

#048 MAY 08, 2015

eNEWS

Magazine

*Crowdfunding
Your Dreams*

GREAT FOR GETTING NEW
PROJECTS UNDERWAY

*Avengers
Age of Ultron*

SECOND BIGGEST US
OPENER OF ALL TIME

UBER

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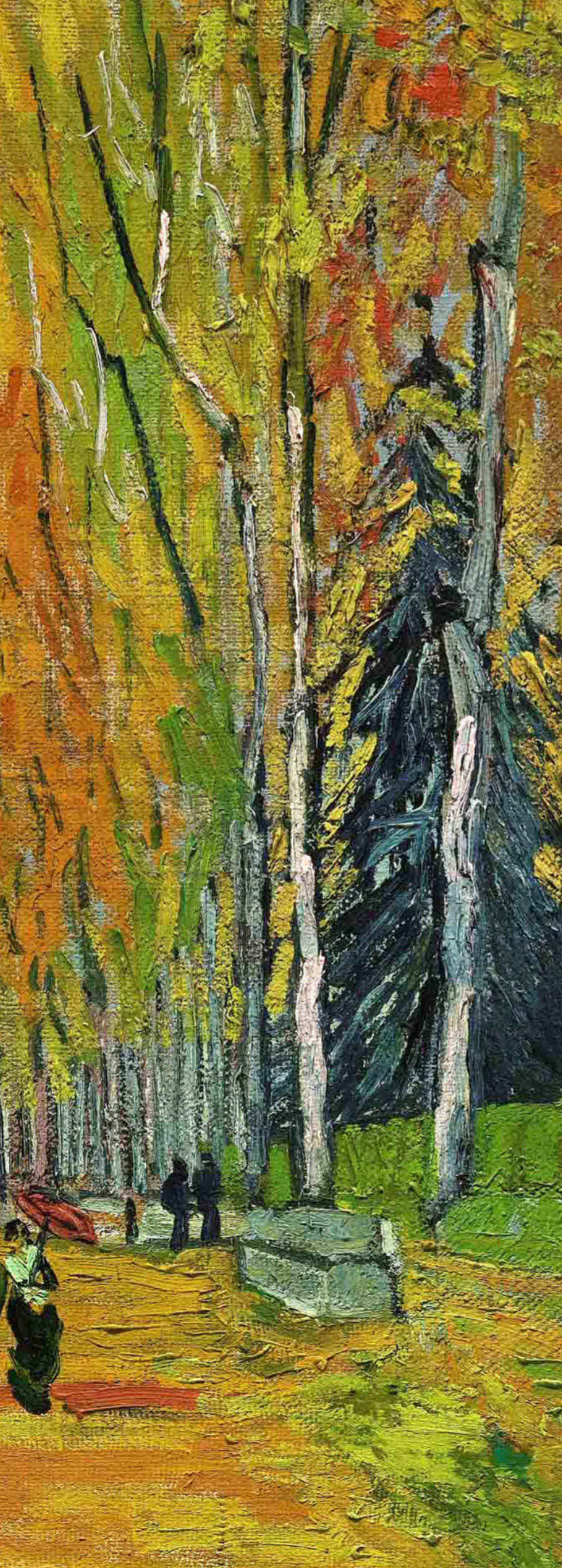


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Van Gogh Work Could Bring Over \$40M At Nyc Auction

A painting Vincent van Gogh created while briefly working side-by-side with his friend Paul Gauguin in the south of France could sell for more than \$40 million at auction Tuesday evening.

“The Allee of Alysamps” is being offered at Sotheby’s impressionist and modern art sale. The autumnal scene was painted in 1888 during a two-month period when van Gogh and Gauguin worked together in Arles, France.

The auction record for a van Gogh, who died in 1890, is \$82.5 million.

“To have a canvas from Arles by that very self-taught artist at the height of his work marks the sale as momentous,” said Clifford Edwards, a van Gogh expert and professor at Virginia Commonwealth University.

The sale also features six paintings spanning four decades of Claude Monet’s career for an estimated \$78 million. The highlight is “Water Lilies,” a 1905 version of the artist’s beloved pond and gardens at his home in Giverny, France. It’s estimated to fetch \$30 million to \$45 million.





Monet's 1908 painting of Venice with a view of the Palazzo Ducale on the Grand Canal could fetch \$15 million to \$20 million. It was confiscated by the Nazis from the noted collector Jakob Goldschmidt and reclaimed by his son in 1960. It descended to the grandson who died in 2014.

The current auction record for a work by Monet is his 1919 "Water Lily Pond," which sold for \$80.5 million in 2008.

Sotheby's also is offering works from two prominent single-owner collections.

There are two works from Hollywood film moguls Samuel Goldwyn and his son.

"Woman With a Chignon in an Armchair," a portrait of Pablo Picasso's lover Francoise Gilot, is estimated to bring \$12 million to \$18 million. It depicts her in an embroidered jacket Picasso purchased for her in Poland while she was pregnant with their child.

Henri Matisse's "Anemones and Pomegranates" was purchased by the elder Goldwyn two years after it was painted in 1948. It's estimated at \$5 million to \$7 million.

About two dozen other works from the collection will be offered in a series of sales later in May, June and October.

Samuel Goldwyn Jr. died in January; his father died in 1974.

The other collection on Tuesday evening belonged to Jerome Stone, a Chicago businessman and founder of the Alzheimer's Association who died in January. It includes Fernand Leger's "The Blue Wheel, Definitive State" with a pre-sale estimate of \$8 million to \$12 million. Other artists in collection include Joan Miro, Marc Chagall and Alberto Giacometti.





'Walking Dead' Actor Accused of Drunken Driving, Drug Charge

An actor who plays a priest on the AMC drama "The Walking Dead" is facing drunken driving and drug charges after police say he was clocked going 107 mph on a Georgia highway.

Seth Gilliam, 46, was stopped shortly after 2 a.m. Sunday on Georgia Highway 74 in the Peachtree City area, authorities said.

“The driver applied the brakes prior to passing my vehicle and was still traveling at 107 mph,” a Peachtree City police officer, who was in his patrol car and running radar, wrote in a report.

The speed limit on that stretch of highway is 55 mph. It is not far from the set where much of the TV show is filmed in the nearby town of Senoia. Gilliam plays Father Gabriel on a drama that portrays survivors of a zombie apocalypse battling infected “walkers” and each other.

Gilliam told the officer he had three beers and a shot of alcohol, according to a police report. The actor’s eyes were “extremely bloodshot,” the report said.

Police say they noticed a strong odor of marijuana emanating from the Chevrolet Cruze, and found a marijuana joint inside a cigarette pack in the car.

Two representatives for the actor didn’t immediately return phone calls Tuesday from The Associated Press.

Gilliam faces charges of speeding, reckless driving, drug possession and drunken driving.

Gilliam is the second actor from “The Walking Dead” to face drunken driving charges in Peachtree City in the past three years.

Actor Scott Wilson, who played a farmer named Hershel Greene on the show, was arrested by Peachtree City police and charged with drunken driving after someone called 911 to report a Chrysler PT Cruiser driving erratically in August 2012.





'Avengers' Sequel is Second Biggest us Opener of All Time

The Avengers are mighty, but not enough to beat themselves. The Marvel and Disney sequel earned a staggering \$187.7 million in its debut weekend, making it the second biggest U.S. opening of all time according to Rentrak estimates Sunday.

But "Avengers: Age of Ultron" failed to top the all-time record of the first film's \$207.4 million debut in 2012.

Although "Ultron" was the only new film in wide release this weekend, it had some significant small screen competition: The Kentucky Derby, the NBA playoffs, and the Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao fight.

Numbers could shift by the time Monday actuals roll in, but it seems the robust counter-programming may have blockaded another record for Marvel and Disney.





Still, for Disney's head of distribution Dave Hollis, the weekend was a "spectacular result."

Playing on 4,276 screens, the audiences for "Ultron's" debut were 59 percent male and 41 percent under the age of 25.

"We're in rare air here," said Hollis. "Having the second biggest opening weekend in the history of the movie business is always going to be something you walk away overwhelmingly happy with. The momentum of the brand for Marvel at this point is really something to take a step back and admire."

Marvel and Disney now boast the top three opening weekends of all time with "Avengers" and its sequel taking the top two slots and "Iron Man 3" in third place.

Hollis said this is "confirmation" that these films are "bringing a completely different kind of filmmaking to cinema. They're creating events and characters and building worlds in a way that is drawing the attention of huge crowds."

Rentrak's Senior Media Analyst Paul Dergarabedian agreed that the failure to top the first film is "in no way" a disappointment.

"You have to put this into perspective. Considering the level of competition this weekend in the sporting world, it shows that movie going holds its own against all other options," he said. Also, while the first film's \$207.4 million haul might just seem like a new benchmark to hit, Dergarabedian was quick to point out that opening above \$200 million was "literally like breaking the box office sound barrier." Instead of a new industry standard, a \$200 million opening might continue to be an industry rarity.

"Ultron's" future success is not in doubt either.

"These other options were single events. 'Avengers' has a very long playing time. This is a journey to \$1 billion and beyond," he said.





The rest of the top five was populated with holdovers, “The Age of Adaline,” “Furious 7,” “Paul Blart: Mall Cop,” and the animated “Home.”

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Rentrak. Final domestic figures will be released Monday.

1. “Avengers: Age of Ultron,” \$187.7 million.

2. “The Age of Adaline,” \$6.3 million.

3. “Furious 7,” \$6.1 million.

4. “Paul Blart: Mall Cop,” \$5.6 million.

5. “Home,” \$3.3 million.

6. “Cinderella,” \$2.4 million.

7. “Ex Machina,” \$2.2 million.

8. “Unfriended,” \$2 million.


9. “The Longest Ride,” \$1.7 million.

10. “Woman in Gold,” \$1.7 million.









What To See on Closing Day of New Orleans' Jazz Fest

The New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival wraps up its last of seven days of music, food and culture on Sunday. The festival, a celebration of Louisiana's heritage, features music stages dotted around the city's fairgrounds and booths selling food.

A few things to watch for on the last day of the festival:





- Lenny Kravitz, rock musician hot off his 2014 album “Strut” and roles in the “Hunger Games” movie franchise, might be the headliner at most music festivals but in a city where jazz reigns supreme, New Orleans’ Troy “Trombone Shorty” Andrews and his Orleans Avenue band will close out the main stage. The two have a connection. Trombone Shorty performed in Kravitz’s horn section during a 2005-2006 tour. His music incorporates various musical styles from New Orleans - jazz, gospel and R&B - along with hip-hop and rock.

