Community

Millennials, gig economy workers and corporate high-flyers are all suffering from burnout.

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Official opening of B-lounge brings music, entertainment and fusion cuisine for people in Qatar.

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Netflix and the streaming wars

The company faces an existential challenge from a new crop of rivals determined to beat it at its own game.

Next month, Apple and Disney will launch their streaming platforms, followed by WarnerMedia and NBCUniversal next year, writes Wendy Lee

At a downtown coffee shop in 1997, Marc Randolph and Reed Hastings wondered: Could you mail a DVD and have it arrive unbroken?

To test the idea, the friends dropped off a disc at the post office across the street and mailed it to Reed’s home nearby. To their surprise, the disc arrived undamaged, an experiment that soon led to the birth of a scrappy start-up now known as Netflix.

Netflix, a name that combines the Internet and movies, was once such an improbable idea that Randolph’s wife thought, “that will never work,” inspiring the title of his recently released book.

The company not only worked, it worked beyond their wildest dreams. It would eventually revolutionise TV, herald the era of binge-watching and upend Hollywood’s long-established order.

Netflix poured vast sums into original TV series and films and became the undisputed king of streaming, with more than 151 million subscribers

“Life is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated.”

– Confucius

Quote Unquote
in nearly 200 countries. Now the Los Gatos company faces an existential challenge from a new crop of rivals who are determined to beat it at its own game. Next month, Apple and Disney will launch their streaming platforms, followed by WarnerMedia and NBCUniversal next year.

Investors have grown skittish about the looming competition. Netflix shares, which closed last Tuesday at $270.72, have fallen nearly 30% since the company reported that it lost 126,000 subscribers in the US during the second quarter, its biggest decline since 2011. While revenue rose 26% to $4.9 billion the second quarter compared with a year ago, net income dropped 30% to $270.65 million during the same period, according to a filing.

Netflix's domestic business is slowing at a time when legacy media companies are determined to seize control of lucrative shows that have helped fuel Netflix's success and lure subscribers to their own services.

"Netflix is in a much more difficult situation than it's ever been," said Rahm Eliey, president of the Convergence Research Group, a Victoria, BC, firm that tracks the streaming industry. "It's a lot more competitive. It's choppier waters." Though few think Netflix will relinquish its dominance, its market share is expected to decrease sharply in the US last year. Netflix took in 47% of subscription revenues for streaming platforms in the US, according to the Convergence Research Group. In 2022, Netflix's market share will decline to 34%, Convergence said.

To be sure, Netflix has faced challenges before, first with the transition from mail-order—delivery to streaming in 2007, and later its successful foray into original programming with such hits as Orange Is the New Black and House of Cards.

"We have to continue to do what we've been doing, which is make the best content and deliver it seamlessly," Ted Sarandos, Netflix's chief content officer, said in an interview from the company's Los Angeles offices. Speaking of all the coming rivals, he said: "I think the bigger you are, the more distractions you have to your core business, the more likely you can't move as quickly as we've been able to through our history. The new set of competitors is actually just the old set of competitors."

One of the biggest hurdles facing Netflix is that it's going to lose some of its most popular programmes starting next year, analysts say. Its top two most-watched titles in the US in 2018, Friends and The Office, will leave to go to competing streaming services, according to Nielsen, which tracks ratings and viewership. Marvel and Pixar movies will also disappear from Netflix for a period of time. Netflix originals took up just roughly 30% of the time adult subscribers spend on Netflix, according to Nielsen data from October 2018. Analysts will be closely watching to see how consumers react when they realise shows and movies they were used to seeing on Netflix are no longer part of its library.

Sarandos said Netflix originals are more profitable than acquired shows when examined per season and that Netflix will continue its diverse programming strategy, which includes unscripted feel-good programmes like Queer Eye, sitcoms such as The Ranch and acclaimed mini-series such as Unbelievable.

"Basically our goal is we're trying to make your favourite show," Sarandos said. "For some people, it's that high pedigree, Emmy-winning, well-reviewed show and other people just want to relax and watch something." But as studios reclaim shows when examined per season, Netflix will have to spend even more money on original programmes like Ozark and Stranger Things to fill the gap — and keep subscribers coming.

Netflix's spending on content is projected to climb to $35 billion in 2025, up from an estimated $16 billion this year, according to Pivotal Research Group. The additional spending on new and licensed programming could add to the company's debt load.

The company reported long-term debt of $12.6 billion in the second quarter, up 5% from the same period a year ago. Its overall streaming content obligations — which includes amounts related to the acquisition and licensing of streaming content — totalled about $10 billion as of December 31, according to a regulatory filing.

In the past, Netflix has been able to raise subscription prices to offset its rising investments in programming, but that option will be tougher because rivals will offer their streaming services at lower prices. Apple TV+ will start at $4.99 a month ($8 cheaper than Netflix's basic plan). Disney+ will offer a basic plan for $6.99 a month and a bundle package with ESPN+ and Hulu for $12.99 a month. Netflix's standard plan is $12.99 a month.

"There has been pressure on Netflix and its financial model for years," Eliey said. "New players in the market only increase that pressure."

Sarandos said that the company's spending on content is sustainable given its revenue growth and that Netflix will remain competitive by offering something for everyone.

"The test is, 'are you getting enough value for the money?'" Sarandos said. "That's a question that consumers have to answer."

Netflix also has an advantage in the bidding war because video streaming is its core business, unlike rivals such as Apple and Amazon. Some of Netflix's competitors could back down if shows become too expensive, said Jeff Wlodarczak, a principal and senior analyst at Pivotal Research Group.

