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Just four men alive today
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I ISSUE 38 SPRING 2019 I



O L Y M P I A N T R I U M P H
DRIVING THE NEW RANGE ROVER EVOQUE IN ATHENS



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PHOTO: GREG WHITE

WELCOME

ISSUE 38

TAKE THE PATH LESS TRAVELLED...

Welcome to *Onelife*, the magazine exclusively for Land Rover owners. This latest issue continues to live up to its name, with stunning photography and insightful stories that remind us to get the best out of life – by going above and beyond. Read on for a rich variety of perspectives from around the globe: from an innovative eco-city in China and a fascinating carnival subculture in Brazil, to meeting an American astronaut and a top British fashion model and activist who epitomises urban cool. And of course, delve into the world of the latest vehicles from Land Rover, with an in-depth drive of the new Range Rover Evoque, evocative experiences in the Range Rover Velar and the Range Rover Sport PHEV, and a first glimpse of the eagerly-awaited new Land Rover Defender. Stories that put you in the driving seat, and help you make the most of your world. Enjoy the issue.

COVER: MICHAEL SCHNABEL



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MICHAEL SCHNABEL

The award-winning German landscape photographer's distinctive visual style reflects his flair for sensory drama. For this issue, Michael captured the new Range Rover Evoque in Athens, skilfully conveying both their lively personalities.



VAISHALI DINAKARAN

A noted Indian motorsport journalist – she was recently awarded by the Guild of Motoring Writers – Vaishali specialises in evocative, passionate pen-portraits. The Berlin-based writer met US astronaut Charlie Duke for this issue.



LUKE PONSFORD

This London-based lifestyle and motoring writer is mad about cars, watches and classic design. So it was Christmas come early as he first drove a Range Rover Velar to a modernist house, and then interviewed a petrolhead watch customiser.



STEFEN CHOW

The acclaimed Malaysian-born, Beijing-based photographer's work ranges from commercial shoots for global brands to personal gallery 'projects with social conscience'. Here, Stefen brings our travel story on the Chinese city of Shenzhen to life.

PATHFINDER

EXPLORE YOUR WORLD





PHOTO: BLUE LAGOON ICELAND

The Blue Lagoon has been an Icelandic icon for decades – and in the Instagram age, its gently steaming pools of milky blue water, heated by the natural, geothermic energy that powers much of this beautifully rugged island, remain a surefire winner. But the Blue Lagoon is not just a pretty sight; the mineral-rich water and mud is said to impart health benefits too. Now, the original facilities, including a spa, restaurant and Silca hotel complex, have been expanded with a new hotel: The Retreat at Blue Lagoon Iceland.

GETAWAY BEAT THE BLUES

The luxurious new digs offer a tastefully minimalist experience. The structure nestles into the surrounding

volcanic landscape, incorporating natural features like flowing water and bare lava rock for visual harmony, textural richness and low environmental impact. The 62 suites are tranquil spaces with floor-to-ceiling windows, not least the 60m² Lagoon Suite (priced from £1,950 per night) with its vast terrace and private lagoon access. End your day at the hotel's gourmet restaurant, Moss, where famously fresh, local, seasonal ingredients make fine dining a celebration of purity. www.bluelagoon.com



PHOTO: IAN BEATTIE/AUSCAPE/CONTRIBUTOR/GETTY IMAGES



ARTSCAPE
LAKE BALLARD

Fancy a camping holiday with 50 strangers? Oh, and they're made of steel.

In the salt pans of Lake Ballard, 50km outside the remote former gold-rush town of Menzies – itself a dot amidst the vast swathes of unspoilt Western Australia – acclaimed sculptor Antony Gormley erected 51 surreal steel statues, based on digital scans of local residents. The eerie installation makes for an unforgettable stop on your Outback road trip. Set aside several serene hours to walk between the statues, as vehicles are not allowed on the salt lake. With stunning, expansive views of both land and sky, camping (in designated areas) is hugely rewarding, though not for the faint of heart: you'll need to bring your own water and firewood. lakeballard.com



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SALT **ALL YEAR**

This nomadic arts festival began in a remote part of Nordland, and is now resident in the heart of Oslo until next year. It features traditional wooden constructions, based on Norwegian fishermen's fishracks, that serve as giant saunas and exhibition and music spaces. salted.no

SARDINE RUN **MAY-JULY**

Billions of sardines spawn off South Africa and migrate up the continent's east coast in miles-long shoals, harried by sea predators. Numerous operators run Sardine Run tours, giving divers and snorkelers a front-row seat to one of the world's most spectacular marine events.

YUKON 1000 **JUNE**

Registrations open for the world's longest canoe race – along a thousand-mile stretch of the remote Yukon River in Canada's far north and into Alaska, finishing in the Arctic Circle. With entrants from around the world, it is seen as the ultimate canoeing fest. yukon1000.org

NAADAM **JULY**

Short for 'eriin gurban naadam', or 'the three games of men', this is a festival of Mongolia's three national sports: wrestling, horse racing and archery. The festival takes place in every town and village in the country, but the official one is in the capital, Ulaanbaatar. naadamfestival.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: ENDRE LOHNE, DOUG PERRINE/GETTY IMAGES, JAY DICKMAN/CONTRIBUTOR/GETTY IMAGES, JACK TAYLOR/GETTY IMAGES, JODHPUR RIFF/OJO, ENTE FIERA DEL TARTUFO – FOTO DAVIDE CARLETTI, DOGWALK(2015)/MAELLA JAARSMA



GUČA TRUMPET FESTIVAL AUGUST

Brass is the backbone of the Balkans' frenetic Gypsy-inspired music – and never more so than during this cacophonous weekend in the tiny Serbian town of Guča, when a multitude of bands, and specifically trumpeters, battle for the crown. gucafestival.rs



JODHPUR RIFF OCTOBER

The Rajasthan International Folk Festival takes place within the walls of the immense Mehrangarh Fort in the fabled Indian city of Jodhpur. It brings itinerant folk musicians together with classical ensembles and international acts. Sir Mick Jagger is a big fan, and patron. jodhpurriff.org



FIERA DEL TARTUFO OCTOBER – NOVEMBER

The world's top chefs descend on the small Italian town of Alba to mark the start of white truffle season. The festival's centrepiece is an invite-only truffle auction, but you can make your own purchases at the weekly truffle markets, and sample lots of truffle treats. fieradeltartufo.org



SETOUCHI TRIENNALE UNTIL NOVEMBER

Held across several beautiful islands in the sparsely inhabited Seto Inland Sea, this Japanese festival sets contemporary art installations amidst buildings and landscapes. It runs in three sessions – Spring Encounters, Summer Gatherings and Fall Expansions. setouchi-artfest.jp



SURVIVE THIS WILD ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

Alan McSmith, a safari guide at South Africa's Kruger National Park, stars in a now-viral social media video,

where he stands his ground against a charging bull elephant. We speak to him to understand what it took.

"You cannot figure out the intelligence and complexity of an elephant at a cursory glance. You have to spend time with them, track them on foot. This particular encounter was quite unique. But it's not about standing up to an elephant in some Rambo style of guiding. I would be hesitant about using the video in any educational sense.

"It was a walk without rifles, which is fairly unusual. As the encounter occurred and the elephant got closer, there was no script. There was no storyboard. You can look at it through the science of body language: the eyes, the trunk, the ears and the tail, the noise he's making, how he's moving. Then you can possibly deduce what the animal is going to do, judging on what the textbooks say. However, I've never seen an elephant reading a book.

"It's human instinct to want to take control of the situation, especially if you're a guide leading clients. But with wild animals, that can be the wrong thing to do, because your idea and sense of timing often doesn't agree with that of the wild animal. So if you can let those moments go right to the boundary, and possibly even across to the other side, then you've got more chance of diffusing the situation.

"You stand your ground. You let the elephant decide what to do, as opposed to you suggesting. In this encounter, I had no outcome envisaged. What the elephant did, I accepted. He moved sideways, I moved sideways. He moved forward, I moved back. If you look at the video carefully, it's almost a choreographed dance.

"This intuitive understanding between an elephant and a man diffused the situation. There was absolutely no panic. Even the people who were behind me couldn't believe how calm they were. This encounter crossed the line between what is logical and what is intuitive. Sometimes you have to break down the barriers – that's invariably where you find the meaningful encounters."

Watch the video at alanmcsmith.weebly.com

Left: How would you react to six tonnes of elephant storming towards you?



When pretty much everywhere has been visited, what's next? Enter new scientific frontiers to shake things up. DNA self-testing kits have made family trees cool, spawning a trend for booking a trip in search of your roots. New World tourism in search of Old World roots isn't new of course, but the emergence of easy-to-use DNA self-testing kits – just a saliva sample will do – has made it possible for anyone to find out where their ancestry lies, and go in search of the old country. According to the *MIT Technology Review*, some 12 million people had done such tests by the start of 2018. The test measures your results against databases of samples from current global populations, looking for common genetic variations to match your DNA to, and gives you a probability. It's a percentages game, not a black and white answer. Some 40 companies currently offer this service, and will produce a detailed report of your geographical DNA strands, plus maternal and paternal haplogroups, which are your ancestral paths to specific common ancestors. There may be no such thing as a final truth in science, but the thrill of self-discovery mixed with wanderlust is an irresistible cocktail.

TRENDSPOTTER DNA TOURISM



TRAVEL SECRET GRAPE EXPECTATIONS

Picture this: 112,000 hectares of vineyards planted with 30 grape varietals, a 5,000-year winemaking tradition, the world's largest wine cellar, wines that

have been enjoyed by kings, queens and presidents. **Where in the world?** The rolling countryside of Codru, Ștefan-Vodă and Valul lui Traian in Moldova: a terroir suited to the production of high quality reds, sparkling wines and brandies. And it has pedigree – the Negru de Purcari won a gold medal at the 1878 Paris Expo and became a favourite of the Russian Tsars. **Must-see pitstop:** The Cricova winery with that world-beating cellar. "Their labyrinth of underground chalk cellars is larger than all of the cellars of Champagne," reveals US oenologist and Master of Wine, Christy Canterbury. "They have stop lights and street signs down there." Epicly Soviet scale of industrial wine production aside, it's the sheer quality of Moldovan wines that impresses outsiders; the cellars at Cricova and elsewhere age local wines for numerous international dignitaries and celebrities. **Pick of the lot?** The local tradition of natural in-bottle fermentation (the Champagne method) means all Moldovan sparkling is aged for at least nine months and up to five years. Time to raise a glass. wineofmoldova.com

"I chose photography because I want to capture the best moments of my life," says Ivander Fauzy Armando, or simply 'Vander' as he is known to friends and family. The 26-year-old's Instagram account @familywithnature shows just what these moments look like. Vander's distinct visual aesthetic is instantly recognisable throughout the social media feed, with a focus on nature and the great outdoors, brought to life with warm colours, stunning reflections

SOCIAL LENS
@FAMILYWITHNATURE

and awe-inspiring drone shots, mostly portraying his native Indonesia. The other recurring theme is family: his wife and daughters are regularly featured, adding a deeply personal touch to his posts. "I love travelling with my family and my camera," Vander explains. "I document the unforgettable moments we experience together, and I like sharing them with the world." Vander's journey to Instagram fame began seven years ago, while still working his day job as a chef. Taking pictures on hiking trips with his daughters, he saw the potential to combine his love for photography with quality time with his family, and began working seriously on his Instagram account. Now, more than 12,000 followers get to share his twin passions too.



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W A T C H T H I S S P A C E

The excitement is building as one of the world's most eagerly awaited car launches draws near. Get ready for the new Land Rover Defender...