- Closing out the Jazz & Heritage Stage will be the Stooges Brass Band, headed by band leader Walter Ramsey, an institution in the New Orleans music scene. Speaking to The Associated Press, Ramsey said the festival is an opportunity for local residents to see national artists and for people from out of town to experience the music, culture and food of New Orleans: “That’s the importance of Jazz Fest to me.”

- Every year concert organizers highlight a specific country or cultural institution. This year it’s the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts, a high school for the arts that’s marking its 40th anniversary this year. The school’s graduates include Ramsey, Terence Blanchard, and Wynton and Branford Marsalis. NOCCA students and recent grads like Sasha Masakowski will perform throughout the day at the NOCCA Pavilion. NOCCA graduates will also perform a musical tribute to Ellis Marsalis, the patriarch of the Marsalis family and the founding jazz teacher at NOCCA.

- Other acts performing Sunday include country singer Kasey Musgraves and singer-musician Steve Winwood, whose hits include “Back in the High Life Again.” New Orleans favorite Kermit Ruffins will also perform a tribute to Louis Armstrong.

UBER: CHANGING THE FACE OF URBAN TRANSPORTATION

TRANSFORMING HOW WE USE CARS







Image: Paul J. Richards/AFP



THE NEXT BIG STEP FOR TAXI SERVICES

For more than a century now, we have had taxis in some shape or form. They've always been pretty much the same - sure, the cars have become more sophisticated, safer and economical with the passing of the years, but otherwise, the basic premise of the taxi service has long been familiar. Things look like changing now though, in large part thanks to a certain service known as Uber.

Certainly, one might have thought that the technology associated with taxi services - even the very ways in which they operate - would have changed more profoundly over the years, at least when one considers that our city streets are more choked up than ever with cars. The need for quick and convenient urban transportation has clearly never abated - so how is a service like Uber responding to it?

Uber was launched in 2009, and is simple in its premise, its apps making it easier for taxi drivers and riders to connect. With a current leadership team including Travis Kalanick, Thuan Pham, Ryan Graves and Salle Yoo, the company has taken much of the hassle out of calling for a taxi - the prospective taxi-hailer simply uses their mobile phone to request, ride and pay.

Not only does the app show when a car is on its way so that the user can quickly and comfortably hail a ride, but they can even follow the progress of the cab on a street map, represented by a blip. The app is gaining real currency among tech-savvy customers



UBER V





S **NYC TAXI**



across the world, but how could it point the way to the future of taxi services in general?

UBER TAKING OVER NEW YORK CITY

If one was in any doubt about the massive impact that Uber has made in just one city - NYC - they would only need to look to figures released last month by the city's Taxi and Limousine Commission. It revealed that there were now 14,088 registered Uber cars, compared to 13,587 of the yellow cabs that have long been ubiquitous here.

That's quite a changing of the guard, although this shouldn't be over-emphasized - after all, **there are still around 440,000 yellow cab rides every day, compared to a mere 20,000 to 30,000 Uber rides**, a difference that can be attributed to Uber drivers often owning their own cars and working less than 40 hours a week. In contrast, the typical NYC yellow cab is on the roads on an almost constant 24 hours a day basis, due to being owned by a taxi company and having more than one driver.

As Meera Joshi, the taxi commission chairwoman observed, in reference to the black sedans typically used by Uber drivers: "Yellow cab rides significantly outstrip the number of black car rides, so the number of their affiliated vehicles in and of itself doesn't paint a complete picture."


Nonetheless, there can be little doubting the massive impact that Uber has had on local taxi transportation since its introduction to NYC in 2011. This indicates that the app is at







Image: Patrick Wack



the forefront of our changing ways of using automobiles.

A REAL GLOBAL IMPACT

Uber is now available in locations across North America, from Akron, Ann Arbor and Atlanta to Vancouver, Washington D.C. and Wilkes-Barre Scranton, to say nothing of such parts of central and South America as Barranquilla, Santiago and Rio de Janeiro.

It has even extended its reach throughout Europe, Middle East and Africa, **so that if you find yourself in Abu Dhabi, Athens, Brussels, Krakow, Prague or London** - to name just some places - it'll be a cinch for you to whip out your phone and hail a suitable local cab. Add areas of the Asia-Pacific region like Adelaide, Tokyo, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur to the list, and it's clear that the app is making its presence felt across the globe - in some 57 countries to date, in fact.

One part of the world where Uber has not taken the same tight grip that it has in the likes of NYC, however, is that perennially tough-to-crack market, China. The lower end of the Chinese taxi-hailing services market is already dominated by the local players Kuaidi Dache and Didi Dache, which only last month announced a merger that threatens to make Uber's task even tougher.

In late 2014, the Beijing-based Internet consultancy Enfodesk released the results of a study **indicating that Kuaidi hogged 56.5 percent of the taxi app market, compared**





to Didi's 43.3 percent - meaning just a 0.2 percent share for all other participants.

If there's hope of Uber making real inroads in the Chinese market, however, it is surely at the higher end, where it offers an UberBlack service for those seeking more luxurious transportation. It also recently held a one-day promotional event in Shanghai, designed to drum up interest in airborne services in the country.





This is in addition to the boat-hailing and rickshaw-hailing services that the firm has already rolled out in China, as it demonstrates the possibilities for its technology well beyond traditional taxi hailing.

NOT UNEQUIVOCALLY POPULAR

It's worth pointing out at this point that not everyone is an unqualified fan of Uber - traditional cab companies, for example, have understandably felt threatened. Kalanick admitted in 2013 that "D.C. is a real pain in my butt", **after a late-night attempt to pass a law effectively banning Uber in Washington.** It took a voracious response on social media, including 37,000 tweets, to eventually thwart the so-called Uber Amendment.

Meanwhile, back in NYC, although prices for Uber and traditional yellow cabs are comparable, there have been some complaints from users of the former service about "surge pricing" at times of peak demand, as well as fare add-ons for larger vehicles. Nor have some taxi drivers and their advocates been too thrilled by what they see as a flooding of the market that has put downward pressure on drivers' average incomes.

Chinese regulators have sought to protect state-regulated taxi companies by cracking down on private cars that make use of Internet-hailing apps. Many of the biggest taxi companies in the country are in municipal government ownership and have capped fares, and the Chinese government is



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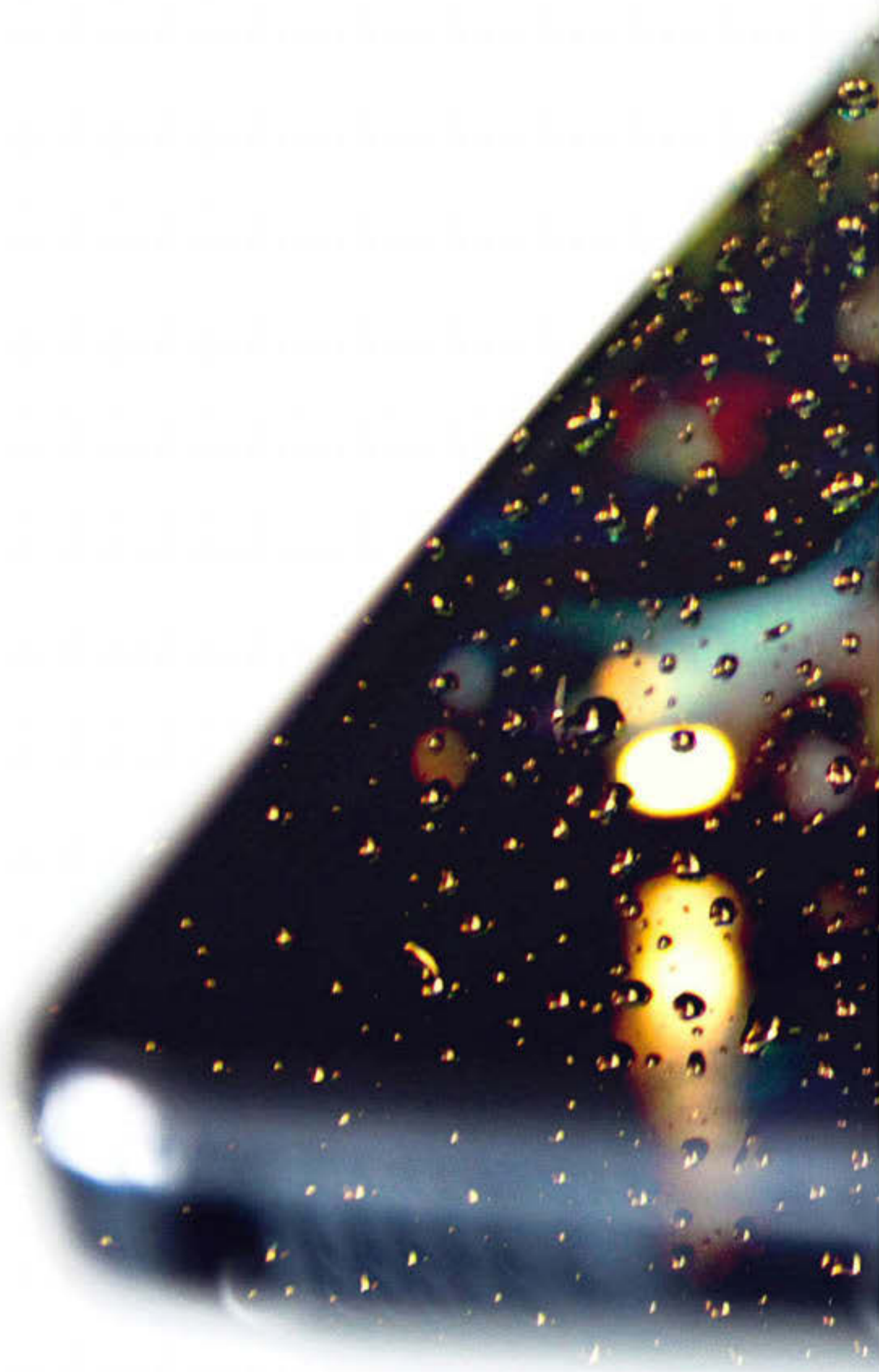


continuing to look at regulating the market for ride-hailing apps.

