy, unusual jewelry and a chandelier of human bones (\$3,200).

6:30 P.M. | GO BIG ON A BURRITO

There are entire screeds devoted to assessing where to find the best Mission burrito, the aluminum-wrapped, loaf-size San Francisco staple that got its name from the district that popularized it. Let La Taqueria's burritos (from about \$11) be your introduction to the genre. Layered, saucy and without the filler of rice, they are smaller than some found at other popular neighborhood spots. The carnitas are especially revered. Take yours to go and head one stop north on BART to Standard Deviant, a friendly neighborhood brew pub that allows outside food. Wash it down with a cream ale brewed with horchata, the spiced Mexican rice drink, or a crisp Kolsch, a German ale. Enjoy a game of shuffleboard, hop in the photo booth for a souvenir, and check out the offbeat portraits of the brewmasters.

8 P.M. | LOVE THE NIGHTLIFE

The Mission is San Francisco's most happening nightlife district. For dessert, reserve a courtyard table at Foreign Cinema, a restaurant with a Mediterranean-influenced menu and a film screening nightly. Try the Fuji apple and



huckleberry galette with frangipane and lavender ice cream (\$13) or an affogato with chocolate-pistachio biscotti (\$12.50). Then head to Horsies Saloon, a narrow vermouth bar that's like walking into the apartment of your cool, maximalist uncle. Every surface is adorned with knickknacks, retro décor, crocheted blankets and Tiffany-style lamps. When the piano isn't being played, vinyl records match the 1970s vibe.

SUNDAY

9:30 A.M. | ENJOY JAPANTOWN

Japantown, the country's oldest Japanese immigrant community, doesn't get as much attention as San Francisco's historic Chinatown or the Italian North Beach. It was nearly eradicated by the Japanese internment during World War II but is undergoing a revitalization that includes renovating the 1968 Peace Pagoda. Pick up a pastry and a coffee at Jina Bakes to hold you over to brunch. Try the kalbijim croissant (with Korean spicy braised short ribs from nearby Daeho restaurant, \$8) or a matcha, hojicha (roasted green tea) or black sesame-crusted cream puff (\$5). Japan Center Malls — home to elegant housewares and ceramics shops, conveyor-belt sushi restaurants, bonsai nurseries, and Japanese bookstores — is bustling on weekends, when people come to eat, shop and take origami workshops at Paper Tree.

11:30 A.M. | PLAY IN THE PRESIDIO

The Presidio, a military post for more than 200 years until the 1990s, is today one of the city's most inviting neighborhoods and green spaces. Reserve a table at the Turkish-influenced restaurant Dalida. The wide porch, overlooking the Presidio's parade ground, has views of the bay and Alcatraz Island. Its brunch menu is built around a soft and balloon-like "chubby pita," seasoned yogurt and flavorful sauces for sopping. Then visit the Presidio's new park, the Presidio Tunnel Tops, which has immaculate lawns, picnic areas and a nature-centric playground of repurposed eucalyptus trunks, metal, sand and water.

1 P.M. | SEE THE CITY FROM THE BAY

Take the free Presidio Go Shuttle to the Embarcadero to browse the Ferry Building Marketplace for mementos like a Chez Panisse mug or artisanal knives and tableware. Take the Treasure Island Ferry (\$10 round trip, children under 5 free) to Treasure Island, a

Clockwise from above: Presidio Tunnel Tops park; an origami dragon made at Paper Tree; Horsies Saloon; and cioppino at Anchor Oyster Bar.

KEY STOPS

The Great Highway is now closed to cars on weekends, making it a beachfront promenade devoted to pedestrians and cyclists.

Visit the Presidio, a national park and historic military base, and its new Tunnel Tops park, with spectacular views of the Golden Gate Bridge and San Francisco Bay.

WHERE TO EAT

Anchor Oyster Bar serves some of San Francisco's best cioppino (a fisherman's stew).

Breadbelly offers creative Asian American cafe food.

Lou's Cafe has a long, varied menu of only-in-San Francisco sandwiches, perfect for a Golden Gate Park picnic.

Mamahuhu is a fast-casual Chinese American restaurant by the award-winning chef Brandon Jew.

Standard Deviant is a welcoming neighborhood brew pub.

Foreign Cinema's atmospheric patio is a romantic setting for a dessert and an espresso.

Japantown's **Jina Bakes** serves Japanese-inspired riffs on cream puffs and croissants.

Dalida serves a beautiful Turkish-inspired brunch with bay views.

The Interval at Long Now is part cocktail bar, part science-centric museum to the future.

Propagation's lush interior is an unpretentious escape, offering excellent drinks.

Dawn Club is a retro jazz club on the site of a historic venue of the same name.

Horsies Saloon is a tiny, out-of-the-way vermouth bar with artful, eccentric décor.

WHERE TO STAY

On the Embarcadero, **1 Hotel San Francisco** has views of the Bay Bridge and Ferry Building. Rooms start in the low \$400s.

Beacon Grand, formerly the Sir Francis Drake, reopened in 2022 with a new name and an extensive remodel. Its location overlooking Union Square, along with its elegant bar, the Starlite, and whiskey lounge, the Hidden Library, evoke the hotel's glamorous history. Rooms start at \$185.

The boutique **Hotel Castro** in the Castro — the city's historic gay neighborhood — has 12 rooms (starting at about \$150) in a modern, art-filled building.

former naval base being redeveloped as the city's newest neighborhood. There, enjoy live music (weekends, noon to 3 p.m.) and pitchers of mimosas and Bloody Marys (from \$41) at the restaurant and bar Mersea. Or stroll to Yerba Buena Island and ascend the path to Panorama Park, where Hiroshi Sugimoto's "Point of Infinity," a gleaming 69-foot spire, reaches skyward and the views are unbeatable.