The Defender is the direct descendant of one of the world's best-loved cars, the Series Land Rover – the pioneering all-terrain passenger vehicle. That lineage is evident both in its iconic shape and in a steely toughness that sees decades-old examples still on the road (and for that matter, off-road too). From farmland to outback, and urban jungle to safari park, the Defender is a global motoring icon.

Which is why the forthcoming launch of the new Land Rover Defender later this year is a major event – not only for Land Rover, but millions of enthusiasts worldwide. Teams at Land Rover are working at full tilt to ensure that the new Defender is as much of a game-changer as the original. While evolved for today's world, it will never compromise on capability, as you can see from this scene captured on a test cycle in the US. In fact, camouflaged prototypes are being tested to the extreme all over the world, be it in the deep-freeze of Arjeplog, the rocky heat of Utah, or on the specially designed test circuits of Eastnor in the UK.

It will certainly be the go-anywhere vehicle for a new generation, with purposeful and durable design and exceptional all-terrain capability. But equally, it will have the all-round composure to take on the rest of life's challenges, in that typically Defender way: with calm, assured strength.

With the launch of the new Defender just months away, get set for full details in a future issue of *Onelife*. □



PHOTOGRAPH: NICK DIMPLEBY



S M O O T H



Vehicle shown in Nolita Grey colour exclusive to First Edition

O P E R A T O R

Already an urban icon, the original luxury city SUV has evolved to reinforce its position as a design tour de force, whilst setting a new benchmark for sustainability and capability



It is now such a ubiquitous sight in cities from London to Shanghai, it is almost easy to forget what a ground-breaking car the Range Rover Evoque really is.

Launched in 2011 with lines that stayed faithful to the radical LRX concept, the original Range Rover Evoque was an instant smash hit. It soon became clear it was a real game-changer, not only for Land Rover, but for the entire industry. The Evoque's perfect balance of head-turning looks, luxury and compact size pioneered a new segment of desirable urban SUVs and attracted a new generation of buyers. Its timeless design – a rare feat in the automotive world, where models can often seem dated even in just a couple of years – helped make it one of the decade's great motoring successes, with nearly 800,000 units sold. It also transformed Land Rover, putting design firmly at the heart of all new models since, while maintaining the brand's legendary capability. All in all, you'd agree, a pretty tough act to follow: which is why the new Range Rover Evoque takes the game to a whole new level.

The exterior design builds on the original's instantly-recognisable form, with a sophisticated evolution of the distinctive silhouette typified by the fast roofline and rising waistline. Surfaces have been honed to perfection, with flush door handles, super-slim Matrix LED front and rear lamps*, and sweeping directional indicators*. The luxurious, uncluttered interior is crafted with sumptuous, sustainable material options, such as Kvadrat wool blend and Dinamica suedecloth. The sense of serene wellbeing is enhanced by the spaciousness: despite the new Evoque's compact 4.37m footprint, it offers 80% more kneeroom for rear passengers and 10% more luggage space.

The interior is also smartly packed with a contemporary suite of connectivity and interface technology**. Apple CarPlay* connects you to your smartphone, 4G Wi-Fi* hotspot to the internet, and InControl Remote to the vehicle, while the twin touchscreen Touch Pro Duo system* runs fast, intuitive software. Smart Settings* uses artificial intelligence algorithms to learn your preferences and readies the cabin for your journey. A full suite of driver assistance systems and active safety technology is available.

The overhaul goes all the way through to new architecture technology delivering a smoother, quieter and more refined drive. The range of Ingenium petrol and diesel engines is bolstered by a 48-volt mild-hybrid option, with an enhanced stop-start system (where the engine switches off and runs on battery power below 10mph) offering improved fuel economy†. An efficient three-cylinder Ingenium petrol engine, as well as a full plug-in hybrid (PHEV), will be available later in 2019.

Handling has been tuned for further agility and responsiveness ideally suited to tight city streets – as you'll find out when you read motoring journalist Ken Gibson's first-hand account of driving the new Evoque in Athens, on the following pages. □

"THIS CHARACTERFUL VEHICLE COMBINES REFINEMENT AND FUN TO CREATE THAT ALL-IMPORTANT EMOTIONAL CONNECTION"

GERRY MCGOVERN, CHIEF DESIGN OFFICER



VISION IMPOSSIBLE? NOT HERE

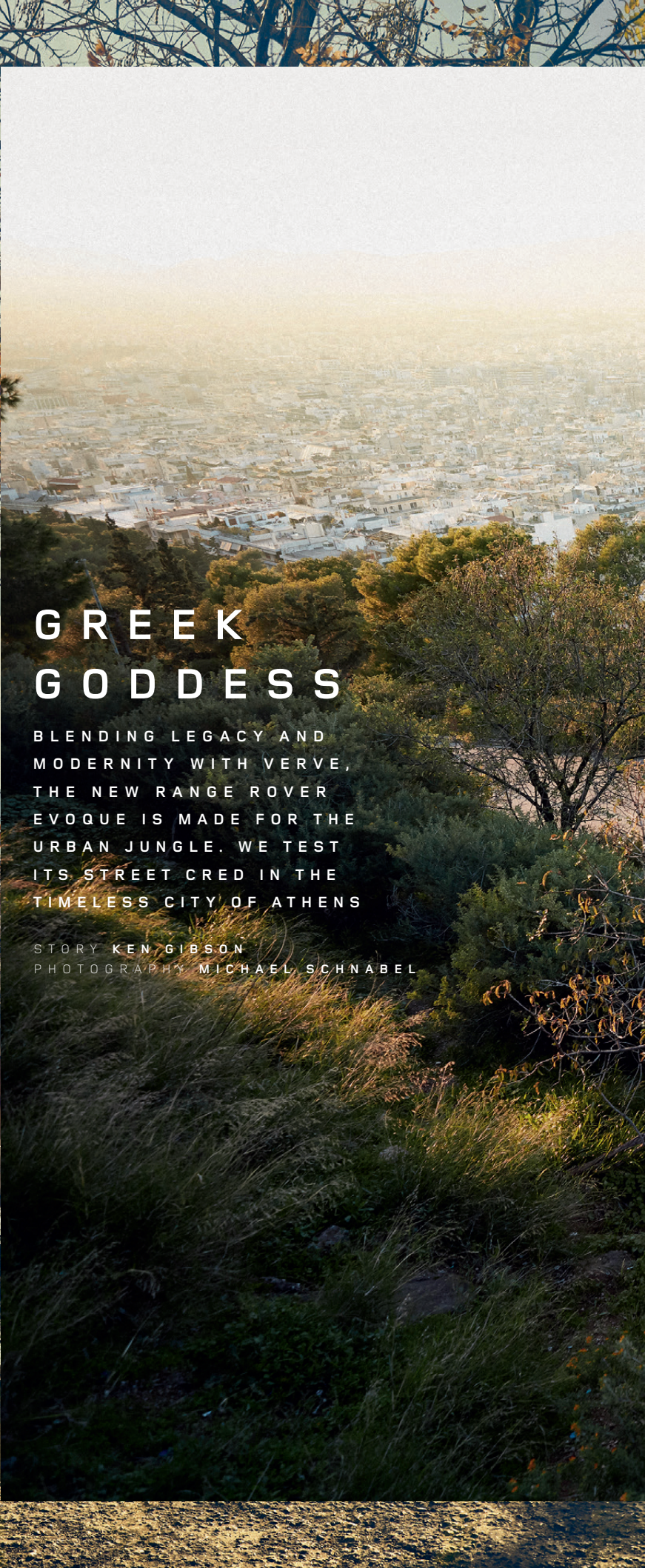
An array of clever technology enhances visibility in the new Range Rover Evoque. The world-first ClearSight Ground View**†† effectively makes the bonnet 'invisible' by projecting camera imagery onto the upper touchscreen to give you a 180° view under the front of the vehicle. This is useful when negotiating difficult parking spaces, navigating high kerbs or tackling rough terrain. Land Rover's new ClearSight interior rear-view mirror helps to overcome instances of obscured rear vision. Flick a switch and the mirror shows you what's behind the car, via a camera atop the car – all in crisp high definition, doubling the usual 25° vision, and with superior low-light visibility.

*Optional features. **In-car features should be used only when safe to do so. Drivers must be in full control of the vehicle at all times. †† Requires 360 Surround Camera. † WLTIP Fuel Consumption Combined mpg (l/100km): TEL: 6.3 (44.9) TEH: 9.9 (28.5). CO₂ Emissions Combined (g/km): TEL: 165 TEH: 224. Figures provided are WLTIP. WLTIP is the new official EU test used to calculate standardised fuel consumption and CO₂ figures for passenger cars. It measures fuel, energy consumption, range and emissions. This is designed to provide figures closer to real-world driving behaviour. It tests vehicles with optional equipment and with a more demanding test procedure and driving profile. TEL (Test Energy Low) and TEH (Test Energy High) figures are shown as a range under WLTIP testing measures. TEL refers to the lowest/most economical figures (with the lightest set of options). TEH refers to the highest/least economical figures (with the heaviest set of options).



Every element of the new Range Rover Evoque, from flush door handles to slimline headlamps, contributes to its refined design, while retaining the distinct silhouette





GREEK GODDESS

BLENDING LEGACY AND
MODERNITY WITH VERVE,
THE NEW RANGE ROVER
EVOQUE IS MADE FOR THE
URBAN JUNGLE. WE TEST
ITS STREET CRED IN THE
TIMELESS CITY OF ATHENS

STORY KEN GIBSON
PHOTOGRAPHY MICHAEL SCHNABEL





Few cities blend rich heritage with modernity quite like Athens. The birthplace of European culture and home of the Acropolis and Parthenon may be steeped in the splendour of the past, but it's also very much a city bursting with contemporary style and energy. Which makes it the perfect location to test the new Range Rover Evoque, a modern motoring icon that changed the world of SUVs and transformed Land Rover into a global design leader.

If the Acropolis shaped the architecture and culture of the world, the Series 1 Land Rover gave motoring a vehicle that was to become an institution. But times move on, as illustrated by the plethora of striking modern buildings that now happily share Athens' skyline alongside the architectural icons of the past.

With the original Evoque, Land Rover created that priceless commodity of 'timeless' design, a vehicle that looked so right from launch that only smart evolution has been needed. The new car is instantly recognisable.

My first sight of the new Range Rover Evoque told me immediately that the designers have hit the sweet spot again, with a vehicle that instantly stands out from the crowd. The beautiful Seoul Pearl Silver is one of an array of exterior colours that is sure to please any image-conscious owner. The exterior changes are subtle, but eye-catching details – such as ultra slim LED headlights and grille, flush door handles and elegant wrap-around rear lights – give it a more sophisticated and mature look.

If the exterior is an evolution, step inside and you'll see a revolution in materials, technology and luxury. The new Evoque is every inch a Range Rover, comparable with its range-topping big brothers. Anything you touch has a quality feel, from the rich soft leather* that covers everything from the seats to the

dashboard and doors, to the Kvadrat option which offers a radical premium eco-friendly cloth alternative to leather trim.

Instant connectivity and the latest technology are an essential part of any modern car, and the Evoque now boasts a double screen infotainment system* that fits beautifully into the dashboard and centre console, to give the cabin a clean, uncluttered and logical appeal. Driver and passengers are linked up** to Android Auto and Apple CarPlay*, plus six USB ports and a 4G Wi-Fi* Hotspot. I enjoyed the instant access to my own music playlist (the local radio was not quite to my taste).

As I set off into Athens' manic early morning traffic, the first thing I noticed was how quiet things were in the Evoque cabin – it is an oasis of luxurious calm. The lack of noise highlights the significant improvements made by Land Rover to soundproofing and refinement.