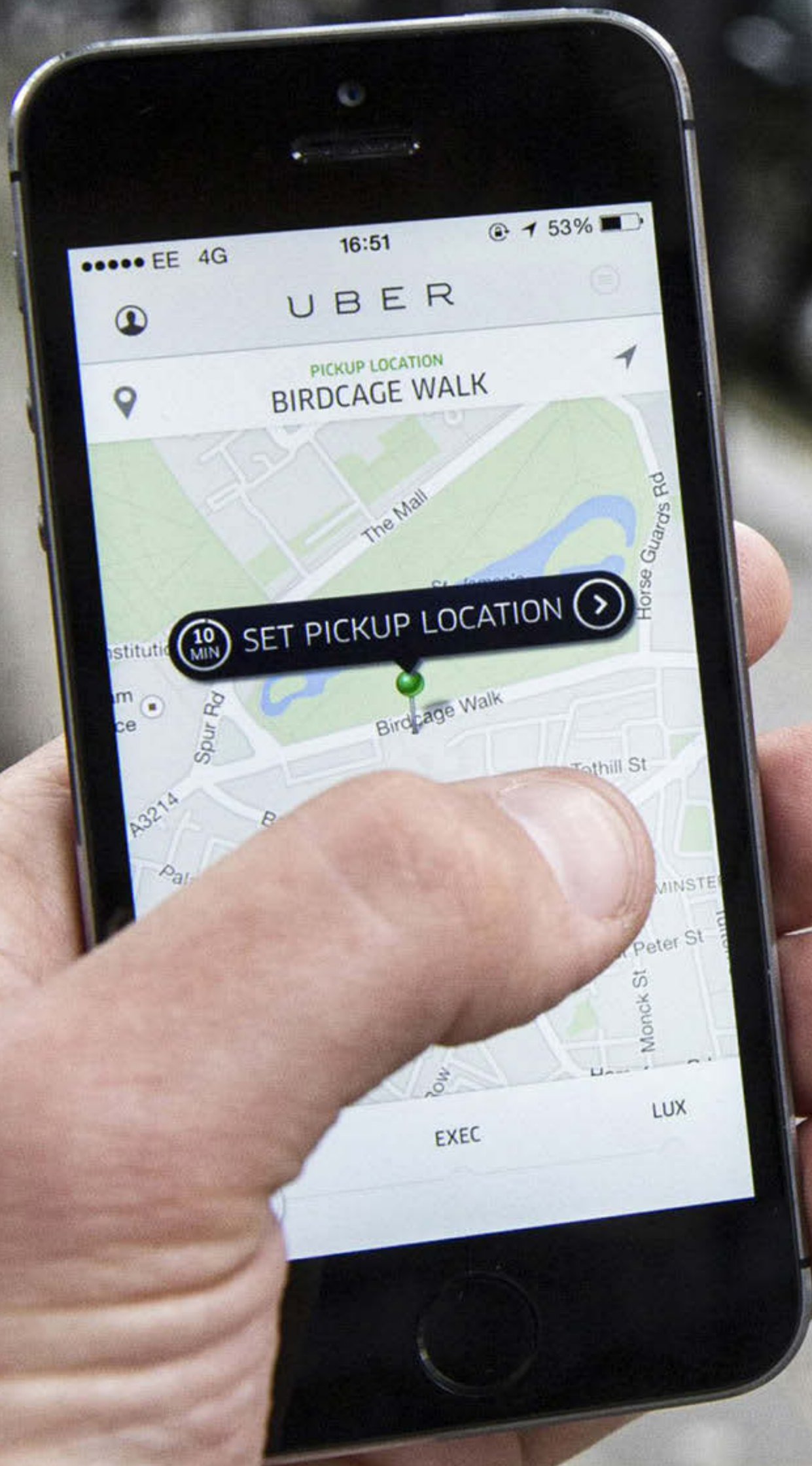
MOVING FAR BEYOND A TAXI SERVICE

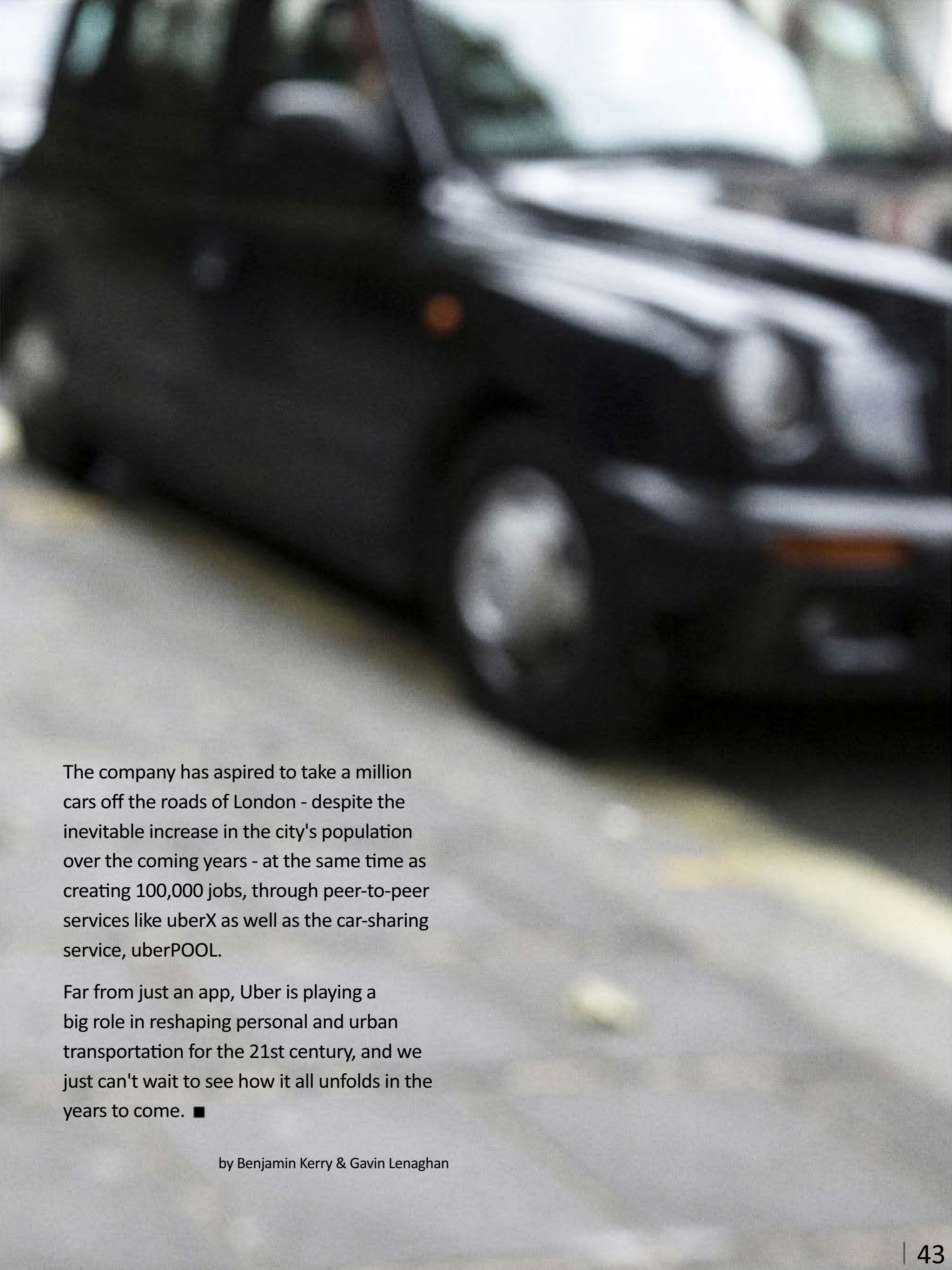
Uber's growth so far suggests that it will spend the next few years being so much more than a taxi-hailing service. Indeed, the company itself has declared that it has big plans for reducing the number of cars on our roads, making our cities more livable. That's on the basis that Uber is already cheaper for many people than owning a car, **the company adding in an October 2014 blog post that it remained "committed to changing people's lives by revolutionizing urban transportation"**.

The firm said that it would do that by not only "reducing traffic congestion, one ride at a time", but in so doing, also making it quicker and easier to find a parking space. It added that it was also interested in "bringing back date nights where you can both enjoy a few cocktails and not have to worry about how you'll get home", and wanted to ensure that "you have a safe and reliable ride within minutes of requesting it after a night on the town or when you find yourself working late".









The company has aspired to take a million cars off the roads of London - despite the inevitable increase in the city's population over the coming years - at the same time as creating 100,000 jobs, through peer-to-peer services like uberX as well as the car-sharing service, uberPOOL.

Far from just an app, Uber is playing a big role in reshaping personal and urban transportation for the 21st century, and we just can't wait to see how it all unfolds in the years to come. ■

by Benjamin Kerry & Gavin Lenaghan

Celebrities: Fight-Watching, Betting and Making Vegas Money

Celebrities are taking sides in the Floyd Mayweather-Manny Pacquiao matchup just like everyone else. Unlike most of us, some of the stars are close friends of the fighters, can scoff at a \$100,000 wager or a \$10,000 ticket and will get to be center stage on the Las Vegas club scene during a weekend where watchers are willing to pony up \$50,000 for a table.

It's impossible to list all of them, but here are some headliners:





JAY-Z APPEARANCE NOT A PERFORMANCE

Got a spare \$5,000 to \$50,000 for booze? Superstar rapper and music streaming service provider Jay-Z is commanding some of the highest prices to reserve table-side bottle-service for his appearance at the Marquee nightclub at The Cosmopolitan. General admission tickets cost \$250.

But here's the thing - it's just an appearance not a performance unless he feels so inclined to pick up a mic on a whim.

The club has been selling tickets to its outdoor pool deck that night (\$150 for women, \$250 for men) but there's no guarantee Jay-Z might even wander outside.

Other celebrity non-performing "hosts" during the fight weekend? Sunny poolside appearances are expected from Justin Bieber at the Hard Rock Hotel (\$75 for women, \$150 for men) and Puff Daddy at the SLS Las Vegas' Foxtail Pool Club (\$40, \$50).

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES

The cost of glimpsing a celebrity nightclub performance goes from realistic to out-of-this-stratosphere back down to earth in just three days.