"There are few companies in the world that are going to be able to spend at these levels long term," Wlodarczak said.

Known for the creative freedom it offers, Netflix continues to lure big-name talent, signing lucrative production deals with writers including Ryan Murphy, Shonda Rhimes, as well as DB Weiss and David Benioff, the showrunners behind HBO fantasy series Game of Thrones.

The streaming giant also has landed projects with critically acclaimed filmmakers such as Alfonso Cuaron, (whose film Roma won three Academy Awards), Guillermo del Toro and Martin Scorsese, whose much-anticipated gangster film The Irishman debuts in November. It's one of some eight Netflix movies that will debut later this year.

Major theatre chains have refused to screen The Irishman in protest over Netflix's strategy of showing films on its platform on the same day — or shortly after — they appear in cinemas.

"You lose more than the cost of the movie ticket, you get a month of Netflix," Sarandos said. "At the end of the day filmmakers want their films to be seen, their work to be out there in the culture and that happens on Netflix better than anywhere in the world."

As the race for consumers intensifies, Netflix will look to grow its subscribers abroad in Brazil, India and South Korea and other international markets.

One area Netflix is investing in is animation, which can be easier to dub into different languages such as Hindi. Netflix launched its first original animated kids shows in India in April called Mighty Little Bheem as part of an expansion in the vast market. In India, the company recently launched a cheaper $3 monthly plan for people who only watch Netflix on their mobile devices.

Then there is the push into interactive series that can track subscriber choices on shows. Last year, Netflix distributed a Black Mirror film, Bandersnatch, that allowed viewers to select what the main character should do from a list of choices on their screens.

Netflix has accumulated a massive amount of data on what people like to watch and when. The information dates back to 1998, when Netflix launched an online store for DVDs.

"They know more about their subscribers than anybody else," said Aswath Damodaran, a finance professor at New York University's Stern School of Business. "They need to figure out a way and take that information from their subscriber base and be more focused." — Los Angeles Times/TNS
Is too much work the real cause of burnout?

Millennials, gig economy workers and corporate high-fliers are all suffering from burnout, but mounting overtime is not the only culprit, writes Johanna Leggatt

Carolyn King reached a crossroads moment in her life, ironically, while negotiating a roundabout on the way to work. She loved her job, but had always been able to push through the Sunday night dread to turn up on time. Yet on this particular Monday morning, almost two years ago, King couldn’t exit the roundabout.

“I was like I was possessed, my body was telling me not to go to work,” she says. “Instead, I turned around and drove to my GP. ”

King was burned out. Her job of 17 years at an international manufacturing company, where she managed their accounts, office and IT, was sapping the life out of her, largely due to a “micromanaging boss”.

“I was very emotional, teary and agitated at work; I had a short fuse,” she says.

“It really hit home to me when someone said to me, ‘You know, you’re such a different person outside of work to who you are at work.’”

King, who is based in Victoria, quit the role almost two years ago and now runs her own small business.

But the effects lingered.

“Even three months after I quit, I found myself thinking, ‘I hate Sundays’, then I realised, ‘No, I being ‘on’ even when you’re not actually at work.”

An unrelenting workload was also similar to Australia’s colonial antecedents.

In 1856, Melbourne stonemasons marched to Parliament House to demand an eight-hour day, marking the beginning of a series of progressive labour laws that enshrined workers’ rights to clock off at a reasonable time.

While these protections have been preserved to varying degrees in contemporary workplace agreements, many employees are nevertheless working 10th-century hours at the expense of their mental and physical wellbeing.

“These days, the people who get paid the most are those who are working the most hours,” says Michael Leiter, a professor of industrial and organisational psychology at Victoria’s Deakin University.

“It used to be those who worked the most hours were low-paid people trying to make a living.”

In a sign of growing concern over the increased incidence of workplace burnout, the World Health Organisation recently added burnout to a list of occupational phenomenons, although it stopped short of labelling it a disease.

WHO defines burnout as being characterised by exhaustion, cynicism or detachment from one’s job, and reduced professional efficacy at work.

This chimes with King, who used to love her job and got on well with her previous manager.

“But the new manager made me feel so devalued and like my opinion didn’t matter, even though I had seen the company grow over many years,” she says.

Leiter has been studying workplace burnout since the 1980s, and says the global nature of the business world has chipped away at employees’ rights to clock off at a reasonable time.

While burnout is “more intense” in the US, owing to precarious healthcare and higher levels of student debt, Australians are suffering too, he says.

“There are definitely some people in Australia who are working their allotted hours and then they go home,” Leiter says.

“However I think there is a significant slice in Australia, on the low and high wage-end of the scale, who are working ridiculous hours.”

As Leiter points out, burnout seems to affect those earning at the extremes of the spectrum: commercial lawyers working 100 hours a week as well as underemployed gig economy workers who struggle to earn a minimum wage ferrying delivery food to the same corporate lawyers too busy to cook.

“The gig economy is totally hostile to a unionised framework, and then at the higher end of the pay scale if you want to compete globally, you have to scramble all the time,” Leiter says.

Which speaks to one of the common features of burnout: an overwhelming sense that your work life, your career, is out of your control.

A recent study by researchers from Montreuil University tracking 2,026 people – half of whom were women – for four years, found that women were more likely to burn out because they had less authority or control over their work than men.

“Whether someone has input into important decisions that affect their work is a major factor (in burnout),” Leiter says.