I drove the 2-litre turbocharged petrol and diesel versions and they both deliver smooth, lively performance. The nine-speed automatic gearbox is slick, with a sportier traditional gear lever replacing the rotary shift of the original.

But undoubtedly the big step forward is that, in a first for Land Rover, both petrol and diesel engines get a mild 48V hybrid system which basically captures

energy that would normally be lost in deceleration and stores it in a small battery. The bonus for owners is that when you pull away, this energy is redeployed to assist the engine, which in turn reduces fuel consumption and CO₂ emissions. A full plug-in hybrid, powered by a three-cylinder petrol engine, will follow later this year.

You will appreciate the increased space in the back seats where adults can now sit comfortably, while boot space increases to 591 litres, enough for two big suitcases. But the clever bit is that the Evoque is the same compact size, just with a longer wheelbase that delivers the extra space, and that means you can slip →

**"IF THE EXTERIOR
IS AN EVOLUTION,
STEP INSIDE
AND YOU'LL SEE
A REVOLUTION
IN MATERIALS,
TECHNOLOGY
AND LUXURY.
THE NEW EVOQUE
IS EVERY INCH A
RANGE ROVER"**


*Optional features. **In-car features should be used only when safe to do so. Drivers must be in full control of the vehicle at all times.



From narrow alleyways to sweeping thoroughfares, the new Range Rover Evoque is right at home in the city, thanks to its compact footprint, plush cabin and lively performance







through rush hour city traffic with ease and park in tight places. That is a major asset in any city, and certainly so in Athens where driving is a fascinating challenge, manoeuvring through a sea of traffic where everyone seems to be in a hurry. Fortunately, the slow progress allows you to appreciate the beauty of the city.

I used the updated and much slicker Navigation Pro* system to pilot my way to the must-visit locations of the sacred Acropolis and Parthenon; it even took me directly to a rare car parking space in the shadow of the great ruins. The sheer magnitude of the Acropolis was breath-taking – even sharing it with bus-loads of tourists did not diminish the uniqueness of the experience. After soaking up the sights I enjoyed a lunchtime break, with a reviving traditional Greek moussaka at a restaurant packed with tourists and locals having animated discussions.

Back on the road, as I inched the Evoque through chaotic narrow side streets it became clear that Land Rover has been equally successful in improving both the handling and the ride comfort of the car. It really is easy and relaxing to drive. I headed up busy Syngrou Avenue, and through the thriving downtown district of Metaxourgio, where shoppers indulge in the latest fashions and gourmet dining, with the added attraction of street art, including the distinctive work of renowned local artist Sonke.

As I drove out of the city's gridlocked traffic onto the dual carriageways, I began to fully appreciate the depth of improvements made to the new Evoque, especially how quiet the diesel engine was. The Evoque may be a car that will spend most of its time in the urban jungle, but it is just as happy out in the country where it cruises serenely.

And for owners with a sense of adventure, rest assured it is an authentic Land Rover, with off-road abilities none of its rivals can match. Scaling rough rock-strewn tracks in the spectacular Katafygio Mountains, I was reminded of the astonishing ability of the Evoque's Terrain Response 2* system to tackle any terrain.

This also gave me the chance to test two groundbreaking pieces of technology. ClearSight Ground View** features cameras which show you a 180° image of what's beneath the front of the car. It's like having a see-through bonnet, which is perfect for off-roading or just negotiating high kerbs.

The other is a ClearSight interior rear-view mirror*. The previous-generation Evoque had a narrow rear window and any luggage in the back meant your view behind was close to nil. Here, the mirror transforms into a high-definition video screen that uses a camera to give you a clear rear view.

Having enjoyed the driving experience from behind the wheel, when I had the opportunity to be chauffeur-driven, I decided to sample life in the rear seat. It's a tranquil place to be, with much-improved head- and knee-room, and as we

progressed down the Marco Polo Highway, I felt the great explorer would have appreciated the new Range Rover Evoque as a fine way to travel.

Two days behind the wheel left me in no doubt that if the original Evoque was a game-changer, the new version raises the bar once again. It is more luxurious, refined, technologically advanced, drives better and looks even cooler. Range Rover's baby has matured into a superb re-imagining of the original, and is well on its way to becoming a new icon. □

**"ON THE DUAL
CARRIAGEWAYS,
I BEGAN TO FULLY
APPRECIATE
THE DEPTH OF
IMPROVEMENTS
MADE TO THE
NEW EVOQUE,
ESPECIALLY HOW
QUIET THE DIESEL
ENGINE WAS"**

*Requires 360 Surround Camera. **Optional features.

LONDON MONITOR

Activist and fashion model Adwoa Aboah, the face of the new Range Rover Evoque launch campaign, tells *Onelife* why she lives for the city

"There is a strength to every Londoner I've met; an amazing sense of humour and the ability to make every occasion a party," says Adwoa Aboah. The 26-year-old should know – she has much to celebrate. One of the new class of supermodels, she is known for her activism and unique look as much as her global fashion campaigns (Dior, Calvin Klein and Marc Jacobs, to name a few).

And that's not to mention her show-stopping presence on the catwalk for, most notably, Fendi and Chanel. With a slew of magazine covers including *Vogue's* relaunch issue to her name, she was awarded the British Fashion Council's coveted Model of the Year award in 2017. She's come a long way from "spending my summers playing out with the kids where I lived [in west London], pretty much always on rollerblades".

With her shaven head, bejewelled front tooth and unapologetic attitude, Aboah – who is half-Ghanaian and whose first name is often used for women born on a Monday in Western Africa – cuts a distinct presence in the fashion world.

It's no surprise then, that when she travels the world modelling, or working with young women as part of Gurl's Talk, of which she is a co-founder, that she seeks out unique places in the cities she visits.

"If I could create my own fantasy city," she says, "I'd have London's Portobello Market and Golborne Road with Mexico City's restaurants, Tokyo's vintage shops and karaoke bars, and LA's wide roads."

Aboah went to school in Somerset in the UK, and recalls, "I was lucky to have experienced both city and country life, but I was always counting down the days till I could get back to London! Now, because I love being on the go and experiencing

new places and people, I'll always welcome a little jaunt out of the city." Despite her bucolic schooling and the fact she now splits her time between the UK and US, she says, "London is my home, and a huge part of my identity. I will forever be a Londoner. I love its energy – it's so vibrant, there is constantly something going on."

Fashion runs in Aboah's blood. Her mother Camilla Lowther is the founder of creative management firm CLM, and she signed with an agency when she was 16. Her sister Kesewa is also a model, starring in Alexander McQueen's latest ads.

Close as she is to her sister, Aboah says she savours moments alone: "I think it's important to feel comfortable in your own company. I watch a lot of Netflix, I read and I love to walk around London and people-watch. There are so many characters here."

"Driving around cities is a great way to get to know them," says Aboah. Her passion for driving lends a characteristic authenticity to her decision to star in the launch campaign for the new Range Rover Evoque. "It's such an amazing car to drive, and I love its commitment to sustainability," she says, referring to its options of natural materials and hybrid-electric power.

Given that she leads such a nomadic life, how does she feel 'rooted' in the world? "Having my friends or family with me. I'm always home when I am with them."

And there's no doubt the spirit of London remains with Aboah, wherever she goes: "One of the most special things about London is its huge diversity. With that you learn compassion and understanding for others."

With such vital values guiding her as she navigates the urban jungle and life, Adwoa's star will surely continue to rise. □







D E S I G N E D
F O R

We take a Range Rover Velar to visit a timeless example of mid-century modern design: one of just a handful of European residences built by famed Californian modernist architect Richard Neutra

STORY LUKE PONSFORD
PHOTOGRAPHY GREG WHITE



“ONE OF THE CENTRAL
TENETS OF NEUTRA DESIGN
IS THE BLURRING OF THE
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
INDOORS AND OUTDOORS”

Two-thirds of Wuppertal, in Germany’s western state of North Rhine-Westphalia, is made up of parks and woodland, making it the country’s greenest city. It’s a pleasant yet somewhat unremarkable part of the world, and probably not the first place you’d go looking for a prime example of mid-century modern architecture – the kind of silvery glass-and-steel edifice you’d normally find perched atop a Los Angeles canyon, or ensconced between the monolithic boulders and spiky cacti of some Californian desert moonscape.

But take a short drive from central Wuppertal (tempting though it is to take a longer route in our luxurious Range Rover Velar), turn off onto a winding forest road and this unassuming corner of western Germany will spring a surprise. Here, concealed behind a dense palisade of trees and hedgerows, lies one of just eight residential villas built in Europe by fabled modernist architect Richard Neutra.

A central figure in modern architecture, Austrian-born Neutra relocated to Los Angeles in the early 1920s, attracted by the city’s open spaces, abundant sunshine and sense of freedom. He worked briefly for visionary architect Frank Lloyd Wright before starting his own practice in 1929. It was during this period that Neutra designed and built the Lovell Health House in LA, still regarded as one of the most important houses of the twentieth century. Based on early skyscraper technology, and the first American residence to be made from steel, the Lovell House made big waves in the architectural community. It also made Neutra an international name.

Over the next 40 years Neutra, often working in conjunction with his son Dion, designed and built more than 300 houses and buildings, the vast majority of them on the West Coast of the US. Designed with much care lavished on light and views, Neutra paid considerable attention to accommodating the needs of his clients. What did they do? How did they socialise? What did they want to see and hear?

Indeed, one of the central tenets of Neutra design was that the relationship between indoors and outdoors should be blurred – a terrace separated from the indoor space by a sliding glass wall, an attempt to bring the outdoor environment inside, and vice versa. “I’d say ‘contact with nature’ characterises a Neutra design as much as anything,” smiles Dion Neutra, who at 92 years old still runs the Neutra firm in LA. “It’s always about re-establishing that, in any of our designs.”

Re-establishing ‘contact with nature’ may have been something of a chillier proposition in Europe, but nevertheless, between 1960 and Richard Neutra’s death in 1970, father and son worked together on the design and construction of four villas in Switzerland, three in Germany and one in France.

“People just started asking for us to design them houses,” says Dion. “I’m not sure what sparked that. All these (European) creations were the result of an initiative launched by these owners, who had heard of us, and liked what they saw.”

One such couple were the Kempers, the owners of a successful corset manufacturing business in Wuppertal, who quite fancied a taste of the new →

Right: Owners Manfred and Sarah Hering have furnished the Kemper House to fit in with their singular design aesthetic







Left: A series of water-filled reflection pools highlight the Kemper House's relationship with its woodland habitat

American 'West Coast' style of living. In 1963 they contacted the Neutras, who set about finding a suitable plot in the area. Once the 40,000 m² site was selected, construction began in 1965 and lasted until August 1968. The completed 380 m² house boasted six bedrooms, fully glazed walls and several large fireplaces as well as unique features such as an au pair room and a 'gentlemen's room', which now serves as an office for current owner Manfred Hering.

Having bought the house in 2016, Hering is currently in the process of painstakingly restoring it back to its original specification. "When I bought the place, it looked a bit like a boutique hotel," says the 50-year-old classic car restoration expert and mid-century-modern über-fan. "Everything was grey and beige. The previous owners had painted over a lot of the wood. We've looked at every material, bought books, spoken to the previous owners, all with a view to getting the entire house period correct – so original that it doesn't even look restored."

The Kemper House looks brilliantly inserted into its woody hilltop location. The living area – a glassy adjunct to the central two-storey structure – is framed by the original floor-to-ceiling windows, which invite light into this surprisingly 'liveable' main room, while its ceiling treatment carries out consistently from the inside to the outside of the house, through the glass line. Water-filled reflection pools on the flat roofs and behind the terrace mirror the surrounding trees and woodland. It all highlights the house's relationship with its environment, its 'contact with nature'.