A Friday night show by frequent Vegas visitor 50 Cent at Drai's Nightclub in the Cromwell costs a \$40 or \$75 cover charge, and table reservations require spending a minimum of \$1,000 to \$10,000.

By Saturday night, Chris Brown commands \$100 and \$200 cover charges at the same poolside club with tables ranging in price from \$2,000 for a small four-person table far from the stage to at least \$20,000 for a table in the middle of the action.









Sunday night, the club hosts rapper Busta Rhymes who came to fame in the 1990s with “Woo-Hah!! Got You All in Check.” Tickets? \$20 and \$30.

Others taking to a nightclub stage include:

Actor and performer Jamie Foxx who is expected to belt out the fight’s national anthem earlier performs at The Bank at Bellagio later that night with a dance floor table for 12 people costing at least \$10,775.

Lil’ Wayne at SLS Las Vegas’ Foxtail Pool Club for \$137-\$220. A premium pool cabana? You’d have to spend at least \$14,010.

Las Vegas resident Snoop Dogg at Tao nightclub at The Venetian for a roaring 1920’s “Snoopadelic Cabaret” For \$30 to \$90.

Nicki Minaj at Chateau in Paris Las Vegas charging a \$275 cover for her rooftop performance, or \$80 for a view from inside where there’s no guarantee the performer will venture.

Others still: Big Boi from Outkast at Aria’s Liquid Pool Lounge, Ludacris at the Hard Rock Hotel, Macklemore & Ryan Lewis at Mandalay Bay’s Light nightclub and Nelly at Paris Las Vegas.

YOU CALL THAT A BET?

Edited outtakes from a video filmed for an HBO fight promo shows Puff Daddy challenging actor Mark Wahlberg, a Pacquiao fan, to a \$100,000 wager that Mayweather would win the fight.

“Why so low?” Wahlberg retorts, raising the wager to \$250,000, sealed with a clinking of water bottles.

No word if Wahlberg is invited to Puff Daddy’s invite-only pre-fight Friday night party at Lavo at The Palazzo where he’s hosting Showtime and celebrities including Mark Ronson of “Uptown Funk” fame and former football star and current television personality Michael Strahan.

Puff Daddy follows up the party with a poolside presentation of his Ciroc-based cocktail concoction “The Champ” at the Foxtail Pool Club at SLS Las Vegas Saturday where cover charges cost \$40 and \$50.

KISS OFF, PACQUIAO

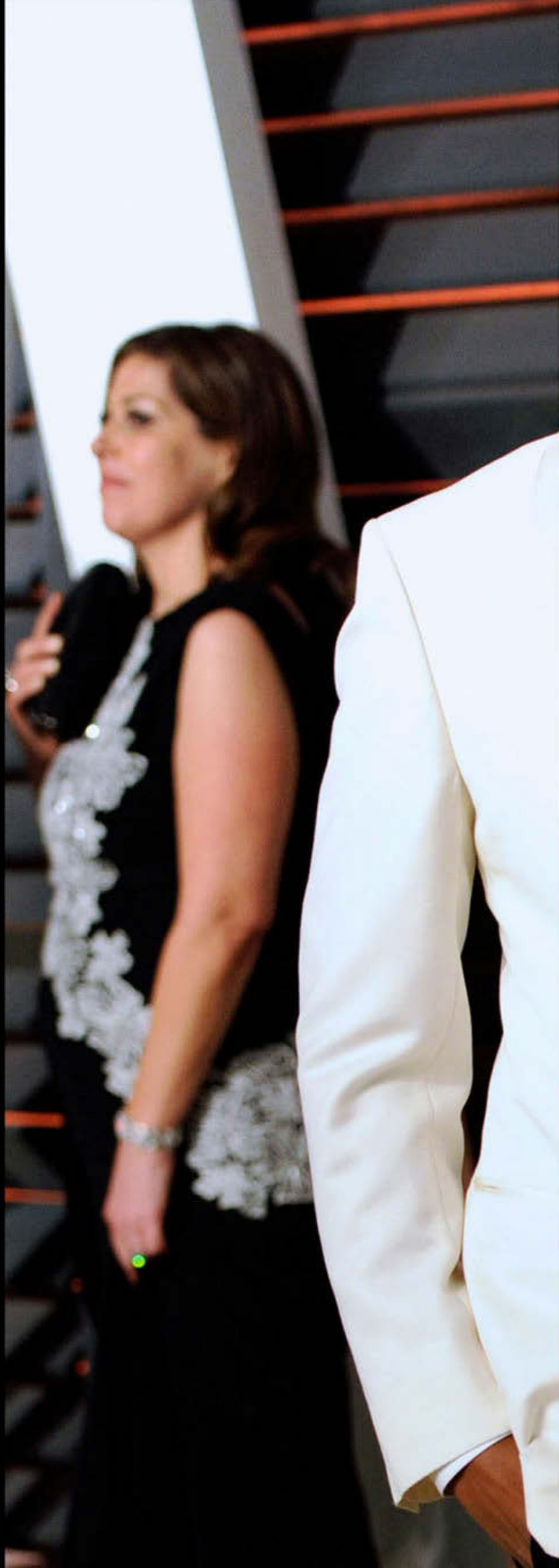
Rockers Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons agree: Mayweather should emerge victorious Saturday. From the red carpet for the 32nd annual ASCAP Pop Music Awards in Los Angeles, both said they hope Mayweather and Pacquiao give it all they’ve got.

“I just think Mayweather has the power to knock him out and Pacquiao has been out, you know, in the last few years,” Stanley said, adding that for the kind of money they’re getting, that he hoped they truly go toe-to-toe. “That’s what people want to see. This isn’t supposed to be a tactical match. This is supposed to be a brawl.”

FROM ZERO TO HERO?

The celebrity consensus is pretty well divided on who will win, but Michael Bearden, musical director for the Michael Jackson documentary “This is it,” said it’s undefeated Mayweather’s fight to lose, unless the fighters take a more scandalous route.

“The only way I can see Mayweather losing is if they just want to make so much more money and they throw it and they do a rematch,” he said from the red carpet of the ASCAP Pop Music Awards show in Los Angeles. “But (Mayweather) likes that zero on his record, too, so I don’t see him wanting to let that go for money.”





YOU DON'T WANT TO MAKE HIM ANGRY

The “PacMan” has a fan in the Hulk. Actor Mark Ruffalo who plays Bruce Banner-turned-Hulk in the “Avengers: Age of Ultron” had to be reminded on a red carpet for the movie’s premiere by co-star Jeremy Renner why the upcoming weekend would be a doozy, sports-wise, but he said he would be watching Pacquiao.

“Freddie Roach is a friend of mine, too,” he said of Pacquiao’s trainer.

TAKING SIDES

Mariah Carey, the Las Vegas Strip’s latest resident celebrity performer holding court at The Colosseum at Caesars Palace, made her boxing allegiance known on Instagram and Twitter with “(hash)TeamFloyd” attached to a photo of herself with Mayweather, posing for a selfie.

But like any debate on social media, the post didn’t sit well with Manny Pacquiao’s fans or those not keen on Mayweather.

Days later at her grand Caesars Palace arrival, Carey was more diplomatic.

“I am a fan of both,” she said.

Will she be ringside?

“I really do want to attend. We’ll see.”







CROWDFUNDING: **THE NEW INNOVATION DRIVING FORCE**

**GREAT FOR GETTING
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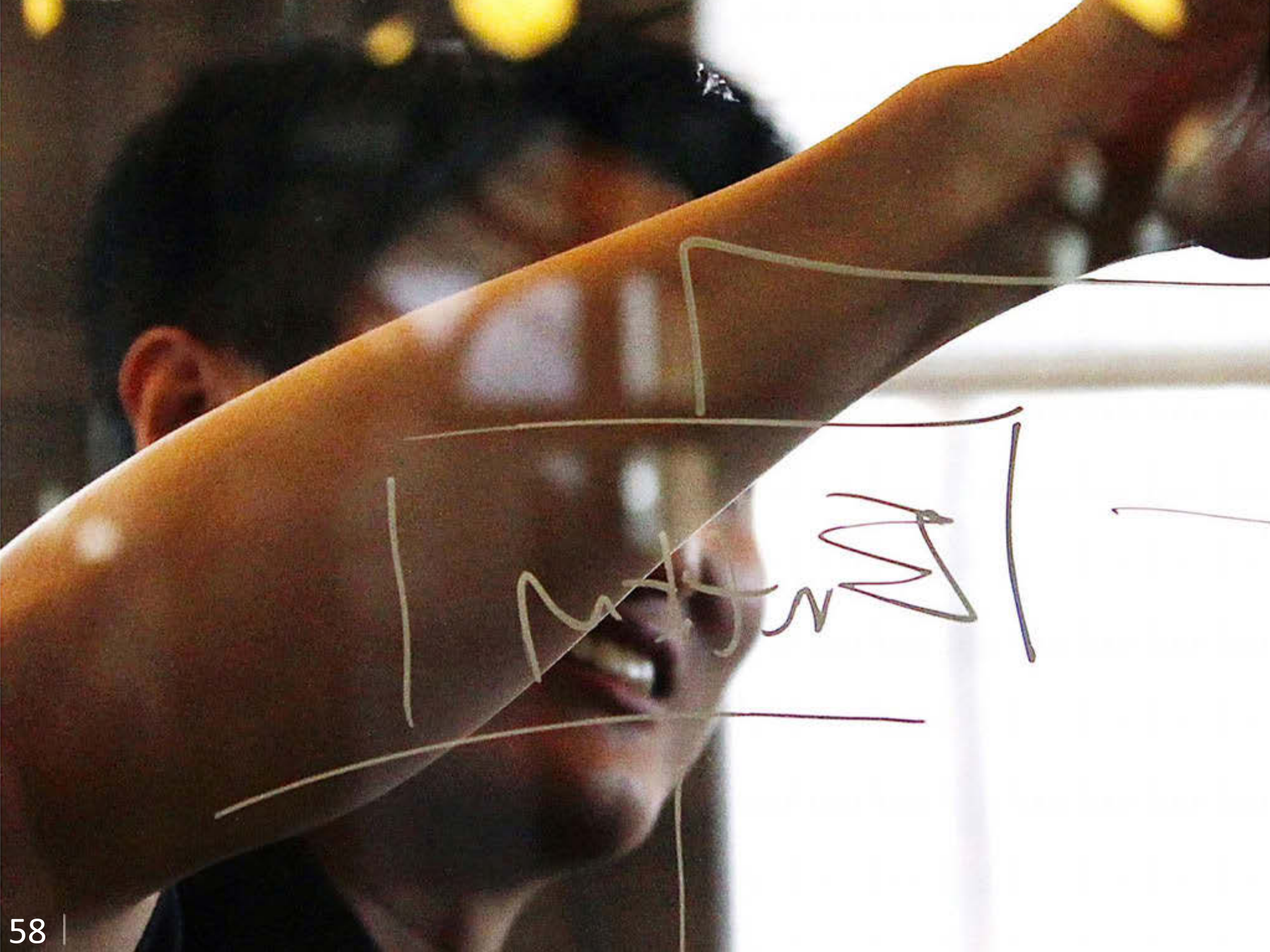
FINANCING APPLE WATCH ADAPTERS, VR HEADSETS AND MORE