“People have a real need for that autonomy. And by autonomy I don’t mean, ‘I can do whatever I like,’ it’s about that feeling of making something happen as opposed to being acted upon.”

This was certainly the case for King, who felt worn down by a toxic work environment.

“When my manager wanted something done, he wanted it done straight away,” she says.

“If I wanted to put in a new procedure, he wouldn’t allow it and always wanted it his way even if it wasn’t the best.”

Taylor has worked with scores of corporates to help build resilience in stressful situations and says both men and women, senior or junior, can feel they lack control.

“I know a lot of high-ranking executives who say they feel they have no control over what the board is doing,” Taylor says.

If your workplace is not allowing workers any freedom whatsoever, then maybe it’s time...
BOD Y & M I N D

WAYS TO GET A BETTER BEDTIME ROUTINE

Amy Sedghi

Getting to sleep can be a struggle, but blackout blinds and to-do lists can help – as can reserving the bedroom for shut-eye.

1. Go to bed at regular times
Going to sleep and waking up at regular times – even on weekends – will strengthen your body clock, says Dr Linzie Hill, a clinical sleep physiologist and a spokeswoman for the British Sleep Society. Regular meal times are also an important cue for your circadian rhythm. Avoid exercise too close to bedtime, as it can cause restlessness and an elevated body temperature, says Samantha Briscoe, a senior physiologist at the Sleep Centre at London Bridge hospital.

2. Protect the bedroom
Preserve the bedroom as a place for sleep there is evidence that the brain forms a strong association with sleep there. A temperature of 16-18°C (60-64°F) is thought to be ideal for most, according to the Sleep Council, an awareness and support organisation. Blackout blinds or an eye mask can help block out light, while keeping electronic devices out of the bedroom is highly recommended. If you struggle to fall asleep after more than 25 minutes, Matthew Walker – a sleep expert and a professor of neuroscience and psychology at the University of California, Berkeley – suggests getting up and going to read under a dim light in another room. Once sleepy, you can return to bed.

3. Get ahead on the next day
Your night-time routine is an opportunity to make mornings run a little smoother: choose your clothes for the next day when you reach for your pyjamas or pack your bag while brushing your teeth. Martin Hagger, a professor of health psychology at the University of California, Merced, has stressed how routines are linked to the formation of healthy habits.

4. Wind down
Reading a book can help slow breathing and relax muscles, while yoga stretches or even a gentle walk can reduce anxiety, says Briscoe. A warm bath or shower can also help you relax: researchers at the University of Texas at Austin found that bathing in water of 40-42.5°C one to two hours before bedtime was associated with better sleep.

5. Write down your worries
“If your mind is buzzing from the day, try keeping a journal or worry book,” suggests Hill. The NHS also recommends writing to-do lists for the next day in order to organise thoughts and clear the mind. “If you experience difficulty with sleep over the longer term, consider whether there may be an underlying medical condition,” says Hill. A sleep diary could help you identify any patterns.

RECOMMENDATION: Blackout blinds or an eye mask can help block out light, while keeping electronic devices out of the bedroom is highly recommended.

THERE IS NO AGE FOR EXERCISE WHEN IT COMES TO HEART

Regular exercise is highly beneficial for all patients with cardiovascular disease regardless of age, a new study has said, adding that patients who benefited most from cardiac rehabilitation were those who started out with the greatest physical impairment.

Ageing is associated with several factors such as increased inflammation or oxidative stress that predispose people to cardiovascular diseases.

“As a result, elderly patients are usually less fit than their younger counterparts, and deconditioning is accelerated once cardiovascular disease is established,” explained lead investigator Gaelle Deley from University of Burgundy Franche-Comté in France.

However, there is few data available about the impact of patient age on the physical and psychological effectiveness of cardiac rehabilitation, said the study published in the Canadian Journal of Cardiology.

In the new study, investigators examined 733 patients who completed a 25-session cardiac rehabilitation programme.

Following the intervention, all patients experienced improvements.

“We found a few weeks of exercise training not only significantly improved exercise capacity, but also decreased anxiety and depression. Patients with the greatest physical impairments at baseline benefited the most from exercise,” said Dr Deley.

Another interesting result was that patients younger than 65 who were very anxious before rehabilitation benefited the most from exercise training.

A similar result was found for depressed patients older than 65.

Cardiovascular diseases are the main cause of death globally. While cardiovascular diseases increasingly affect young people, the number of people above the age of 65 years, and even more above the age of 80 years, dying from cardiovascular diseases is also increasing. – IANS

AT RISK: Women are more likely to burn out because they have less authority or control over their work.

Ways to get a better bedtime routine

It appears to be no different in Australia, with a stress and wellbeing survey conducted by the Australian Psychological Society finding those aged 18 to 23 consistently report lower levels of wellbeing.

“It’s a vulnerable time for burnout when you first start work as you’ve usually come from university or some form of training, which is more idealistic,” Leiter says.

“There is a conflict between the reality and the idealistic vision of work.”

The tech-heavy aspect of much of modern work is not helpful for millennials either, according to Leiter.

“When information technology opens access to resources that further a person’s work, it also opens users to distractions and to administrative busy work that will hurt their productivity in the long run,” he says.

King’s view, far too many of us have merged our identities with what we do for a living. “I honestly think a lot of people are lost and work is feeding people’s self-worth,” she says. “After all, you don’t have time to realise you’re unhappy if you’re working all the time.”