Inside, original furniture and fittings – an Arne Jacobsen Egg chair, Knoll sofa and Panton shell lamps – bring the living experience back to the mid-1970s, Hering's favoured era for both interior design and air-cooled German sportscars. The Kemper House is a real home, rather than a sparse monument to modernism. It's what Neutra intended the space to be. He believed in building houses for the human being, not the architecture critic. It's inviting, comfortable, and it's hard not to feel at home here.

Parked outside on the terrace, the Range Rover Velar looks right at home too. Decades may separate their respective designs, but both the Kemper House and the Velar share a reductionist design philosophy, an elegant simplicity. Like the house, there's nothing extraneous about the Velar's design. Nothing that doesn't need to be there. Taking a seat in the clean, uncluttered cockpit of this 'avant-garde' Range Rover feels like a visit to the future. The Kempers must have felt the same when they ventured inside their new house in the summer of 1968. The space, the light, the general understatement of the architecture. It was all new back then. And it will be again.

"There's a bit more work to do, but even now, you can feel the house has its original sense. It has its soul back," says Manfred. "This is my forever house," he laughs. "I will definitely die here." And looking around this glamorous, slightly incongruous slice of sunny Southern California nestling in the green hills of western Germany, you can understand why. □



R E T U R N T O T H E

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Hollywood actor Joseph Fiennes and legendary explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes teamed up for a Land Rover Discovery-powered journey across Egypt. *Onelife* caught up with the cousins to hear about incredible sights, dangerous creatures and the challenges of sand dune driving

STORY GEOFF POULTON

To most people, crawling through narrow tunnels, speeding across vast sand dunes and encountering snakes and scorpions – all while filming a TV show – may seem an unconventional way to get to know your cousin. But then, not everyone's cousin is famed explorer Sir Ranulph Fiennes.

For Joseph Fiennes, Hollywood actor and star of the current hit TV show *The Handmaid's Tale*, exploring Egypt with Sir Ranulph ('Ran') had seemed like an excellent idea – the chance for him to fulfil a lifelong ambition and find out more about his illustrious cousin, whom he barely knew. "But then, suddenly, you're there and the idea has morphed into reality and you feel very ill-prepared," he says. "I tried not to show it, but when we arrived, I was a little apprehensive."

There to capture his apprehension was a National Geographic crew, filming for a new three-part series which aired in spring 2019. The show follows the Fiennes as they retrace parts of Ran's 1969 expedition along the Nile river, from Alexandria to Lake Victoria.

When *Onelife* caught up with the two Fiennes, they took pleasure in sharing their experiences of filming in Egypt, as well as their favourite anecdotes. The two make for an engaging and often amusing double-act: Ran, the self-deprecating, unflappable adventurer; Joe, the eloquent, pun-loving actor.

Often dubbed the world's greatest living explorer, Ran has set records exploring both Poles, climbed Everest, run marathons on seven continents and cut off his own frostbitten finger tips. "By contrast, I think the closest I had come to feeling fear was standing up on stage in front of a few hundred people," 48-year-old Joe admits. "I was just hoping Ran wouldn't be appalled by his younger cousin."

"And I thought it would have been the other way around," quips Ran, 74. "You wondering, 'What the hell is this doddering geriatric still up to?'"

For Joe, the trip represented a chance to test himself – "to see where my cut-off point is", as well as connecting with a "near-mythical figure in the family and get an insight into the drive behind his incredible feats". For Ran, it was the opportunity to revisit cherished memories and explore new sites.

As on so many of Ran's trips, Land Rover played a vital role in the latest Fiennes adventure. Joining the party was an equally versatile adventurer, a Land Rover Discovery. In the 30 years since the nameplate's launch, the Discovery has enabled not only Ran but many

renowned explorers, teams and good causes to complete challenging global expeditions, including the memorable journey of the millionth Discovery from Birmingham to Beijing in 2012.

And it was in the Discovery that Joe got his first taste of off-road driving, tackling the imposing sand dunes of the Egyptian desert. "You know, we actually took off at one point," says Ran drily. "Yes, I'd like to apologise again for that," Joe replies. "We were heading up a huge dune and I remember Ran saying 'More speed!'. I was supposed to slow down at the top, but we went careering over, and down the other side. Gear everywhere, bones shaken. But Ran wasn't fazed."

Nor by the poisonous snakes, scorpions and spiders the two encountered on a health-and-safety prep session near Cairo. "Ran has a handle on fear. I just wanted to prove to Ran that I could cope with anything expedition life threw at me," Joe says. "Yes, you did rather well, actually," muses Ran.

The two recall crawling through tunnels barely half a metre high to reach recently discovered tombs near Al Minya. "Joe is very athletic and flexible, I couldn't keep up with his speed," Ran says. "If he was scared, he didn't show it. But gosh, what an experience. To have the privilege of being one of the first people for thousands of years to see that chamber full of mummies – that alone made the whole trip well worthwhile."

And Joe was able to indulge his artistic side, too. As a more leisurely contrast to the Indiana Jones-style adventures, he took every available opportunity to get out his sketchbook or camera. "I loved wandering off or getting lost in a souk and just sitting down for five minutes to capture some of the beauty of Egypt."

From the Great Pyramids to the temples of Abu Simbel, Joe says there are sights and experiences that will stay with him for a lifetime. But importantly, he learnt more about his cousin, and about risk-taking, the power of perseverance and pushing boundaries.

Ran nods, before adding: "And do you know what? If I had a preconceived notion of what an actor would be like in these circumstances, Joe is certainly completely different. I put it down to family DNA."

With the Land Rover Discovery set to power more far-flung expeditions in the decades to come, perhaps there's time yet for more Fiennes family adventures. □



FOLLOW THE JOURNEY Relive the Fiennes' expedition across Egypt: search for 'Return To The Nile' on nationalgeographic.co.uk



"RAN HAS A
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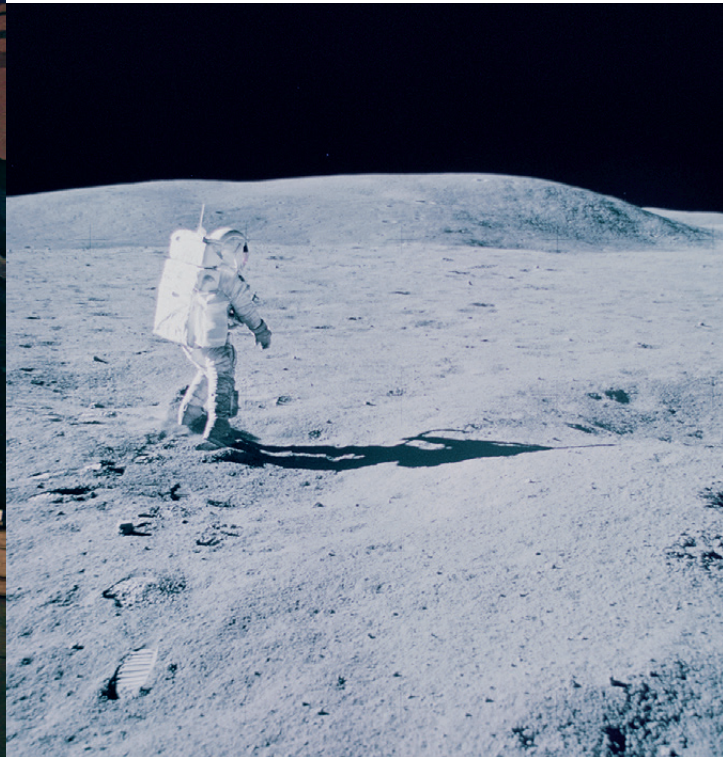
M O O N L I G H T S O N A T A

Charlie Duke is one of just four humans alive on the planet who has set foot on another world. Fifty years after the first Moon landing, *Onelife* meets a remarkable man – a cosmic explorer who heard the music of the heavens, and still dances to its tune

STORY VAISHALI DINAKARAN
PHOTOGRAPHY DANIEL AUF DER MAUER



Left and above: Duke sports his mission patch with pride. Below left: Duke (left) with his Apollo 16 crewmates, Thomas Mattingly and John Young. Below: The tenth human to walk on another world



Charlie Duke has always been an adventurer, with an irrepressible desire to go exploring – be it when he was a boy of 12, scoping out the big rock formations and caves on Coronado Island, California, or out rambling through the wilderness on family property in South Carolina earlier last year, at the age of 83. Or, most famously, as he did in 1972, when walking on the Moon, leaving footprints in the lunar surface that remain to this very day.

Our paths cross at a quiet cafe in Zurich, where Duke shares a tale of adventure only three other living men can match. His eyes brighten, and there's a sense of awe in his voice as he recounts that epic journey nearly five decades ago, on the Apollo 16 mission.

"The lingering memory of the experience that I had was the wonder of it all," he says.

"It's never been like a dream, but you can hardly believe that you've had *this* experience. One of only 12 people that have been able to step onto the Moon."

Following mission commander John Young out of the Orion lunar module he piloted, Duke became the tenth and (at 36 years) the youngest person to walk on the Moon. It was to be the most significant walk that he ever took, and one that he had long wished for.

He recollects a NASA geology training programme at the Grand Canyon, where he found himself staring up at the Moon from his sleeping bag, wondering whether someday he'd be up there too. Which is why, when he finally was, he felt joyous and triumphant all at once. The thought that ran through his head as his foot touched the surface was "I'm on the Moon – finally! I'm on the Moon!", he laughs.

As they went from location to location in the lunar rover – driving around boulders, stopping at the edge of craters, carefully peering into their depths, chipping away at rocks, collecting samples to carry back for NASA to study – there was a constant feeling of curiosity and marvel at all that they saw around them: "'What's in this crater? What are we going to find over here?'" That kind of wonder, adventure, excitement!" The memories make his face light up.

As fascinating as the surface of the Moon was, it was the "breathtakingly beautiful" sight of the Earth as seen from outer space, that truly captivated him, and also led him to the epiphany that, irrespective of our country of origin, "we're all here on

Spaceship Earth and we need to learn to love one another." Duke recollects the sight as though it were yesterday: "There were three colours – the brown of the land, the crystal blue of the oceans, and the white of the snow and the clouds. The jewel of Earth, suspended in the blackness of space." A blackness so rich and velvety, he was convinced he could almost reach out and touch it.

Perhaps the contrast between the brightness of the sunlit Earth and the blackness of space was a metaphor for Duke's own life, and his own journey; an especially dark phase followed his return to Earth. "The thought occurred to me, 'What are you going to do for the rest of your life? What's the challenge?'" Instead of a

sense of peace at having accomplished his goals, he was filled with dissatisfaction; the drive that took him to the Moon was still burning within him, and he knew not how to channel it.

The turmoil nearly cost him his family. But Duke eventually found peace in religion, repaired his personal life, and then began travelling the world sharing stories both of his journey to the Moon, and his subsequent journey with God.

"It's a responsibility I take seriously, to share my enthusiasm, especially with young people," he says. "To challenge them – that you never know where your life is going to take you."

Duke's interest in space travel remains keen, heightened by the new space race, between private companies like SpaceX, Orbital, Blue Origin and Virgin Galactic. "I can visualise something in the future, where we'll have big habitation modules orbiting Earth. I'm an advocate of building

a science station with permanent habitation on the Moon. I think we're eventually going to get to Mars," he says with conviction.

Given that he has experienced the wonders space has to offer, Duke is a vocal advocate of manned space flights, and not just for the technological growth they bring about. Instead, he believes they tap into a fundamental human characteristic – the endless desire for discovery. "I think we all have a strong urge within us, a spirit, that is inquisitive. Space travel helps to fulfil that desire to understand the Universe and the beauty of its creation."