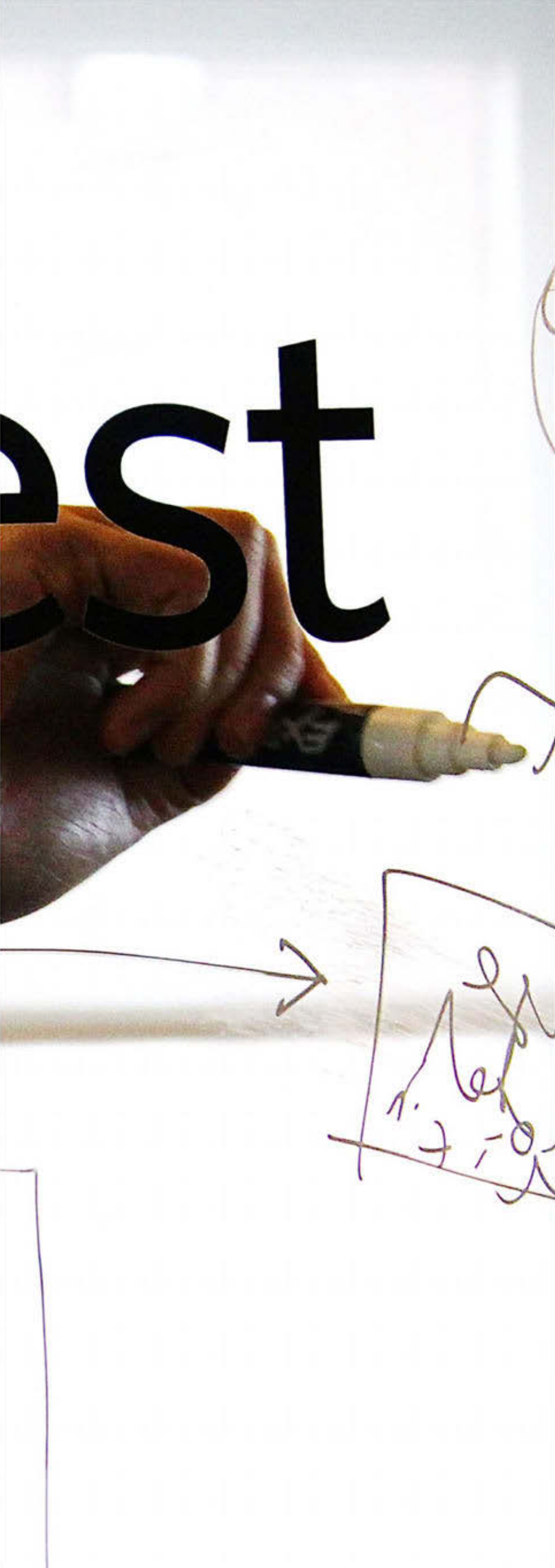
You may not have heard of crowdfunding, or if you have, you may have understood it as merely 'funding', or 'donating'. Alternatively, you might have imagined it to be of only minor interest, relevant merely to young adventurers trying to pay for an around-the-world trek. Alas, none of these things are quite true - it is actually gaining more significance than ever, with the Apple Watch playing its own modest role.

First, let's give crowdfunding a proper definition. It is a means by which a project or venture may be funded through the raising of monetary contributions from a large number of people, typically online. There only really needs to be two or more financial contributors to your project via the Internet for it to be deemed 'crowdfunded', and there are three parties typically involved: the project initiator proposing the idea, the individuals or groups supporting the idea and the platform, or moderating organization, that brings the aforementioned two parties together.

The **earliest known reference to 'crowdfunding' was in 2006**, although the general concept of raising funds for a single project from many different donators obviously far predates this, the Statue of Liberty being just one such project to have benefitted from funds raised in this way.

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THE RISE AND RISE OF CROWDFUNDING

The 2000s and early 2010s saw the launch of increasing numbers of crowdfunding sites, from ArtistShare in 2003 and EquityNet in 2005 to the likes of Indiegogo, FundRazr, RocketHub and SeedInvest in more recent years. Sites like these are helping often very ordinary people - at least as far as their background is concerned - to realize their dream, just as long as they can get enough people to reach into their pockets to back it.

All manner of projects can be made reality by crowdfunding - **a video game, perhaps, or a music album, social network or art exhibition.** With crowdfunding, many people who might have thought their projects to be unviable can get their dream underway and test out its commercial relevance by presenting it to the masses.

A decade after crowdfunding began to pick up steam, it is no longer the mere preserve of the pluckiest entrepreneurs. Both big and small projects have surfaced on sites like GoFundMe, which has raised more than \$1 billion for personal fundraisers, and **Kickstarter, which accepts all manner of creative projects.** Different crowdfunding sites naturally differ with regard to their popularity, fees and the types of projects that they accept.

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STARTER



THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF CROWDFUNDING

Other popular crowdfunding portals include **teespring**, which is a dedicated T-shirt crowdfunding site, and **patreon**, which accepts creative projects only. We could go on and on, but we think you get the message by now: in the year 2015, crowdfunding is a big deal, giving people the money that they need to get their project off the ground and in many cases, guaranteed sales as well.

There are two main types of crowdfunding, **as identified by a May 2014 report from the Crowdfunding Centre**. Rewards crowdfunding involves entrepreneurs pre-

selling a product or service to launch a business concept, without any debt being incurred or equity/shares sacrificed.

Alternatively, one can launch an equity crowdfunding campaign, whereby the backer pledges money and in turn, receives shares in the company in what is usually its early stages. Obviously, to attract support via this type of crowdfunding, the project initiator will need to convince prospective backers of their company's viability.

Debt-based, litigation and charity crowdfunding also exist, helping to show just how powerful 'people power' can now be for the widest range of purposes and campaigns.

APPLE WATCH PROJECTS ALREADY SEEKING SUPPORT

With all of the fuss that has surrounded the Apple Watch, it's not a big shock that so many potential accessories for the device have also emerged, with some of these making their public debut on crowdfunding sites. Charging stands have appeared, as have band adapters, such as the Click and the Adappt.

Click, for example, has been shown off on Kickstarter, and promises to allow Apple Watch owners to personalize their timepiece "without breaking the bank", using any 22mm watch band that they desire. It comes in a choice of three materials - **a durable polymer from as little as \$12, anodized aluminum starting at \$20 and stainless steel from \$35**, "each precisely machined to perfectly blend with Apple Watch".

The Click campaign was created by Brandon Hudson, and as so often with crowdfunding, was accompanied by the offer of a series of rewards. Even those donating just \$1 were sent a personalized 'thank you' email, while those volunteering \$5 had their names printed on T-shirts worn by the Click team at events. At the complete opposite end of the rewards scale, those volunteering \$1,000 got to meet the team in person, in a restaurant of their choice.

Click received pledges totaling \$216,436 from 5,538 backers.









THE ADAPPT ALSO TURNING HEADS

Another band adapter project that was still ongoing at the time of this article being written was Adappt, which is being publicized on Indiegogo, with the aim of raising \$50,000. At the time we visited the page on the site for the adapter, **some \$29,772 had already been raised by 1,096 people, with nine days of the campaign remaining.**

Adappt is similar to Click in its premise, enabling the Apple Watch to be used with traditional watch straps, as well as with Adappt's own rubber, leather and metal straps. Again, there are various perks on offer to those pledging certain amounts - \$7 gives you the plastic adapter, donating \$15 means that you get Adappt along with a genuine leather watch band, and for \$18, you can have Adappt with a metal watch band.

A \$3,450 pledge, meanwhile, gives the deep-pocketed donator an Italian-handcrafted Adappt 18k Gold, although as of the time of typing, none of the five available had yet been claimed. That might not be too surprising - after all, these third-party adapters seem to principally appeal to those seeking more affordable alternatives to Apple's own straps, rather than those wanting to indulge with even more expensive ones.

EVEN VIRTUAL REALITY IS GETTING IN ON THE ACT

Don't be misled into thinking that attentions will turn away from crowdfunding once the first glut of third-party Apple Watch accessories have begun shipping, however. As a matter of fact, this method of cobbling together finance is already showing just as much relevance in making the next generation of technological innovations possible.

Did you know, for example, **the key role that Kickstarter played in making the Oculus Rift - a virtual reality head-mounted display - possible in 2012?** Although a consumer version has not yet been released, there has been suggestions that it will emerge in 2015. If so, the Kickstarter campaign that attracted pledges of \$2,437,429 from 9,522 backers will have played a big part in putting it into customers' hands. That campaign specifically concerned the developer kit for what was described as "the first truly immersive virtual reality headset for video games".





CROWDFUNDING IS HERE TO STAY

Not all projects - virtual reality or otherwise - that have been presented to the public via crowdfunding sites **have necessarily attracted the necessary backing**, with part of the whole principle of crowdfunding being that if you fail to reach your stated total, you don't get a cent of funding. This approach eliminates the risk for those who do put their money where their mouths are, and has helped to make crowdfunding the success story that it is today.

Certainly, as the Apple Watch accessories market gets more and more competitive, we can't wait to see what new products pop up on the popular crowdfunding platforms in the months and years to come - including for other devices from the Cupertino stable.

It's clear that for those who want to see the technology of the future, there's no need to break into Apple's Californian development labs - a visit to Kickstarter or Indiegogo will tell them much of what they wish to know. ■

by Benjamin Kerry & Gavin Lenaghan





Oculus VR
HD Prototype

Oculus
Development Kit 2





Britain's New Princess Named Charlotte Elizabeth Diana

Britain's newborn princess has been named Charlotte Elizabeth Diana - seen as a tribute to Prince William's parents and grandmother.