– The Guardian

There is no age for exercise when it comes to heart

Ways to get a better bedtime routine

It may not be easy and it may take a while, but starting the process of looking is part of taking some control back,” he says.

How invested employees feel in their work can also be the difference between exhilaration and exhaustion. “Within reason, doing work that really matters does not burn people out as quickly and, in fact, if often energises them,” Leiter says.

And the problem, according to Leiter, is that many people are pulled away from work they enjoy to perform soul-crushing administrative tasks. “Technology gets a bad rap, but the problem with technology is that it allows employers to impose all kinds of administrative nonsense, such as compliance training, filling out forms, online time sheets,” he says.

“This meaningless work exhausts people, and it makes them more cynical.”

Leiter notes that millennials are more likely to feel the effects of burnout compared with other demographics, with a viral Buzzfeed article, “How millennials became the burned generation”, capturing the mental load many young Americans feel.

There is no age for exercise when it comes to heart

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Being a chef I think about food all the time and fall season colours remind me about pumpkin. I was never a pumpkin fan but after I tried it myself to make a variety of dishes I fell in love with it and every year I try new recipes. Today I will tell you about this wonder fruit which is considered a vegetable by most. There is a whole world of history about this great orange globe and it is so much richer than your favourite pumpkin latte.

Pumpkin, squash and gourd are all the members of cucurbitaceae family which has almost 700 species. They have been providing mankind with so many delicious options in various forms.

The great pumpkin to pumpkin pie, to pumpkin spice lattes, to the pumpkin soups, to the puddings, the pumpkin is an icon for the fall season and arrival of winters. The pumpkin was one of the first wild plants cultivated for human consumption in America, making it an extremely important part of the culinary history. Because of their thick and solid flesh, pumpkins could easily be stored throughout the winter and even last times of scarcity.

These pumpkin cookies are blended with warm autumn spices, like cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg and cloves, they have a cake like texture with a bit of crunch from the raw sugar.

Cakey pumpkin cookies, a must for fall baking

Ingredients
- Unsalted butter, softened 1 cup
- Dark brown sugar 2/3 cup
- Castor sugar 1/3 cup
- Eggs 1 no.
- Vanilla extract 1 tsp
- Pumpkin puree 250 gm
- All-purpose flour 2 cups
- Cinnamon powder 1 1/2 tsp
- Nutmeg powder 1/3 tsp
- Clove powder 1/3 tsp
- Baking soda 1 tsp
- Salt 1/2 tsp
- Baking powder 1/4 tsp
- Walnuts 1 cup

For Icing
- Unsalted butter 1/4 cup
- Cream cheese, softened 120 gm
- Icing sugar 2 cups
- Vanilla extract 1 1/2 tsp

Method:
1. Preheat the oven at 180 degrees Celsius.
2. In a large mixing bowl cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
3. Add egg and vanilla extract, add pumpkin puree and mix well.
4. Combine the flour, cinnamon, baking soda, clove powder, nutmeg powder, salt and baking powder and gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well and stir in walnuts.
5. On a greased baking sheet drop the mixture using a tablespoon, keep the mixture 2 inches apart from each other.
6. Bake for 8-10 minutes or until the edges are lightly brown.
7. Allow the cookies to cool down and keep aside.
8. In a small bowl, beat all the frosting ingredients until light and fluffy.
9. Fill the prepared frosting in piping bag and frost the cookies.
10. Store in an airtight container in refrigerator and serve as required.

Note: To soften the cream cheese, keep it at room temperature for about an hour. Dark brown sugar contains molasses, if you prefer darker bonder flavors choose dark brown sugar instead of the light brown sugar.

Chef's Special

Tarun Kapoor
Culinary Mastermind, USA. He may be contacted at tarunkapoor83@gmail.com
CFQ felicitates Indian Athletics Team

Cultural Forum Qatar (CFQ), a socio-cultural organisation under the ages of Indian Cultural Centre, recently organised an event to felicitate Indian Athletics Team that was in Qatar to participate in the IAAF World Athletic Championship. Suhail Santhapuram, Acting President of CFQ, presided over the event. The event was attended by notable personalities, including Radhakrishanan, Deputy Chief Coach of Indian Team; P T Usha, Co-ordinator of Women Athletes; Yousuf P Hameed, General Manager of Islamic Exchange; Nabeel Shareef, Business Communication Trading and Contracting Company; Shashidhara Panicker, Vice President of CFQ; and Ifriq, CFQ committee members, including Shiyas Kottaram, Thaiseen Ameen, Sajna zakki, Ameen Annara, Sharafudeen also attended the event. Thaseen Ameen, CFQ Sports Convener, welcomed the gathering and Majeed Ali proposed a vote of thanks.

PISQ organises Science – Art Exhibition

The Primary Wing of Pakistan International School Qatar recently organised a Science – Art Exhibition. The students of Grade I-IV took part in the exhibition. The students presented a variety of innovative models, including Solar System, wind mill, quiz board, water wheel, candy machine, earth quake alarm, hydraulic lift, dispenser and popcorn machine. The students actively participated in the exhibition by demonstrating various experiments and also by role playing some of the renowned Muslim scientists.

The exhibition was inaugurated by Nargis Raza Otho, Principal of PISQ. Speaking on the occasion, she appreciated the talent of students and praised them for their work. The art exhibition provided a platform to the young artists to showcase their creativity by displaying their artwork and projects.