In this octogenarian former astronaut, it's certainly strong enough to make him conclude with a smile, "Every once in a while, I think that maybe I would love to go back to the Moon." □

**"WE ALL HAVE
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T H E F I N A L F R O N T I E R

With the likes of Virgin Galactic poised to make commercial space flight a reality, get ready to boldly go where no ticketholder has gone before...

Ever since our earliest ancestors looked up to the starry skies, humans have always dreamed of exploring the great unknown above. Soon however, looking back down on the curvature of Earth will no longer be the sole preserve of national agencies' astronauts. A new era of commercial space travel is dawning. The day is not far off when all those who have looked upwards longingly will have the opportunity to experience the wonder of space for themselves.

Virgin Galactic is spearheading developments on this front. On 13th December last year, their project took a giant leap forward as mothership VMS Eve and spaceship VSS Unity took off from Mojave, California. Once released from the mothership, Unity's pilots ignited its rocket motor for a 60-second burn, which propelled the craft to nearly three times the speed of sound and, for the first time, out of Earth's atmosphere. This was a major milestone: the very first time that a crewed vehicle built for commercial passenger service has reached space, the pilots earning Commercial Astronaut Wings in recognition of their achievements.

Sending crewed rocket-propelled vehicles into space is about much more than simply proving it can be done. According to Sir Richard Branson, the British entrepreneur and philanthropist behind Virgin Galactic, the democratisation of space travel will "open space to everybody – and change the world for good". Virgin Galactic's mission is to alter the very way we see our world. "Space is not only important for the future of transportation," said George Whitesides, CEO of Virgin Galactic, hinting at the immense impact commercial spaceflight will have on global mobility. "It's important for the future of imagination."

As the exclusive automotive partner of Virgin Galactic since 2014, Land Rover plays its own role in this mission, providing vehicles to support

operations at Virgin Galactic's build and test facilities in Mojave, and at their future home for flight operations, Spaceport America in New Mexico. Once regular commercial service begins, the vehicles will also play an integral role in the astronaut experience, transporting trainee astronauts between facilities for the three days of preparation before their spaceflights. On flight days, the Land Rovers will also shuttle the crew to the spaceship, and post-flight, bring back the fully fledged astronauts to Spaceport America for celebrations and the award of astronaut wings.

The partnership goes beyond ground support; Virgin Galactic and Land Rover work together on joint youth-focussed STEM education programs around the world. They also run events for the 600 people who have already signed up to fly to space with Virgin Galactic – members of the company's exclusive Future Astronaut community. These events, which take place at Land Rover Experience centres both in the UK and abroad, are helping spacefarers to prepare themselves to go above and beyond. □

STRATOSPHERIC LUXURY

When you've touched space, will mere land vehicles seem pedestrian? Worry not; Land Rover has taken luxury to new heights. The company's Special Vehicle Operations division has created the Range Rover Astronaut Edition, inspired by the two brands' shared commitment to iconic design and engineering excellence. The exclusive edition is replete with bespoke features, from a unique multilayered paint colour inspired by the night sky to a console made from the spacecraft Unity's engraved wooden braking skid, which can be later replaced with the equivalent from the customer's own spaceflight. The Astronaut Edition is only available for purchase to those who have signed up to Virgin Galactic's Future Astronauts programme.



E L E C T R I C D R E A M S

Shenzhen is on a mission to be the blueprint for the city of tomorrow, not least with its advanced electric transportation infrastructure. We explore this innovative and driven Chinese metropolis in a Range Rover Sport PHEV





STORY **NATHANIEL HANDY**
PHOTOGRAPHY **STEFEN CHOW**

A mass of cloud-brushing glass towers perched on the edge of a vast natural harbour; the economic engine room of its nation, with more wealth per capita than anywhere else; and perhaps most fundamentally of all – a city of immigrants. Sound familiar? This isn't 20th century New York, but 21st century Shenzhen, a city that more than any other defines the new China.

Shenzhen turned 40 at the end of last year. In 1978, it was the first experiment in former leader Deng Xiaoping's drive to open up China. This sleepy fishing town of 30,000 was chosen

because it sits just across the bay from the financial hub of Hong Kong. What began as a simple factory town making most of the 'Made in China' items in your house has morphed into a metropolis of 13 million people, home to tech giants such as Huawei, Tencent and Alibaba.

Everything happens fast in Shenzhen, and that includes the future. 'I can't remember the last time I carried a wallet,' is something many locals told us; everything from parking to restaurants to the most humble street food can be bought using your smartphone. The skyscrapers may still be rising at a breathtaking pace, but this is a city where a high quality of life is now everywhere apparent.

The streets are clean and green, the parks are beautiful, and there are plenty of ways for Shenzheners to enjoy their leisure time. People throng glitzy shopping malls, the offbeat creative district of OCT-LOFT, art galleries, museums, and restaurants serving everything from tip-top Sichuan flavours and Beijing-style beef hotpot to sushi and Parisian coffee.

Perhaps most importantly, Shenzhen has mapped out a goal for itself in sustainable urban living. Part of

the International Low Carbon City initiative, it leads the world in electric vehicle infrastructure. Last year, its entire bus and taxi fleets turned electric and it has one of the world's most comprehensive networks of EV charging points. As a result, the sound of Shenzhen is a purr rather than a roar. What better place to bring the Range Rover Sport Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicle? Welcome to the future – Shenzhen-style.

There's an ad everywhere in the city that says, 'Once you come to Shenzhen, you're a Shenzhen-er'.

It reveals the super-open essence of the city. We meet Tat Lam of social enterprise start-up Shanzhai City in the newly developed Houhai district, where many of Shenzhen's steel and glass towers are literally still growing.

Amidst the girders and hard hats, Tat is explaining the unique identity that's been forged in a few short decades. "Shenzhen is a start-up version of a city," says Tat. "If it doesn't innovate, it doesn't have any value. It's always looking for the next thing."

This energy is the result of a mixing of people from all over China, each searching for something new. Lately, that includes everything from craft beer to designer tea with frothy

cheese toppings. Walk the streets of the converted warehouse district of OCT-LOFT and you'll find a low-lit gym where leather Chesterfield sofas rub shoulders with the weight benches, and the rough-and-ready OCT Contemporary Art Terminal offers a retrospective of sculpture, 3D printing and film from artist Sui Jianguo.

"Shenzhen is a series of urban villages where innovations develop organically," says Tat. "In that sense, you could think of it as a crowd city. Rather →

**SHENZHEN HAS
MAPPED OUT A
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IN SUSTAINABLE
URBAN LIVING.
IT LEADS THE
WORLD IN
ELECTRIC VEHICLE
INFRASTRUCTURE**

Slick and sophisticated, Shenzhen is not only home to the world's latest trends, but is now setting its own. Top left: social start-up founder Tat Lam, amongst the city's fast-rising towers





than being filled with big mega-projects, here the crowd decides which small-scale innovations work best. Those that are popular will grow.”

In the last 20 years, some of these small ideas have become really big. In a two-square-mile block, you’ll find the headquarters of tech giants Alibaba, Tencent and Huawei, and the world’s leading drone company, DJI. All this development can mean less cool things – dirt, smog and noise. But here again, Shenzhen has some neat answers built into its DNA. Across the waters of Shenzhen Bay, bulbous mountains rise green out of the heat haze: Hong Kong.

Such proximity has brought with it some useful ideas. “Shenzhen has learned a lot from Hong Kong,” says Tat. “Hong Kong made its mountain areas into country parks and Shenzhen followed that model. Now, half of all space in Shenzhen is green, which is almost unique in China.”

That greenery is not confined to the mountains, which snake into the heart of the central districts. As we cruise the city, in near-silence thanks to the Range Rover Sport PHEV’s electric drivetrain, every road is lined with palms and tangles of tropical creepers. Concrete and glass are juxtaposed with deep, shaded undergrowth. Plants even hang from the sides of skyscrapers. Along these green belts, we pull off the highway into car parks where EV charging points stand among the palms and lawns. And there is water everywhere – cascading, spouting or lying in tranquility.

“All these sustainable developments are simply a choice between doing something better or doing nothing,” says Tat. “Most cities have the burden of history, of existing infrastructure. Shenzhen can make itself afresh, and the impetus isn’t top-down. It’s about daring to take risks – and about implementation. Testing these systems in a small city of 100,000 doesn’t reveal the value of the innovation. Here you can scale innovation fast for a city of 13 million. That quickly makes new ways of doing things popular.”

One man who knows better than most the value of scaling up to the Shenzhen model is Robin Wu. This leading tech pioneer is an embodiment of the city’s spirit. We meet in his 22nd-floor office looking out over the golfing greens and glass towers of Houhai.

“For the post-1980s-born who come to Shenzhen, it’s a one-way ticket,” says Robin. “We have to give it our all. Most of the success stories in Shenzhen are people who come from other provinces, like me.” Robin was born in the mountains of Jiangxi province. Ten years ago, he was part of a pioneering group of

IT specialists innovating such smartphone features as dual SIM cards. Today, sitting surrounded by his latest prototypes, he believes that the breakneck period in Shenzhen’s story is over.

“The new era is moving towards innovation and world-beating competitiveness, rather than simply manufacturing,” says Robin. “We’re trying to innovate products that are not in the Western markets yet.”

He cradles in his hand his latest innovation, a small credit card-sized device that plugs into your smartphone and converts it – via a projector or screen – into a laptop. It’s neat and so simple. Robin’s company, MeeGoPad, an offshoot

of traditional manufacturing firm Huajian, is an innovation cell that’s about taking creative risks. Many of its projects use crowdfunding as a source of capital.

“MeeGoPad is more like a club,” Robin explains. “People of different backgrounds come together and share their knowledge to make something new. The direction of our product line isn’t fixed; where there’s a need, we try to fulfill it.” He looks out over the skyscrapers that surround us. “The Shenzhen spirit is not simply about money,” he continues. “It’s about deeper motivations – how to improve people’s lives and make a better community. Within this area there are 300 listed companies, but they don’t forget the small guys, because we were all small guys not so long ago.” →

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People like tech inventor Robin Wu (top right) and innovation lab founder Seth Li (left) are the driving force behind Shenzhen’s rise as a hub of pioneering thinking

Just across town, Shenzhen Open Innovation Lab is a space that's all about connecting the small guys – the makers of the city – with industrial design companies.

"We were founded as a FabLab," explains project coordinator Seth Li. An idea that began in the US, a FabLab provides project management, website design, hardware design – all the basics to help a maker understand how to make a product by themselves. "We provide fabrication machines to help people prototype their ideas. We're open to everyone, and we host workshops and lectures. A maker can come here to chat and exchange ideas."

The exchange of ideas is something that's happening at every level in Shenzhen. We step into the pre-cooled cabin of the Range Rover Sport, which we'd parked at a nearby charge point, and head to Shekou, the city's original port area, to visit Design Society.

"Well, Design Society isn't a direct translation," explains its deputy director, Rong Zhao. "In Chinese we're called Design Interconnected. It reflects our vision of being a bridge – to the world, to the local community, and between makers and the industrial design companies of the city."

Eight years ago, China Merchants, a major corporation, enlisted Pritzker Prize-winning Japanese architect Fumihiko Maki to design this cultural centrepiece for the Shekou port area. In December 2017, this very public building opened its doors wide.

"Shekou is a special place," says Rong. "It's where the process of opening up began. It was a test tube of Shenzhen." China Merchants began by making a port to connect to the outside world. With Design Society, they're once again seeking global connections.