The princess is the second child of William and his wife Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge. The baby will be known as Her Royal Highness Princess Charlotte of Cambridge, royal officials said Monday.

Charlotte, the feminine form of Charles, appears to be a nod to the newborn's grandfather, Prince Charles. The middle names honor Queen Elizabeth II, the infant's 89-year-old great-grandmother, and the late Princess Diana, William's mother.

The princess is fourth in line to the throne after Charles, William and her older brother Prince George. William and Kate introduced the baby princess to the world Saturday evening, just 12 hours after Kate checked into a London hospital to give birth. The baby weighed in at 8 pounds, 3 ounces (3.7 kilograms).

Charles Spencer, Diana's brother, was among the first to react on Twitter.

"Perfect names. My 2-year old Charlotte Diana will be thrilled at cousinly name-sharing," he tweeted.

Earlier Monday, Westminster Abbey's bells pealed and gun salutes were fired across London in honor of the newborn princess. In a display of traditional pageantry, dozens of deafening volleys were fired from Hyde Park and the Tower of London to mark the occasion.

The couple had kept the world guessing about the name until after both sets of grandparents got a chance to visit Kensington Palace on Sunday to meet their granddaughter.

Bookmakers had taken huge amounts of bets on the name, and Charlotte had been a favorite choice, a front-runner alongside other guesses like Alice and Victoria.

"Charlotte was the hot tip over the weekend," Ladbrokes spokeswoman Jessica Bridge said. "We may have lost a fortune, but we're paying out with a smile and wish the duke and duchess all the best."

Another bookmaker, William Hill, said they were relieved because their top bet had been Alice. Spokesman Rupert Adams said 5,096 punters correctly guessed the name, and in total they would pay out just over 100,000 pounds (\$151,100) in the name market.

Royals traditionally look to their family tree for name ideas, and Britain's royal history has seen several Charlottes. Queen Charlotte, the wife of George III, was a keen botanist and founded London's Kew Gardens. Born in 1744, the queen had 15 children.

George IV also named his only child Charlotte in 1796, but she died in childbirth at the age of 21 in 1817, leading to a mass outpouring of grief in Britain.





TEXAS TAKES
AIM AT
TELEMEDICINE
CARE FOR
PATIENTS







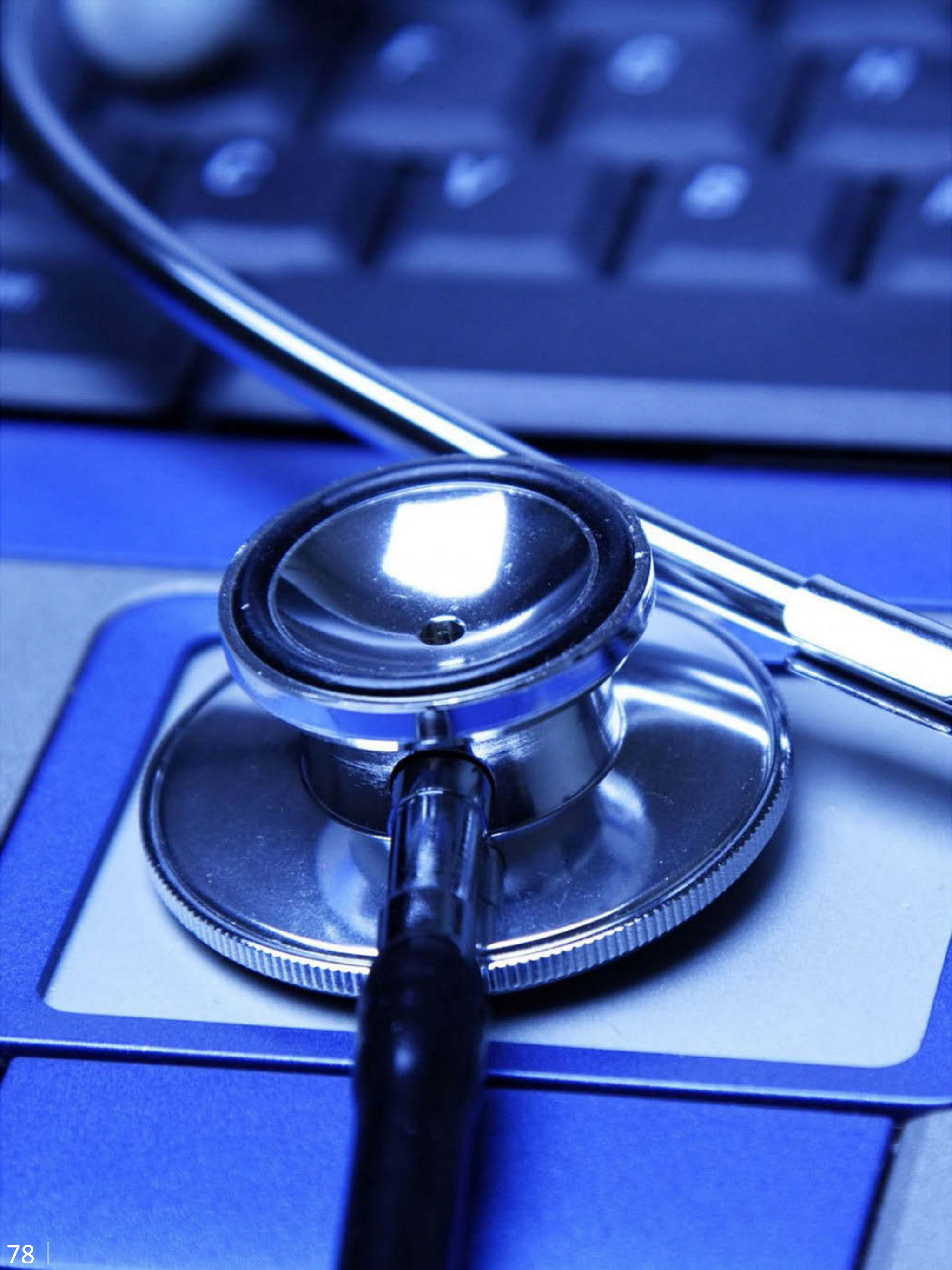
The state of Texas and telemedicine advocates are in a legal tussle over patients who receive doctor consultations through video.

The state's medical board has implemented rules scheduled to take effect in June that place restrictions on the practice, drawing a rebuke from those who say the technology serves a crucial role, particularly in remote regions where doctors are few. A Dallas company, Teladoc, has filed a lawsuit to block the state's action, arguing that it "would raise prices and reduce access to physician services in Texas."

The lawsuit was filed Wednesday in federal court in Austin, against the backdrop of the growing use of telemedicine in physician care.

"It is clear that the medical board acted only when Teladoc consultations became sufficiently numerous to be perceived as a competitive threat to brick-and-mortar physician practices," Teladoc CEO Jason Gorevic said in a statement announcing the lawsuit.

He argues that "not one shred of data was presented" during the Texas Medical Board's discussions to support any claim that telemedicine can pose a risk to patients. The board also ignored comments by consumers, physicians and others opposing the regulations adopted April 10, said Gorevic, whose company is one of the leading telemedicine providers in the U.S. The rules cover a few areas. One requirement is that patients travel to an "established medical site" for an initial appointment, although that meeting with a doctor may be either in-person or via teleconference. The patient could have the appointment from home as long as a medical assistant is present to relay vital signs and other data to the doctor. Dr. Michael Arambula, president of the board, has said the intention is to ensure safe, quality care. He said in an earlier statement that the board wants to avoid any sort of initial treatment done by telephone that





doesn't provide "any objective diagnostic data" to help a doctor serve a patient.

"The board recognizes that as technology evolves, so too must regulations governing telemedicine," Arambula said.

Gorevic noted that the rules require that a physician have an established relationship with a patient to provide treatment. "Imagine if you could only shop online from a store that you'd already visited in-person and how that would impact business innovation and customer care," he said.

Jonathan Linkous, CEO of the American Telemedicine Association, said doctor-patient teleconferences are only a portion of a growing industry. He said telemedicine fills an important gap in rural areas that have a shortage of not just doctors who offer specialized care but also general practitioners.

Texas ranks 47th in the nation in primary care physicians per 100,000 people, according to AMN Healthcare. Thirty-five Texas counties have no physician; an additional 80 have five or fewer.

"The fact that medical boards are starting to pay attention to this is probably a good thing because that means telemedicine is playing a larger role in patient care," Linkous said.

New McCullough Book Celebrates The Wright Brothers

David McCullough's latest work of history followed a spontaneous path, from a book about many Americans in Paris in the 20th century to the biography of just two.

"Among the people I turned up were the Wright brothers, and it just astonished me that they were even in France, let alone that it had an important part to play in their story," says the two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, a Boston resident visiting New York to promote "The Wright Brothers," coming out this week.





"Just reading about them, I realized how much more interesting they were, how much more compelling than I had any idea. And I thought, 'No, this is the book.'"

The 81-year-old McCullough was interviewed recently in a private study at the Yale Club in Manhattan, a favorite setting for the Yale alumnus. He sees "The Wright Brothers," already optioned by Tom Hanks for a planned miniseries, as the last of an unofficial "trilogy of accomplishment," following his landmark "The Great Bridge" about the Brooklyn Bridge and "The Path Between the Seas" about the Panama Canal. Paris is part of the Wrights' story because they at first received more support from the French than from the Americans. McCullough also traces their childhood in Ohio, their devoted parents and Wilbur's relentless self-education, the bicycle shop where they first revealed their mechanical genius and the 1903 flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, that later allowed them to claim honors as the first successful pilots (McCullough dismisses recent claims by Connecticut officials that a resident of their state, Gustave Whitehead, was the real pioneer).

One of the world's most popular and honored historians, McCullough has written about presidents, Paris, bridges and natural disasters. But he sees common themes and approaches in his work. His first book, "The Great Flood," was about the 1889 Johnstown Flood in Pennsylvania and was successful enough that he feared he would be labeled "Bad News" McCullough. So starting with "The Great Bridge," published in 1972, he picked narratives defined by what is achieved and not lost. He also insists on starting with a subject he knows little about.

"And that's something my academic friends find hard to understand," he says. "Because they're experts on a given era or a given group of people or an idea. I don't want to be an expert. Experts have all the answers; I have questions."