DPS-MIS marks 150th birth anniversary of Gandhi

DPS-Modern Indian School (DPS-MIS) recently marked the 150th birth anniversary of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, an Indian lawyer, anti-colonial nationalist and political ethicist, with a series of activities, aimed at reinforcing cardinal Gandhian virtues among the young generation to inspire them to become committed and responsible leaders of tomorrow.

The celebrations kicked off with a prayer, which was followed by special class assemblies, story narration, audio visual presentations and screening of films. Collage making activity was organised for the students of Nursery Wing. A cleanliness drive under ‘Swachh Bharat Swasth Bharat Abhiyaan’ was also organised as part of the celebrations to explain the importance of cleanliness and hygiene, and to educate the students about community service programmes.

A painting and colouring activity engaged for the students of Preparatory Grade till Grade X was also part of the celebrations. The students of Grade III-V put together an exhibition featuring the drawings of Mahatma Gandhi, his journey of life through pictures, his inspirational quotes, pictures and models of books written by Gandhi. The exhibition was attended by notable personalities, including Hassan Chougule, President of DPS-MIS, along with other executive committee members.
Where time gets lost at work (and how to avoid it)

You have:

24 hours a day

1 440 min a day

86 400 sec a day

Use them wisely!

89% of people have admitted that they waste time at work every day.

Most people actually use 60% or less of available work time.

This means we’re productive only 3 days out of 5 every week.

The top 5 of time-wasting activities at work

Email 43.5% Meetings 42.3% Browsing online 21.8% Commuting 17.4% Procrastination 10%

34 weekly business emails received on average ...

16 minutes spent refocusing after handling incoming email ...

4864 potentially wasted min

According to office workers, the number 1 time-waster at work is …

too many meetings

Executives waste 6 weeks per year searching for lost documents.

No wonder: 15% of all paper handled in businesses is lost.

Over 50% of leaders spend more time working with the team rather than personal projects.

An average person has 70 000 thoughts per day, that’s 49 per minute.
Where our time gets lost at work

- Lunch: 30 min
- Coffee breaks: 15 min
- Checking emails: 30 min (6 x 5 min)
- Social media and news: 1 h
- Team meetings: 1 h

= 3.15 h of time wasted

On average, we switch activities every 3 minutes.

It takes up to 25 minutes to return to the original task.

**DOs and DON’Ts of a productive workday**

**DON’T**
- Read emails right after receiving them
- Read daily news at work
- Attend inefficient team meetings
- Delay complicated tasks
- Work without a clear goal
- Set tasks without milestones
- Implement the entire task at once

**DO**
- Check email only 3 times per day
- Make airplane days (turn off internet connection)
- Set a clear agenda for each meeting
- Eat the frog (make the least pleasant task first)
- Use the Pareto Principle: focus on the 20% of tasks that return the most benefit
- Set short 60-90 minute deadlines for each task
- Break big tasks into smaller blocks

Most employees attend 62 meetings each month. They feel that more than half of that time is wasted.

**31 hours** spent at unproductive meetings every month.

Only **2.5%** of people can multitask without a decrease in performance.
V&A hosts Europe’s first major exhibition on kimono

Catwalk pieces and costumes from Memoirs of a Geisha and Star Wars will feature in show

By Jess Cartner-Morley

A rare 17th century treasure from Kyoto, the costume worn by Alec Guinness as Obi-Wan Kenobi in Star Wars and an haute couture gown designed by John Galliano for Christian Dior will be among the exhibits in Europe’s first major exhibition on the kimono, the ultimate symbol of Japan.

With catwalk pieces by Yves Saint Laurent and Rei Kawakubo, and costumes from the Oscar-winning film Memoirs of a Geisha as well as a cropped Jean Paul Gaultier kimono created for a Madonna video inspired by that film, curator Anna Jackson aims to “overturn the idea of the kimono as static, atrophied object and show it as a dynamic and constantly evolving icon of fashion”.

The story of the kimono traces Japanese society from the style-conscious celebrity culture of 19th century Japan in which kabuki actors and courtiers were, says Jackson, “the heartthrobs and fashion icons of the day” to its disappearance from daily life in postwar Japan, where it became a codified costume mothballed in nostalgia and unwrapped only for special occasions.

Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk, which opens at the V&A in February, aims to challenge the establishment tradition in which fashion from Paris and London has been considered art and accepted as a global rubric for taste, while garments from non-western countries have been regarded as exotic curios.

The kimono was at the centre of a cultural appropriation row earlier this year, when Kim Kardashian West renamed her shapewear brand from “Kimono” to “Skims” six days after the announcement of its launch. The riff on her name sparked accusations of insensitivity and cultural appropriation with the mayor of Kyoto, birthplace of the kimono, writing a critical open letter. Kardashian West has apologised for the offence caused, saying that she “had really innocent intentions”.

“Cultural appropriation is about who has the power to speak,” said Jackson at the exhibition launch. Jackson, wearing a kimono over a white shirt, said she had “considered the question of whether it is appropriate for me to wear this. It is perfectly appropriate on my colleagues who are Japanese, but on me – is it different from 19th century orientalism? This is an important issue. But there is a danger that being mindful of the reverence in which the kimono is held means that it gets stuck in the past, and that denies the impact it has had on global fashion and minimises its power to impact fashion in the future.”