"There's a transformation taking place, from 'Made in China' to 'Created in China'," says Rong. "Shenzhen was the very first Chinese city to be awarded UNESCO City of Design in 2008. We set out to build on this with the first initiative to bring a European state museum into China." The result is a collaboration with London's

Victoria and Albert Museum that includes a permanent V&A Gallery at Design Society and the sharing of ideas.

"It's an adventure for both sides," says Rong. "We've introduced them to design associations, tech firms and schools in Shenzhen. They've brought us ideas like their community-focused Rapid Response Collecting project, where members of the public are asked to donate objects that they feel represent their community. As a result, a Shenzhen school uniform is now part of V&A's permanent collection."

Even the architecture in which Design Society is housed is about engaging Shenzheners. "Everything is open," explains Rong. "You can move seamlessly from inside to outside. There are staircases connecting a roof park with the surrounding parks. We've given the land back to the public in its entirety."

And there is a sense of giving back culturally, too. The most recent exhibition – titled *Craft: The Reset* – celebrated traditional Chinese crafts of paper, furniture and ceramic making, but it celebrates them for, and in, the 21st century Chinese city.

"More than ever, modern fast places shouldn't forget about craft," says Jovana Bogdanovic, one of Hangzhou-based design trio PINWU, whose celebrated paper chair for Hermes is part of the show. "In many ways, craft influences architecture, design, lifestyle and cuisine."

This mixing of artistry and innovation is now permeating the city. At the nearby Artron Arts Centre, an installation by renowned Chinese pyrotechnic artist Cai Guo-Qiang is displayed against a backdrop of the world's largest wall of books, a 30m-tall, 50m-long library of art history.

Shenzhen is now shaping a new role for itself in the world through its creative response to technology, urban culture and the need for a sustainable future, and whichever direction that takes, what Shenzhen will never do is stand still. Progress is made and the future is shaped by those who move – and if you move at Shenzhen speed, you'll be a pacesetter. □

**THE EXCHANGE
OF IDEAS IS
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THE MIXING OF
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Design Society's Rong Zhao (top) sees her organisation as building cultural bridges to the wider world. Right: the record-setting book wall, at Artron Centre



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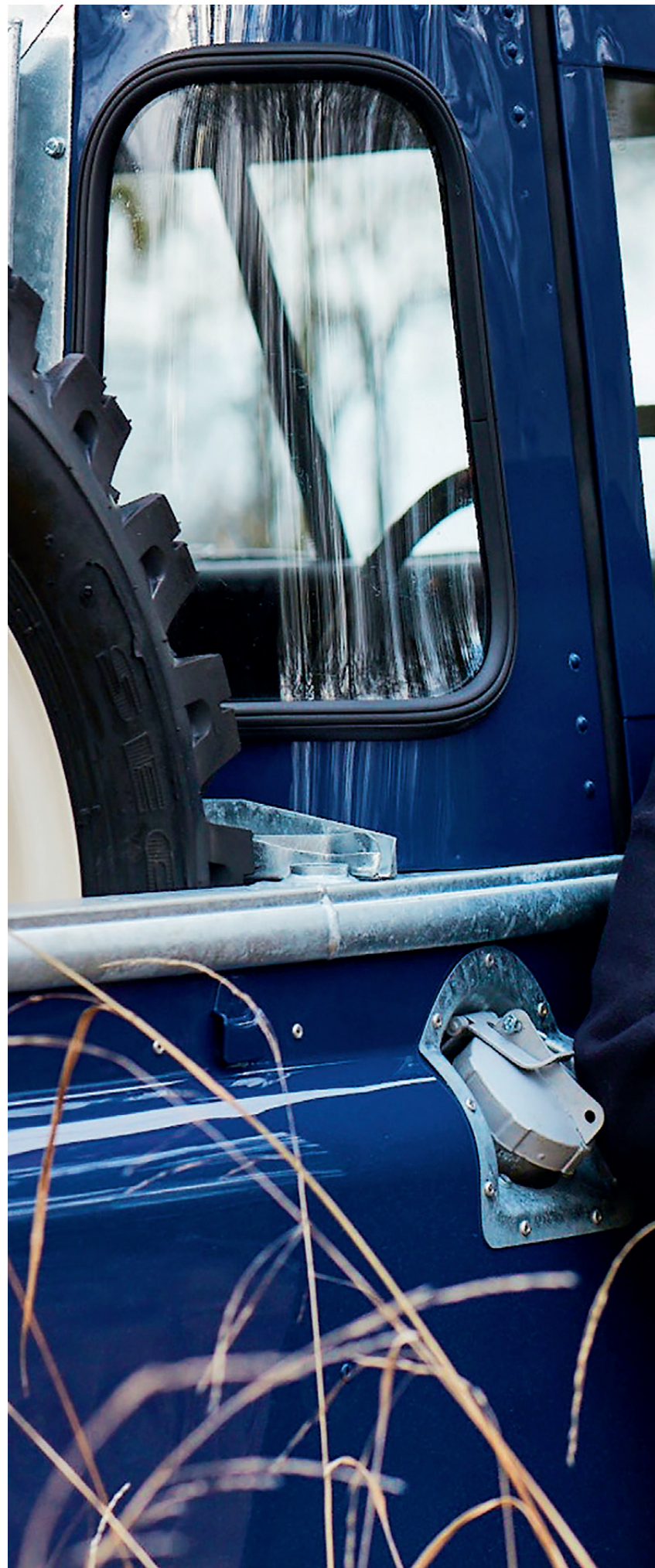
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Bamford Watch Department specialises in customising luxury timepieces. *Onelife* goes off-road with founder, and Land Rover enthusiast, George Bamford to learn about his life in watches and his unique take on luxury

STORY LUKE PONSFORD
PHOTOGRAPHY ALEXANDER RHIND







"LUXURY ISN'T ALL ABOUT THE PRICE. IT HAS TO BE BESPOKE,
IT HAS TO HAVE PERSONALISATION. THEY GO HAND IN HAND"



To say that George Bamford likes Land Rovers would be something of an understatement. He *really* likes Land Rovers. In garages scattered across his Cotswolds estate he has 14, among them a Defender, several ex-military Wolf models, a vertiginous off-road creation nicknamed 'The Beast', and his latest restoration, a 1972 110 tow truck. So it's little surprise that we're here, on Bamford's very own soggy off-road course, talking about his custom-made watch business, rather than in the somewhat plusher confines of 'The Hive', Bamford Watch Department's headquarters in Mayfair, London.

The epicentre of a business that Bamford started 16 years ago, after deciding to not join the family firm – JCB, of bright yellow digger fame and one of Britain's wealthiest dynasties – The Hive's consulting room is where customers can create their very own personalised watch, poring over the smallest details, choosing colours, hands, dial options.

Bamford thrives on these details, his obsession with watches going back to his childhood. "I come from an engineering family," he explains as we slither down a slippery incline in the tow-truck. "It's in my blood. When I was small I'd take the TV or the juicer to bits, which my parents found quite annoying," he smiles. "When I was 16 they gave me a Breitling Navitimer and I took that to bits as well, which annoyed them further."

But that Navitimer was to be Bamford's lightning bolt with watches. He spent the following years, while studying photography at the Parsons School of Design in New York, visiting flea markets buying up cheap old timepieces, disassembling and re-assembling their movements, learning what made them tick.

While the inner workings fascinated Bamford, many watch designs left him cold. "I realised that so many mass market luxury products were the same – the same black dial, the same steel case," he says. "So, in 2003, I decided to personalise a Tag Heuer Monaco I'd been given. I had the whole watch black-coated – the dial, case, everything. That was my first customised watch."

Once he started wearing the black Monaco, friends started to notice, and wanted one too, so Bamford had more produced. Bamford Watch Department was born. Early signature projects from BWD were heavily customised Rolexes – most notably the all-black Cosmograph Daytona. But Rolex took a dim view of Bamford's interpretations of their classic designs.

Indeed, Bamford's unique take on these famous timepieces – black-coating them, adding different colourways to the dials and hands – was invalidating their warranties, a major problem when it came to after-sales servicing. Nevertheless, the personalisation

business continued to grow, so Bamford kept going, even creating his own in-house service department on the top floor of The Hive. BWD soon became known as the world's premier customiser of Rolex watches.

Everything changed in 2016, however, when multinational luxury goods group LVMH threw its full weight behind BWD. "That deal put us in a very good place," he says, as we negotiate a near-impossible incline in the Land Rover. "Getting approval was one of the best things ever because we could now offer a manufacturer warranty with our products."

Abandoning Rolex, BWD focussed its efforts on LVMH's three premium watch brands – Tag Heuer, Zenith and Bulgari. Bamford's huge range of customisation options was now fully legitimate, allowing customers to spec a watch to their own personal taste, choosing from a total combination of over a billion options. BWD also started producing its own range of watches at the same time, the Bamford London Mayfair and GMT Auto offering a way into the brand at a more affordable price point.

"The Mayfair comes in 49 colours," he enthuses. "And we can customise it further for a small fee. But luxury isn't all about the price. It has to be bespoke, it has to have personalisation. They go hand in hand. As with my cars, my focus is on individuality. Purists may not approve, but I love it. I want people to have what they want."

It's a philosophy which is paying dividends. With boutiques and dealers worldwide and a demanding market for his wares in Asia and the US, Bamford has created his own mini empire to go alongside the family dynasty. There's also a line of grooming products and accessories to add to the portfolio.

So, where next for the Bamford brand? Custom-made cars? Bespoke private jets? Bamford smiles wryly as he pulls the Land Rover into his gravelled driveway. "Well, short-term we're launching a new watch just before the summer and we have new collaborations happening – totally apart from LVMH," he explains.

"But if you'd asked me ten years ago, I don't think I would have envisaged this business where it is today. I still constantly think 'is it going to die tomorrow?' he laughs. "But now, being embraced by the brands I'm working with, I have the sun beating down on me. I can safely say I love where I'm sitting."

And you can bet that applies to the now mud-caked Land Rover as well. □

Left: George Bamford with some of his horological creations, and out in his lovingly restored Land Rover 110 tow truck at his estate in the Cotswolds

Visit bamfordwatchdepartment.com for more information on BWD

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Onelife delves into a cultural phenomenon that sees the backstreets of Rio de Janeiro explode into colourful life every year (and no, it's not the Carnival you're thinking of). As an acclaimed new documentary film reveals, this is...

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Frills, fur, flashing lights and all that glitters unleash dazzling energy in Guadalupe, a neighbourhood of Rio de Janeiro. In their ornate costumes and masks, a parade of crews take to the streets. With courtly shapes that recall the historic tradition, but neon designs and iridescent trimmings that are thoroughly modern, the look is bright, rich, garish yet regal. After a year of preparation, the crews are like strutting peacocks. Parasols, coloured smoke and fireworks fill the air. Kids rule the streets, full of excitement, bravado and pride.

These and other astounding visions are captured in *This is Bate Bola*, a short film co-directed by Ben Holman and Neirin Jones which takes viewers deep into the heart of a lesser-known Rio Carnival subculture.

Away from the main Carnival, bate-bola sees dozens of crews of working-class people put on their own themed parades, a surreal competition between suburban neighbourhoods full of elaborate costumes and props. Equal parts play and menace, bate-bola has roots in African and European carnival traditions in which masked men, banging animal bladders on the ground, would excite and scare the crowds. Today, bladders are replaced by plastic globes tied to sticks – the name means ‘beat the ball’.

Holman is a British documentary filmmaker with an enviable collection of stamps in his passport – “Plan the holiday that you really want to go on, then work backwards, and find the film that fits,” he jokes – and a track record of films that reveal bravely poignant stories from around the world. Like his films, Holman is warm, engaging and instantly likeable. His energetic, right-in-the-action approach is immediately evident: one of his legs is strapped up because he broke it during filming.