McCullough is not a trained scholar and has a hobbyist's background in aviation. As a child he built model airplanes and flew them, and watched them quickly descend, from the third floor of his house. He also took flying lessons in the 1960s, as many as he could afford to at the time.

At first, he knew little more about the Wrights than did his editor at Simon & Schuster, Bob Bender, who confides in a reader's note in "The Wright Brothers" that he couldn't tell which brother was which (Short answer: Orville wore a mustache, Wilbur didn't). McCullough educated himself through reading and travel, visiting Kitty Hawk, Paris and other sites of their early experiments and looking through thousands of pages of letters and diaries.

"Five years ago, I knew only the same basic things most people did, that they were bicycle mechanics from Ohio and that they invented the airplane," he says.

His research enabled him to beat the experts and crack a longtime mystery about the Wrights, involving a hockey stick that changed young Wilbur's life.

When Wilbur Wright was a teenager, he was smashed in the face by a hockey stick while playing on a frozen lake, knocking out several teeth. The injury sent him into a depression so severe that he abandoned plans to attend college and rarely left home over the next few years. But it also made him an intense reader and brought him closer to Orville, whom he joined first to run a printing press, then a bicycle shop, then as collaborators on flying machines.

Until recently, no one knew who wielded the stick. But in reading through the diaries of the Wrights' father, McCullough discovered that the boy was famous, notorious, in his own right: Oliver Crook Haugh, a neighborhood bully at the time and later executed for murdering his mother, father and brother.





Dr. Tom D. Crouch, a Wright biographer praised by McCullough and a senior curator at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., told The Associated Press that he had looked through the diaries while working on his own 1989 book and missed the Haugh entry. Crouch gives McCullough “full credit for being the first to identify Wilbur’s assailant in a Wright biography.”

McCullough tries to connect his books to the present and sees in the Wrights an exemplary case of persistence. They endured numerous failures, humiliations and near-fatal mishaps, including a crash that badly injured Orville and a ferocious mosquito attack that McCullough says would have sent him home “permanently, in absolute horror.”

“There’s an old novelist adage, ‘Keep your hero in trouble,’ and these fellows are in trouble all the time,” he says.

“I was flying to California or somewhere and they came on the loudspeaker and said, ‘We have reached out altitude of 35,000.’ And there I am doing some rewriting of some chapters of these guys and I thought, ‘Whoa, here I am, working on this book and I’m zooming along at 35,000 feet, all with other people who don’t think a thing of it.’”



Trailer

Movies & TV Shows

Fifty Shades of Grey

The international literary phenomenon hits the big - or perhaps that should be the iDevice - screen. Dakota Johnson and Jamie Dornan take on the iconic roles of the inexperienced college graduate Anastasia Steele and the young business magnate Christian Grey, who begin an all-consuming sadomasochistic relationship soon after meeting in a business interview.

iTunes Preview



by Sam Taylor-Johnson
Genre: Romance
Released: 2015
Price: \$14.99

★★★★★
1710 Ratings

Rotten Tomatoes
 25%

FIVE FACTS:

1. The film is based on the global bestselling E. L. James novel of the same name.
2. The erotic romance was released in 2011, and **has since sold over 100 million copies worldwide.**
3. The movie premiered at the 65th Berlin International Film Festival on February 11, 2015.
4. It **grossed \$569,521,159 worldwide.**
5. Two sequels have been announced: **Fifty Shades Darker in 2017 and Fifty Shades Freed in 2018.**

See more in
iTunes



Interview with Jamie Dornan



Black or White

The death of his wife in a car crash leaves widower Elliot Anderson (Kevin Costner) raising his beloved granddaughter, Eloise, on his own - his daughter having died in childbirth. Still grieving, Anderson is then thrown into a custody battle when Eloise's black grandmother, Rowena (Octavia Spencer) demands that Eloise be brought under the care of her drug addict father.

FIVE FACTS:

1. Other cast members include Gillian Jacobs, Jennifer Ehle, Anthony Mackie and Bill Burr.
2. The film premiered at the 2014 Toronto International Film Festival.
3. Principal photography **took place in New Orleans during the summer of 2013.**
4. The movie was directed by Mike Binder.
5. It **grossed \$21,560,727 worldwide.**



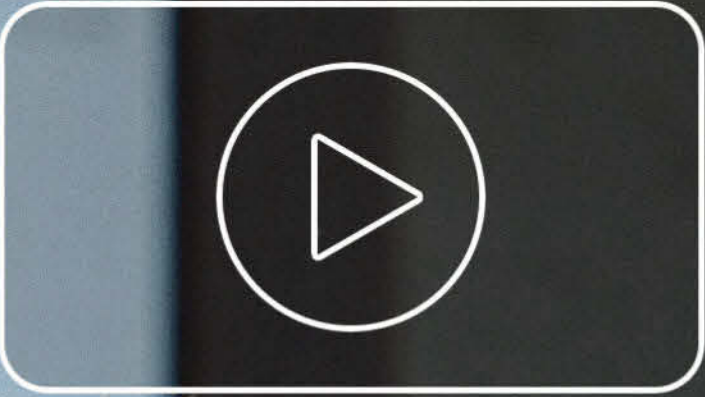
iTunes Preview



by Mike Binder
Genre: Drama
Released: 2015
Price: \$14.99

★★★★★
54 Ratings

Rotten Tomatoes
 37%



Trailer



Interview with Kevin Costner





Believe (Live)

Music



iTunes Preview



Genre: Alternative
Released: May 04, 2015
16 Songs
Price: \$14.99

★★★★★
1757 Ratings

Wilder Mind (Deluxe Version)

Mumford & Sons

The British folk rockers switch producers for their third studio album, from Markus Dravs to James Ford. Sure enough, it also brings a major change in the band's sound, from banjo-plucking neo-folk to boldly electrifying alt-rock worthy of filling a stadium. Mumford & Sons are clearly still distinctive, but they've ramped up the power.

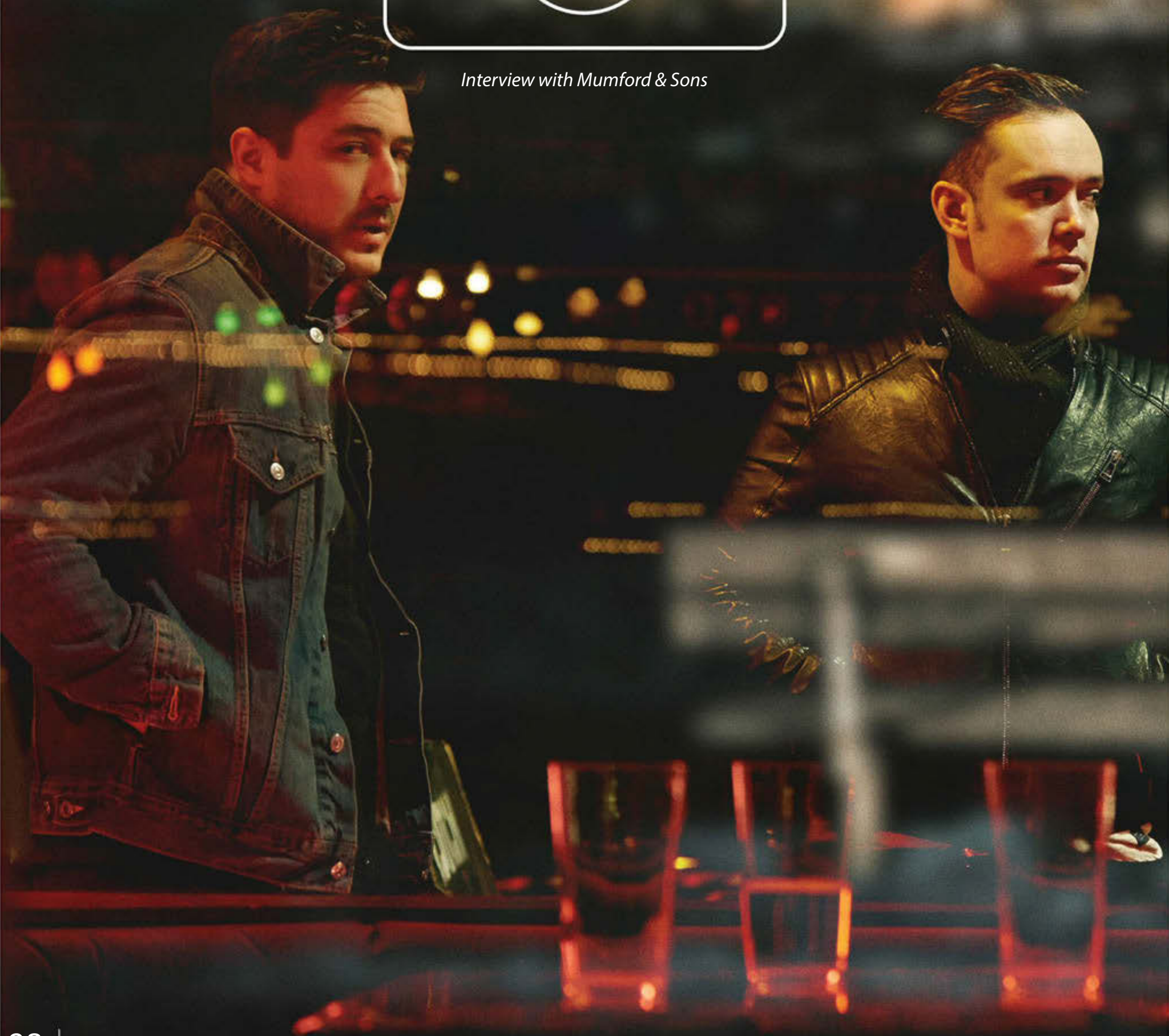
FIVE FACTS:

1. Mumford & Sons were formed in London, England in 2007.
2. The group's members are Marcus Mumford, Ben Lovett, Winston Marshall and Ted Dwane.
3. The band's second studio album, Babel won the 2013 Grammy Award for Album of the Year.
4. Wilder Mind's lead single, "Believe", peaked at number one on the US iTunes chart.
5. Additional musicians on the album include Tom Hobden on violin, Thomas Bartlett on keyboards and Dave Nelson on trombone.

See more in
iTunes



Interview with Mumford & Sons





Stages (Deluxe Version)

Josh Groban

This album of covers of songs from Broadway musicals comes two years after Groban's last studio effort, *All That Echoes*, and has already attracted much praise for the artist's passionate renditions of such classics as "Pure Imagination" from the film *Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory* and "What I Did For Love" from *A Chorus Line*.