The exhibition will explore the 21st century revival of the kimono among young people in Japan who are rejecting the industrialised trend system of western fashion and returning to a timeless mode of dress. Seventeenth century trade between Japan and the Netherlands led to a Dutch vogue for kimono, adapted to the northern European climate with warm padding. “There was already a tradition of robes in Europe – think of Holbein’s The Ambassadors – but suddenly you get all these rich, vibrant colours and everyone wants one” said Jackson. A 1678 portrait of Dutch aristocrat Anna Elisabeth van Reede will travel to the V&A for the exhibition, the first time it has left the ancestral castle for which it was painted. In Edwardian England, kimono became fashionable in artistic circles as a marker of bohemian taste.

With its straight seams and right-angled edges the kimono, unlike most western fashion, is cut to neither trace nor exaggerate the human form. It is because “the body is irrelevant” to the kimono, says Jackson, that it is traditionally displayed on a T-shaped frame, rather than a mannequin.

The impact of the kimono on western fashion has been explored in the book accompanying the exhibition by the director of the Kyoto Costume Institute, who examines how Japanese dress culture dramatically changed the course of Paris fashion.

Show exhibits will include a dress designed by Alexander McQueen for Björk, immortalised on the cover of her 1997 album Homogenic, and the iconic Star Wars Jedi costume which George Lucas, an admirer of the films of Akira Kurosawa, conceived as part Buddhist monk and part samurai. Milligan Beaumont, a young designer whose graduate collection of “kimono hoodies” was bought in its entirety and taken on a world stadium tour by Christina Aguilera, will also feature.

The impact of the kimono on western fashion has been explored in the book accompanying the exhibition by the director of the Kyoto Costume Institute, who examines how Japanese dress culture dramatically changed the course of Paris fashion.
Colour by choice

Maze
Help the toad find its way to the pond.

Connect the dots
Join the dots in order to find out more!

Picture crossword
CRITTERS
Use the pictures below as clues

1. GREEN
2. BROWN
3. YELLOW
4. RED
5. BLUE

Puzzle courtesy: hellokids.com
Pooch Café
By Paul Gilligan

Check it out. That cloud looks like a giant angry squirrel.

That’s ridiculous, it’s just a cloud, and even if it is some kind of squirrel personification, why would it be singling me out for vengeance?

I’m not the only dog who chases squir---

And it’s jerking in on your doghouse, Poncho.

KRAZ-KOW!

Oh, right, that fake walnut investment scam.

Cloud & Gage
By Tina Sumer

This is a one bedroom, but it has a huge bathroom.
**Sudoku**

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   6 5 2   3
 1 4 6   7
 9   4 6 8
 5   1 3 9
 7 9 4 2
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**Wordwatch**

**contumacy** (kon-too-shu-muh-suh)
MEANING: noun: Stubborn rebelliousness or insubordination.
ETYMOLOGY: From Latin contumacia, from contumax (insolent). Earliest documented use: 1596.
USAGE: "Jordan Edwards, a black 15-year-old, was in the passenger seat of a car at a house party in Balch Springs, near Dallas, when he was shot and killed by a policeman with a rifle. The policeman’s boss later told reporters that the car had been driving aggressively backwards towards the officer. But after reviewing body-camera footage, it came to light that the car had been heading away from, not towards the officer. The police chief’s retraction? ‘I misspoke.’… But the Balch Springs police chief… went beyond thinkos.”

**thinko** (THING-koh)
MEANING: noun: A careless error in thinking.
NOTES: When someone makes a typo and spells “teh” instead of “the”, it’s not that they don’t know the spelling of the word “the”. A thinko works the same way: it’s a glitch in one’s thinking, perhaps due to a distraction, tiredness, etc.
USAGE: “But knowing that a failure to comply might very well be regarded as contumacy, I reluctantly surrendered the names.”

**besaiel** (buh-SAY-ul)
USAGE: “She is met by Rickhill for the defendant alleging an older fine made in the thirteenth year of Edward II, great-grandfather (besaiel) of King Richard now reigning.”

**apophenia** (a-puh-FEE-nee-uh)
MEANING: noun: The perception of connections or meaning in unrelated or random phenomena.
ETYMOLOGY: From German Apophänie, from Greek apo- (away, off, apart) + phainein (to show). Earliest documented use: around 1980. Apophenia is the general term—pareidolia is an example of apophenia.
USAGE: “It was apophenia, which made you see the shape of a person in what were only cigarette fumes floating in the air.”
Drops in income could harm your brain: Study

Young adults who experienced annual income drops of 25 percent or more might be more at risk of having thinking problems and reduced brain health in middle age, a study said.

“Our exploratory study followed participants in the US through the recession in the late 2000s when many people experienced economic instability,” said the study’s lead author Leslie Grasset from the Inserm Research Centre in France.

“Our results provide evidence that higher income volatility and more income drops during peak earning years are linked to unhealthy brain ageing in middle age,” said the study’s lead author Leslie Grasset from the Inserm Research Centre in France.

The study published in the journal Neurology, involved 3,287 people who were 23–35 years old at the start of the study and were enrolled in the Coronary Artery Risk Development in Young Adults (CARDIA) study, which includes a racially diverse population.

Participants reported their annual pre-tax household income every three to five years from 1990–2010. Researchers have examined how often income dropped as well as the percentage of change in income between 1990–2010 for each participant.

Participants were given thinking and memory tests that measured how well they completed tasks and how much time it took to complete them.

The study found that people with two or more income drops had worse performances in completing tasks than people with no income drops.

Participents with more income drops also scored worse on how much time it took to complete some tasks.

The results were the same after researchers adjusted for other factors that could affect thinking skills, such as high blood pressure, education level, physical activity and smoking.

There was no difference between the groups on tests that measured verbal memory.