Ever since fulfilling a childhood dream to spend the millennium New Year’s Eve on Copacabana Beach, Holman has split his time between London and Brazil. “I’d always had a strong connection with South American culture through friends I’d had as a teenager. It created an affinity for me with that culture.”

Holman recalls initial nerves, from preconceptions generated by films such as *City of God*; “Yes, there are gangsters and guns,” he says. “But you see grannies and children dealing with the situation and getting on with it as part of their day-to-day lives. And I feel, if I’m there, the rules shouldn’t be different for me.”

A keen amateur boxer, Holman came across an NGO in one of Rio’s most notorious favelas which organised boxing for personal development. Seeing something that went beyond stereotypes of the city, he developed a strong connection with the community and began making films for them, hoping to make a

wider impact. One community member, Alan Duarte, set up his own NGO, Abraço Campeão. Telling Alan’s story became a labour of love for Holman. The result, *The Good Fight*, was deemed Best Documentary Short at the 2017 Tribeca Film Festival, leading to funding that now supports over 200 young people in the community.

Holman’s films are experiential and intimate. You can feel the atmosphere, excitement, and the sensory power of the moment. They also give a platform to marginalised voices: “A recurring theme in my work is going to places that I feel are misunderstood or misrepresented, where our knowledge is largely

formed by what the media tells us, and trying to show the reality. So the idea of *Bate Bola* was to show that beautiful heart, that warmth that I discovered in those communities, which is very strong and absolutely existent. Bate-bola is so vibrant. It’s about the noise and the smells and the craziness – it’s fun and beautiful, but also a little bit edgy and scary. I thought it was an amazing metaphor for favela communities themselves.”

Holman sees bate-bola as an example of something that may need external validation to be appreciated within its own country. “These people are otherwise invisible. They put on masks to be seen. Outside their small community they’re not known, they’re not getting respect or praise for the beautiful costumes, the art that goes into it all.”

The theatre of bate-bola was echoed in special film screenings in Chicago and London, which included a standing audience, a live semi-improvised score with Brazilian musicians and soundtrack creator Ben Lamar Gay’s band, and an afterparty with monster speaker stacks to reproduce the carnival vibe. Holman hopes *This Is Bate Bola* will bring overdue attention to and appreciation of the phenomenon, and to Rio’s other textures beyond Carnival clichés.

“Rio for me is simultaneously the most beautiful and the ugliest city in the world,” reflects Ben. “It can get dark, but at the same time, every week I’ve ever been there, there’s always been that moment of genuine magic, of something special.” □



Ben Holman turned in a London ad agency job to make documentaries that shine a light on the world’s hidden stories



WATCH THE FILM View *This is Bate Bola* and learn more about Ben Holman’s work at www.beijafilms.com



"FUN AND BEAUTIFUL,
EDGY AND SCARY -
BATE-BOLA IS A
METAPHOR FOR THE
FAVELAS THEMSELVES"



Land Rover Classic Works' Reborn programme,

launched two years ago, is an object lesson in attention to detail and deep-rooted obsession. Its purpose is to locate and extract milestone vehicles from Land Rover's history, then restore them to their full and original factory specification – a painstaking task which marries the reconditioning of existing parts with the precision engineering of new ones.

With Land Rovers being the original 'go anywhere' vehicles, donor vehicles to the Reborn programme can literally turn up anywhere on the globe, from the highest peaks to the lowest valleys, from urban centres to uninhabited outposts, from extreme heat to sub-zero climates. Is this a problem – or a once-in-a-lifetime, dreamlike opportunity for a Land Rover enthusiast?

"Definitely the latter," says Classic Works' Calum McKechnie. "Our staff are Land Rover-obsessed – they know every single nut and bolt and panel. Whether a Defender needs pulling out of a cowshed in Romania, or there's a Range Rover halfway up a mountain in the Himalayas in need of restoration, we'll always see a queue of willing volunteers."

Most donor vehicles to the Reborn programme arrive with a story: with Series Land Rovers, that's anything from a dash of paint to homemade customisations or, in certain cases, a complete repurposing of a vehicle's chassis, even into fire trucks, mobile libraries and catering vans. Yet one particular recent find came with a story that enchanted

REDEMPTION SONG

When Classic Works' Reborn team unearthed a Range Rover with a curious patina, it belied a stellar musical history...

STORY DAN DRAGE

even the most battle-hardened of Classic Works' team – especially those with an interest in reggae and roots.

"It all started when we were alerted to the availability of a 1980, two-door Range Rover, which had a very unusual history," says McKechnie.

"Built in Solihull, it had initially been exported to Germany, and soon after, shipped out again, this time to Jamaica. There, it had changed colour from Masai Red to a mixture of black, blue and green. And it was being shipped regularly between Jamaica and the UK.

"We were interested enough to delve into its ownership history. The original registration document bore the name of one Robert Nesta Marley. Basically, we'd found Bob Marley's Range Rover."

Perhaps not the most intuitive of love affairs, but the relationship between Marley and Land Rover ran deep. Marley's other Land Rover, a 1976 Series III truck, had been recovered and restored in 2015 (see box). Why did Bob Marley feel the need to covet two Land Rovers in his adult life? The answer lies in his →





upbringing in the rural Saint Ann Parish on Jamaica's north coast. Known mostly for its status as an unprecedented hotbed of reggae talent – the birthplace of Burning Spear, Shabba Ranks and even Marcus Mosiah Garvey himself – Saint Ann is also the most agricultural and rugged of Jamaica's districts. To fully appreciate its rural beauty, Marley would've required an erstwhile off-roader to get himself around, a preference he clearly carried into adulthood.

While Marley's Series III had been left mostly untouched, he (or members of the Marley household) elected to modify the colour of his Range Rover.

"Now we've extracted Marley's Range Rover, we can fully appreciate his own, personal paint job," says McKechnie. "Black on the bonnet, green on most of the door panels, dark blue on the roof – we've never really seen anything like it before."

Further research conducted by Classic Works revealed that it wasn't Marley himself who got busy with the paintbrush – he actually left that to his children. The paint job on this particular Range Rover comes courtesy

of Stephen, Rohan and Julian Marley, all of whom were still of junior school age when they picked up their brushes. They all recall fondly how their father would ferry them to school, football and the various clubs they were members of in the car they decorated themselves.

Indeed, the Range Rover

and the Series III left a lasting impression on Rohan, who's now a coffee grower and plantation owner in Jamaica's Portland parish – quite the deviation from his previous career as an American footballer.

"I love driving through the coffee fields in my Land Rover," Rohan told the BBC at a 70th anniversary celebration concert for his father, which featured his restored Series III as the centrepiece. "You see farmers driving in their 1970s Land Rovers," he added. "You just can't kill them – they keep going and going."

The next chapter in the life story of the newly discovered Range Rover is still being written. "Firstly, we have to decide on the colour – do we keep the Marley family mural or do we go all the way back to the production line and Masai Red," confides McKechnie.

"Then, we have a number of options, including putting the car up for auction, donating it to the Bob Marley Museum or adding it to our own collection. I'm a huge Marley fan and I've already started to develop something of an attachment." □

Best known as one of the world's most iconic musicians, Bob Marley was also a keen automobile enthusiast



CASE FILE: THE OTHER MARLEY LAND ROVER

The extracted Range Rover (top) now awaiting restoration at Classic Works is not the first Marley Land Rover to have risen from the deep. The blue 1976 Series III (above) was restored in 2015, and even starred in a free concert to celebrate what would have been Marley's 70th birthday. Sandals Resorts International, which operates Jamaica's Land Rover dealership, collaborated with ATL Automotive's master Land Rover technician Stephen James, US parts supplier Rovers North, as well as Marley's family, to rebuild the vehicle. While it's not the millimetre-perfect, ground-up kind of restoration you'd get from Classic Works, it still looks ready to relive its glory days in the Jamaican countryside.

FIND OUT MORE Follow Land Rover's global social media channels to see updates on Marley's Range Rover later this year. To enquire about restoring your own heritage vehicle, visit jaguarlandroverclassic.com



BORN WINNERS

The Land Rover BORN Awards celebrate peerless lifestyle design,
and the latest winners exude the perfect blend of style and substance



A great design is one that stands the test of time, and creating one is no easy feat. From the Series Land Rovers (and their direct successor, the Defender) to, more recently, the Range Rover Evoque, Land Rover is no stranger to creating a design that is not only true to purpose but captures the popular imagination.

Outside the world of cars, too, some brands stand out better than most when it comes to creating products with peerless, iconic design. From the Zippo lighter to the Anglepoise table lamp, the Swiss Army knife to the Pantone chair, they are universally acknowledged as being as aesthetically beautiful as they are cleverly functional.

Recognising such feats of peerless design was the central idea behind the 2018 BORN Global Awards. The BORN Awards, co-sponsored by Land Rover for the second year running, are a themed annual celebration of global creativity, design and ingenuity across a range of lifestyle categories. BORN was founded by Jean-Christophe Chopin as a digital premium network of creative professionals and a B2B marketplace for designed products. The Awards laud products, and their makers, that inspire and challenge. Competition is fierce: this year, some 7,000 entries from six world regions had been whittled down to just 48, whereupon the stage was

Left: The Brompton folding bicycle has been cleverly electrified. Top: Land Rover design chief Gerry McGovern lauds the award winners. Above: Brompton's Will Carlesmith and David Rhys with their award



set to recognise the best of the best at the awards ceremony held in London's Design Museum.

In the Mobility Design category, it was another much-loved British brand that triumphed: the electrified version of the Brompton folding bicycle. A design classic, its lines have remained virtually unchanged ever since production began in 1981. It's so common to see London commuters snappily folding up this small bicycle to easily carry it into the Tube, or unfolding one on their way out before smoothly zipping away down the road, that the Brompton has come to symbolise urban freedom and convenient last-mile connectivity.

The electric variant, launched last year, feeds the booming e-bike market with a characteristically neat, high-quality folding solution. A lightweight, easily detachable battery pack allied to an ingeniously compact 250-watt motor in the front wheel hub, to intelligently boost cycling performance and reduce effort. A worthy winner, for as Land Rover's Chief Design Officer Gerry McGovern, who was on the panel of judges at the event, put it: "To truly deserve the term 'peerless' takes imagination, intellect, wit and more than a little wisdom."

Read on for an overview of the rest of the winners: a prestigious roster of design heroes and future classics. →





BORN AWARDS 2018: THE BEST OF THE REST

01 INTERIOR DESIGN

Michael Anastassiades' Flos Arrangements creates head-turning products that are almost jewellery-like. The British lighting firm's pendant lamps are a modular system of geometric light elements that gracefully attach to and rest on each other, with multiple combinations to create delicate compositions of glowing chains.

Runner-up: Ilia Potemine, Isp Lamp (France)

02 ARCHITECTURE DESIGN

Cino Zucchi's design of Italian coffee products company Lavazza's new headquarters in Turin bagged the category win. His striking Nuvola complex regenerates a former industrial site with an artful blend of nature – at the heart of the site lay fountains, trees, green spaces, benches and a pedestrian link – and stunning, LEED Gold-certified sustainable design.

Runner-up: Ramon Esteve, Bombas Gens (Spain)

03 SPORT DESIGN

Category honours went to Alexandre Fauvet of renowned French skiwear brand Fusalp. Fusalp's 'sport-chic' philosophy marries performance and elegance to create ski-suits, jackets and shoes that look equally at home in the après chalet as on the slopes at Winter Olympic Games.