Of the study group, 707 participants also had brain scans with magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) at the beginning of the study and 20 years later to measure their total brain volume as well as the volumes of various areas of the brain.

Researchers found when compared to people with no income drops, people with two or more income drops had smaller total brain volume.

People with one or more income drops also had reduced connectivity in the brain, meaning there were fewer connections between different areas of the brain. – IANS

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**Aries**

March 21 – April 19

Have you been working towards public acknowledgement of some sort? If so, you may receive it today. You’ve been working hard and produced results that aren’t likely to go unnoticed. Expect some compliments, a lot of praise, and maybe even a moment of fame. Needless to say, this is giving your self-confidence a boost.

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**Taurus**

April 20 – May 20

All should be going well for you – love, money, and career. Still, you seek other goals, and today you might be thinking of educational, intellectual, and spiritual matters that you’ve always wanted to pursue. Don’t be surprised if you’re preoccupied with trying to sort it all out. And don’t feel you have to rush to make a decision. Give it some time.

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**Cancer**

June 21 – July 22

A social event involving business associates and friends could bring fresh ideas your way, pointing you in a new direction. Your material and spiritual goals might come under discussion and open your eyes to previously unnoticed opportunities. Communication is clearer than usual. This may prove beneficial. Increased understanding brings you closer to others.

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**Leo**

July 23 – August 22

You’re likely feeling alert, strong, and full of energy and stamina. Your sense of adventure is high. You may be exploring the possibility of an interesting vacation - rafting, backpacking, or some other adventure. This is a good idea. This trend in your physical condition should continue for a while. Get some travel brochures and look into it!

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**Scorpio**

October 23 – November 21

A lot of interesting letters and calls could come your way today. Or you might have business to transact, perhaps involving paperwork, and spend a lot of time out in the community running errands. Group activities could also take place in your neighbourhood, bringing you and your friends closer together. The only caution is that you shouldn’t try to do too much.

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**Libra**

September 23 – October 22

Happiness reigns in the home as your household continues to experience success. Someone new may come to visit. Expect a lot of comings and goings, plus an impromptu party or two. Meditation and contemplation could provide inspiration for new projects, and you might spend some time writing down ideas and brainstorming ways to approach them.

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**Taurus**

May 21 – June 20

Today you might decide to do some intense research regarding economics, stocks, or land investments and see how it applies to your current financial situation. You’ve been doing well and should continue doing so. You’ll want to find ways to make your money grow. Books, magazines, and newspapers can help your quest, as can consultations with professionals.

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**Virgo**

August 23 – September 22

Intimate relationships gather steam as increased involvement in each other’s life brings you closer. Relationships grow through enhanced communication and shared dreams, goals, and ideals - not to mention physical passion! You should feel strong and confident today, especially as your material success continues. Travel, a new car, and a few luxury items might be on your agenda.

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**Libra**

November 22 – December 21

You’re likely to be doing so well financially that you might be a little complacent. With all the hard work you’ve been doing, you might feel that you deserve some rewards and decide to go shopping. Don’t throw caution to the winds, however. You’re doing well, but you don’t want your house cluttered with items you don’t want or need.

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**Capricorn**

December 22 – January 19

Your energy and enthusiasm are elevated as you approach yet a higher level of accomplishment. This could inspire you to channel most of your energy into more work and climb yet higher. You might even be thinking in terms of expanding all your horizons – professional, intellectual, and spiritual. Travel could also be in the offing. Consider your options carefully. There might be too many choices.

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**Aquarius**

January 20 – February 18

Today you might experience a bit of restlessness, perhaps because you feel there’s something you ought to be doing but you aren’t sure what. Your mind is sharp, intuitive, and logical, but too many options could be on the horizon. You might find it difficult to choose among them. Once you decide, you’ll charge ahead and make a success of whatever you try.

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** Pisces**

February 19 – March 20

You might consider entering a business partnership of some kind with friends. This is a good time because your communication is especially good. Details of each person’s role can be worked out with friends. This is a good time because your communication is especially good.
Kevin Smith was about to go in for heart surgery in early 2018 when his doctor informed him the odds were high he would not survive because he had what doctors call a “widowmaker heart attack.” Despite assurances by the man who was about to perform the operation that all would go well, Smith began to reflect on his life.

“I felt at peace because I decided it made sense. I never ate that well and my mom and dad had a bad heart,” Smith says. “I wasn’t mad or desperately clinging to life because everything had worked out. It was a short life, but what more could I have asked for?”

“I had a great mother and father, great brother and sister, great friends. I built this weird career that is uniquely (expletive) yours that no one will ever try again. Then because of this career, you meet this woman, fall in love and made a great (expletive) kid. What more do you want?”

There was one thing.

Chances were high that at age 47, he could die and the last movie he made would have been Yoga Hosers, a 2016 film that made under $40,000 at the box office. Smith knew if he survived, he had to make a better movie that could be part of his legacy.

He came through the surgery and has kept his promise to himself by going back to the biggest success in his filmmaking career with Jay and Silent Bob Reboot.

One year to the day of having his heart attack, production started on Reboot. Played by Smith and Jason Mewes, the stoner icons who first hit the screen 25 years ago in Clerks hit the road when they learn Hollywood is rebooting an old movie based on them.

The cast – many agreeing to be in Smith’s low-project production by using his heart attack as a bargaining tool – includes Ben Affleck, Matt Damon, Chris Hemsworth, Val Kilmer, Justin Long and Jason Lee. There’s also a short tribute to Stan Lee, who Smith planned to use in a larger role in the film before the comic book legend died.

“The film will be in more than 600 theatres on Tuesday, and then on Oct. 17, there will be a special double feature of Jay and Silent Bob Strike Back and Jay and Silent Bob Reboot.

Tickets are available at FathomEvents.com/Reboot

To be fair, Smith had been thinking about bringing Jay and Silent Bob back to the big screen for five years with Clerks 3. That idea never came together and

Smith is happy now because the film he had in mind was extremely dark and “obsessed with death.” Smith decided after his heart attack that he will never write about death. Plan B for Smith was to write Mallrats 2, but that didn’t happen because of contract problems.

“I was frustrated because I was twice stymied to make something I want to make. I am indie and kind of used to doing what I want to do. Sometimes you make Yoga Hosers and no one gives a (expletive) but you do what you want to do,” Smith says. “I decided that since we own Jay and Silent Bob, we didn’t have to ask anyone for permission to do it.”

All of the films featuring Jay and Silent Bob have been snapshots of who Smith and Mewes were at the time.

The basic idea of Jay discovering he’s a father in Reboot was obvious to Smith. He had never thought of his on-screen partner having any paternal instincts until Mewes became a dad. Smith saw how good Mewes was at raising his child that he was sad he became a father first because he could have learned about parenting from Mewes.

Smith cast his own daughter, Harley Quinn Smith, to play Mewes’ daughter in Reboot. He knew that would make the acting easier for Mewes because he had seen Smith’s daughter grow up and already had an emotional connection to her.

Jay and Silent Bob Reboot is the latest work from Smith, who along with making movies, is a comedian, author, comic book store owner, podcaster and writer of comic books.

His past films include Chasing Amy, Dogma, Tusk and Red State.

Now that he has survived the heart attack and made the film he would be comfortable with being his legacy, Smith has a very positive outlook on life.

“I am not really angry at the heart attack because it really saved my life. I was never going to get in shape or get healthy,” Smith says. “It made the movie so much more dramatic because it’s no longer ‘Hey, let’s make a Jay and Silent Bob movie.’ It became that this has to stand as a (expletive) testament to everything I have done, said or thought in this (expletive) life.” – TNS
The Ritz-Carlton, Doha's highly anticipated – B-lounge and restaurant, officially opened its doors to visitors on Wednesday evening.

The formal launching of the lounge was marked with an evening of a stunning fire show, Japanese classical dance, and a subtle mixture of captivating electro-ethnic rhythms played by DJ Naz.

B-lounge introduces the guests to a dazzling playground with breathtaking marina views, Asian fusion cuisine with international touches served straight from the open kitchen and a creative menu.

The lounge is a unification of the grand nature and the delicate people who live in Qatar. Layers of fabric that are suspended from the ceiling act as a screen to reflect the nature of ‘wind’ which is the representation of grand nature as it creates a synergy between the lower and upper floor through the void. The timber finish ceiling on the upper floor is a recollection of window frames which has weathered away from the sea wind.

The local’s delicate techniques are used to regenerate these in a modern approach. The copper counter in the centre of the space is like an iconic monument to represent the swirl of the wind that blows from the sea and the energy of the locals.

“We have aimed to create an environment for various guests to have a memorable experience with their friends and loved ones by creating various scenes and settings in one space such as a high energy lounge, outdoor lounge, and dining. The combination of high quality music, eloquent wind, sunset, and night view will create a new social spot and experience here in Doha” said Sack, General Manager of The Ritz-Carlton, Doha.

Guests are invited to save their calendar as international celebrity DJs are coming to B-lounge, Nick from Mykonos in November and Papa from Monte Carlo in December.

Talking to Community, Nabil Souhail, vice president of B-lounge in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and USA said: “We are very happy to establish this venue in Doha. Basically we started one month ago [soft opening]. We see a great response in the market. We are expecting more in the future. The offer we give is more in terms of the Asian cuisine – entire Japanese and Chinese cuisine.

“The place is more about the atmosphere with DJ music. We are also planning in future to put some elements of entertainment with different events. We are also planning to keep the lounge open for lunch in future.”

Nabil further said: “B-lounge is exceptional in many sense. It is located inside Ritz-Carlton – an icon of Doha for many years. We are very happy to collaborate with them. We have the element of difference what people are looking for. That is the difference. But, of course, what you offer is also important. The concept itself is more into the atmosphere. The dinners these days do not just want to come to a normal restaurant, sit down, and eat. People want some entertainment, some atmosphere, and somewhat different presentation of food.”

He added: “On the formal opening, we are showcasing the Japanese dance, fire show at the outside lounge, and the DJ music. Our guest DJ is Ravin and DJ Naz is the resident DJ at B-lounge. Saxokid, from the Czech Republic, played saxophone.”

DJ Naz is from Morocco and grew up in London. “I like to describe my music as eclectic. I like many different genres of music. My specialty really is world music. I do a lot of research and when I find something that I love, I bring it and like to share it with my audiences around the world. I like to keep an aquatic quality to my music as the sound is warm but at the same time it is emotional and makes you travel. It brings a bridge between different cultures. Whatever I see in my travels, I collect a lot of music because I do not take a lot of pictures. My music is like my photo album.

“As I come from a different place, I bring something different to Doha when it comes to music – totally aquatic – because we are surrounded by water. After I saw the place, I decided what kind of music I am going to play. There are some cities that I call the cities of world such as New York, London, Paris, and I put Doha in the list.”