Runner-up: Teckell, 90° Minuto (Italy)

04 LEISURE DESIGN

It took a ban from the NBA for people to notice what American brothers Ryan and Adam Goldston had created. Their Athletic Propulsion Labs sneakers use forefoot compression springs to give wearers a boost. With supportive and comfortable TechLoom knit construction, APL's distinctive products stormed the sports world.

Runner-up: Clara Daguin, Aura Inside (France)

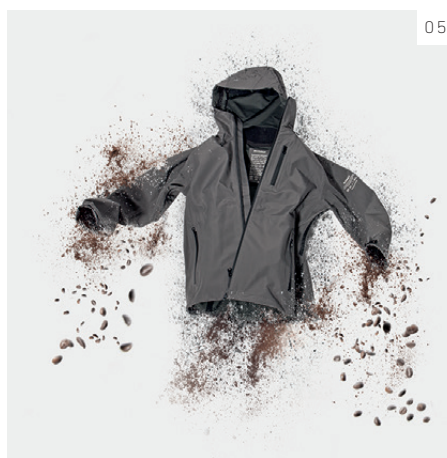
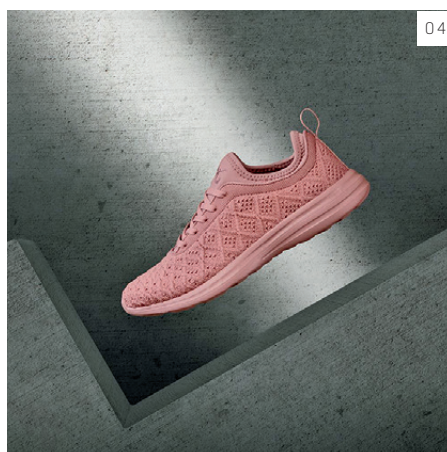
05 TECHNOLOGY DESIGN

Frustrated with the wastefulness of the fashion industry, Spanish entrepreneur Javier Goyeneche launched Ecoalf. Made of recycled materials, including plastics salvaged from the seas, Ecoalf clothing, footwear and accessories are now worn by the likes of Gwyneth Paltrow and Will.i.am.

Runner-ups: Hugo Mercier, Dreem (France) and Max Pontrelli, Lap Steel Guitar (Italy)

SPECIAL PRIZES

These were awarded to the Loewe Foundation, sculptor Nino Mustica, and Scott Painter's US-based Fair app. Fair lets people flexibly hire pre-owned cars, via mobile, without long-term commitment or debt. A slick, all-digital, end-to-end transactional platform using predictive analytical technology, Fair proves that clean, effective design is in fact extremely complex.





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Bangladeshi mountaineer and human rights activist Wasfia Nazreen is proud to defy convention

Wasfia Nazreen never imagined she'd watch the sun

rise from the top of the world. Her journey to the top of Mount Everest was a treacherous one, battling extreme cold, sickness and the daily threat of deadly avalanches. The frozen bodies of perished climbers she encountered along the way offered a stark reminder of the danger. As she neared the summit, more than 8,000 metres above sea level, the first tears began to fall. When Nazreen finally reached the top, she was sobbing uncontrollably, overcome with gratitude. "After feeling so alone on the ascent, I suddenly sensed a connection to every single being. My entire life flashed in front of me. I felt tinier than a bug on these Himalayan gods and goddesses."

Climbing Mt Everest in 2012 was a life-changing experience for the 36-year-old from Bangladesh, giving her a "newfound realisation of how limited our time on Earth is and a fresh strength and perspective for activism". Nazreen doesn't just climb for herself: it has become her way of promoting strength and hope for women, both in her native country and beyond.

Everest was just one part of 'Bangladesh on Seven Summits', her tribute to the fortitude of the women who had suffered during Bangladesh's war of independence. In 2015, she reached the top of Carstensz Pyramid in New Guinea, becoming the first Bangladeshi, and one of just a few hundred people, to climb the highest peaks on each of the world's seven continents.

At each summit, Nazreen proudly displayed the Bangladesh flag, before pulling out a collapsible hula hoop and twirling it around her hips. "I was chastised for doing this as a child, so I do it for me and the girls

back home. It's my way of saying 'No more'."

Nazreen grew up in Chittagong, Bangladesh's second-largest city. After finishing school in the capital Dhaka, she received a scholarship to a college in the US to study art and psychology. Her thesis on how women use art as therapy took her to numerous regions in India, including Dharamshala, home to the Tibetan government in exile, where her passion for the mountains and human rights grew. She worked for aid organisations before deciding to combine her passions for climbing and activism full time; she works to raise awareness of human rights abuses and climate change.

Despite the "love" she received from all over the world, as a Bangladeshi woman, completing the Seven Summits presented major challenges – and not just the physical, mental, financial and logistical. "I encountered discrimination, insults, even death threats. But these only serve to make the rising feminine force stronger."

A self-confessed perfectionist, Nazreen considers planning an expedition an art form. Logistics work will often begin months, even years in advance, alongside her year-round physical training. "No matter how well you plan, though," she says, "you also have to accept that almost anything can and will go wrong." Nazreen aims to start each day with meditation. "Mindfulness is essential while climbing, and mountaineering is a source of reflection and calmness for me."

It's an unconventional career choice, she admits, especially coming from a society in which everything she has chosen to do is considered 'abnormal' or 'taboo'. "But that's exactly what I'm most proud of: Living the life I choose to." □

Nazreen's conquest of mountains is a tribute to Bangladeshi women. Top left: Showing the Dalai Lama a photo of Tibet taken from the peak of Mt Everest. Top right: atop Mt Denali, Alaska



S T O R I E S U N D E R F O O T

What's your ultimate voyage of discovery? How about... time travel?
Palaentologist Kenneth Lacovara takes us on a journey to the centre of the Earth

Would you like to visit an improbably wondrous place? One shrouded in mystery, but generous in tantalising glimpses of events so epic and so otherworldly that knowledge of them is bound to strain the credulity of all but the most ardent readers of fantasy? Look down, in your mind's eye, through the carpet, the flooring, through whatever impediment separates you from the Earth below. The place where you now find yourself is likely, in its own vast history, to equal in splendour the most celebrated natural wonders.

No view on Earth is more vaunted than that which can be had from the rim of the Grand Canyon in the US. Descending from its rim down the eight-mile Bright Angel Trail is a soulful experience, a journey nearly two billion years in time, a visceral voyage through the many past worlds that have been our Earth. It's a transformative experience that leaves many travelers with an overwhelming feeling of connectedness to the land, and to the vast arc of time.

Heated and squeezed metamorphic rocks form its twisted basement. Above these sits a towering edifice of sedimentary rock that records the many marine transgressions and regressions that have yo-yoed this region from land to sea and back again over the last half-billion years. Within these layers of sandstone, limestone and shale are fossils that tell the story of a succession of life, from bizarrely primitive ancestral varieties below to more familiar modern forms above. Yet, geologically, this is fairly standard. What makes it special is that the pages have been laid bare for all to see.

The erosive power of the Colorado River has split the plateau asunder, revealing the history that lies below. In geology, exposure is everything. The Earth's lithosphere – its uppermost layers, namely the crust and the mantle – is the repository of our planet's history. Though its volumes contain epics, the library is mostly shut – closed to us surface dwellers, except when erosion and uplift conspire to reveal a page here or a chapter there. You have lived your entire life traversing the uppermost pages of countless unseen stories. With a little effort, you can catch a glimpse of the deep time tales that surround us.

When heading away from Manhattan, look across the River Hudson and you will see dark towers of rock rising from the edge to form a stony fortification. The 300-foot-tall Palisades are a view of one of the most dramatic moments in planetary history, when, 200 million years ago, tectonic forces tore apart the then super-continent Pangaea. As the Earth's crust thinned, along a line that would later become the Atlantic Ocean, magma below welled up to form vast pockets of molten rock. These convulsions released immense quantities of CO₂ into the atmosphere and tipped the climate into runaway global warming. These sudden changes killed most organisms. When the worst of it ended, at the end of the Triassic Period, over 75% of all species had vanished.

At the time, the dominant large land animals were the ancestors of crocodiles. Dinosaurs, still early in their tenure, struggled to compete against these larger, fiercer contemporaries. Both groups survived the mass extinction, but the crocodiles took the worst of it. With the playing field now leveled, dinosaurs flourished, and evolved into the dizzying variety of species that would completely dominate terrestrial ecosystems across the Jurassic and Cretaceous Periods. And every traveller across the George Washington Bridge can simply glance up and see the incredible apocalypse that triggered this biological revolution.

This example is by no means unique. Look down from a porch in San Francisco and you'll see rock deposits that have skimmed along the western edge of North America –

passengers on a tectonic conveyor belt that will eventually deposit the city's bedrock into the heart of Alaska. Cruising the Pennsylvania Turnpike motorway from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh, you'll transect the Appalachian Mountains – once part of a chain of peaks that included Morocco's Atlas mountains and parts of the Scottish Highlands. Beneath any swimming pool in Florida lies limestone laid down in a warm sea terrorised by history's largest shark, the 40-foot-long megalodon. Hike Colorado's Front Range mountains, and you traverse the former coast of an interior seaway that stretched from the Gulf of Mexico

to the Arctic Ocean. Along its beaches roamed some of the best-known dinosaurs, from the Stegosaurus to the Apatosaurus.

So, take another moment to contemplate the place where you are. It's guaranteed to be amazing – a unique slice of this world's 4.5-billion-year history, set in stone. To find out its incredible story, search online for its geological history, visit your local museum of natural history, or grab a tool and dig for yourself. Train your eyes to see the rockbound stories that lie underfoot, and you'll never look at your world in quite the same way again. □

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MEET THE AUTHOR
KENNETH LACOVARA
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ARE WE THERE YET?

For antics big and small, adventurer Ben Saunders finds the Discovery a trusty ally

In spending long tracts of my adult life dragging a sledge around the polar regions, I fear I may have been guilty of perpetrating the myth that if a journey doesn't cross the Arctic Circle or take in a little of the barren Antarctic Plateau then it doesn't qualify as a proper adventure. The truth is that each hour I've spent on the ice has been preceded by many, many rather less glamorous hours of preparation and training. I suspect the modern-day polar explorer's ratio of time spent in a sledge harness versus time spent working on spreadsheets is probably approaching 1:1.

One of the perks of the job, however, has been the commute. As I prepared to head to Antarctica in 2013 – to start a two-man, 1,800-mile expedition that went on to break the record for the longest ever polar journey on foot – I lived with my dog in a small London flat. Battersea Park wasn't going to be the best spot to train for our ascent of the fearsome Beardmore Glacier, so getting ready entailed more than a few road trips.

The Land Rover Discovery turns 30 this year: three decades of expeditions, of exploring the planet and human limits. In my decade of ownership I've clocked up a six-figure mileage, shuttling between training trips in the hills, moors, fells, plateaus and valleys of Wales,

the Lake District, Scotland, the Alps, even Iceland. In between, the venerable Disco has also been pressed into service to deliver me suited and booted to meetings with sponsors and black-tie charity speaking engagements.

One of the strange paradoxes of my career has been the peculiar anti-climax of reaching the biggest goals. I skied solo to both Poles, and completed the Antarctic journey that had defeated Shackleton. At the finish lines there were no fireworks, just a curious mixture of exhaustion, relief and a vague feeling of reticence about returning to the real world. There's truth in the adage that the journey is the important part, and not the destination.

It's these long journeys that I have loved the most. Adventures that have involved a Land Rover full of friends in muddy walking boots and rucksacks, a wet dog in the boot, a flask of tea, and a plan to walk over a hill or two.

And while I'm certain that the coming years will involve returning to the highest latitudes, I've also made a promise to myself that I will make more time for road trips to the hills with friends. And that I'll spend a little less time working on spreadsheets... □



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