FIVE FACTS:

1. Kelly Clarkson guest stars on the album, contributing vocals to "All I Ask Of You" from *Phantom of the Opera*.
2. Other guests include Chris Botti on "Old Devil Moon" and Audra McDonald on "If I Loved You".
3. Groban has said of Clarkson: "I've wanted to sing with Kelly for such a long time **because she has one of the great powerhouse vocals in the whole business.**"
4. Having long thought of *Stages* as "**an artsy side project**" when deciding on the tracks, Groban has added: "Sometimes in this business you accidentally get over-thinky and jaded and ironically, when you decide to just take the leap of what you wanted to do for so long, people are there for you."
5. The album has been described by BroadwayWorld.com's David Clarke as "**a sparkling collection of some of musical theater's greatest songs**, giving fans of Broadway and fans of Josh Groban many reasons to rejoice."



iTunes Preview



Genre: Pop
Released: May 04, 2015
15 Songs
Price: \$14.99

★★★★★
1757 Ratings



Bring Him Home



Interview with Josh Groban

JOSH GRO STAG



BAN ES





TOP

10 SONGS

SEE YOU AGAIN (FEAT. CHARLIE PUTH)

WIZ KHALIFA

PRETTY GIRLS

BRITNEY SPEARS & IGGY AZALEA

SHUT UP AND DANCE

WALK THE MOON

SHINE ON (THE VOICE PERFORMANCE)

SAWYER FREDERICKS

WANT TO WANT ME

JASON DERULO

HONEY, I'M GOOD.

ANDY GRAMMER

HEY MAMA (FEAT. NICKI MINAJ & AFROJACK)

DAVID GUETTA

AMAZING GRACE

(THE VOICE PERFORMANCE)

MEGHAN LINSEY

**EARNED IT (FROM THE "FIFTY SHADES
OF GREY" SOUNDTRACK)**

THE WEEKND

GIRL CRUSH

LITTLE BIG TOWN





TOP 10 ALBUMS

WILDER MIND (DELUXE VERSION)

MUMFORD & SONS

JEKYLL + HYDE

ZAC BROWN BAND

WILDER MIND

MUMFORD & SONS

21 TOTALLY 80S HITS

VARIOUS ARTISTS

4X4 - EP

GRANGER SMITH

SOUND & COLOR

ALABAMA SHAKES

BLURRYFACE

TWENTY ONE PILOTS

THE WATERFALL (DELUXE)

MY MORNING JACKET

STAGES (DELUXE VERSION)

JOSH GROBAN

FIFTY SHADES OF GREY

(ORIGINAL MOTION PICTURE SOUNDTRACK)

VARIOUS ARTISTS





TOP 10

MUSIC VIDEOS

UPTOWN FUNK (FEAT. BRUNO MARS)
MARK RONSON

DEAR FUTURE HUSBAND
MEGHAN TRAINOR

GIRL CRUSH
LITTLE BIG TOWN

THINKING OUT LOUD
ED SHEERAN

SHUT UP AND DANCE
WALK THE MOON

SHAKE IT OFF
TAYLOR SWIFT

ALL ABOUT THAT BASS
MEGHAN TRAINOR

GROWN WOMAN (BONUS VIDEO)
BEYONCÉ

WORTH IT (FEAT. KID INK)
FIFTH HARMONY

TIME OF OUR LIVES
PITBULL





TOP 10 TV SHOWS

LOST HORIZON

MAD MEN, THE FINAL SEASON

BUGGY BOO

KEEPING UP WITH THE KARDASHIANS, SEASON 10

DON'T FAIL

THE GOOD WIFE, SEASON 6

PLEA

REVENGE, SEASON 4

THE GREAT MAN DOWN

THE ROYALS, SEASON 1

THERE BUT FOR THE GRACE OF GOD

MADAM SECRETARY, SEASON 1

REUNION, PT. 2

THE REAL HOUSEWIVES OF ATLANTA, SEASON 7

THE LIE

SECRETS AND LIES, SEASON 1

SHE'S LEAVING HOME

GREY'S ANATOMY, SEASON 11

MOTHER

ONCE UPON A TIME, SEASON 4





TOP 10 BOOKS

THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN

PAULA HAWKINS

MEMORY MAN

DAVID BALDACCI

THE HEIR

KIERA CASS

GATHERING PREY

JOHN SANDFORD

14TH DEADLY SIN

JAMES PATTERSON & MAXINE PAETRO

WICKED BUSINESS

JANET EVANOVICH

ALL THE LIGHT WE CANNOT SEE

ANTHONY DOERR

HOPE

AMANDA BERRY AND OTHERS

PAPER TOWNS

JOHN GREEN

THE LIAR

NORA ROBERTS

The Muppets to Team up With Several Youtube Stars

It's time to play the music. It's time to light the lights. It's time to stream the video. The Muppets are appearing in skits and other online videos with several YouTube stars.

The collaboration kicked off last month when Gonzo, Rizzo and Kermit doppelgänger Constantine popped up in a detective-themed video on YouTube's VSauce3 channel.

Other upcoming appearances will include Dr. Bunsen Honeydew and Beaker answering science-related questions on the Mental Floss channel and the whole Muppet gang performing "Pure Imagination" with violinist Stirling on her channel.

The videos were filmed on location at YouTube Space LA, a new studio operated by the streaming service in West Los Angeles.

YouTube is celebrating its 10th anniversary throughout the month of May. It opened with its public beta launch in May 2005.





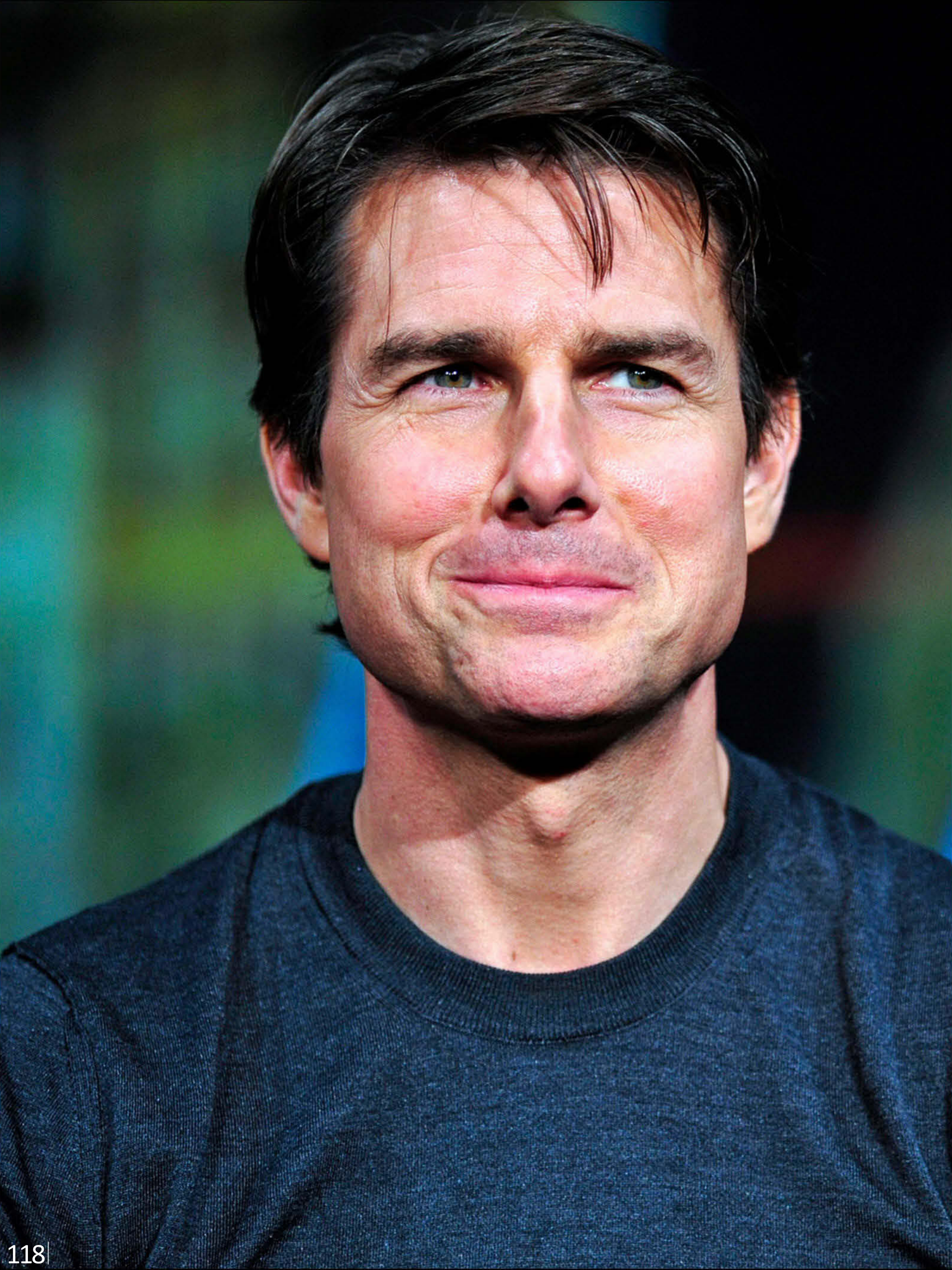
Challenged by 'Going Clear,' Another Test Awaits Tom Cruise

When Janeane Garofalo asked Brad Bird, the director of "Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol," about Tom Cruise at a recent Tribeca Film Festival event, she peppered Bird with allusions to the Scientology documentary "Going Clear." Bird called it "a very inside reference," but Garofalo quickly disagreed.

"Not anymore," she said. "That documentary ... wooo! 'Going Clear,' we could talk about that all day!"

That's probably not what Tom Cruise or the makers of the next "Mission: Impossible" film, "Rogue Nation," want to hear. "Going Clear: Scientology and the Prison of Belief," Alex Gibney's documentary based on the book by the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Lawrence Wright, was a revelation to many and a certain challenge to Cruise, who in recent years has quieted his public advocacy for Scientology.

The film and book did more than anything before to expose the secretive organization and detail some troubling claims involving Cruise,





Scientology's most famous face. Cruise has yet to say anything publicly about "Going Clear," a silence that may be difficult to maintain, given the high-profile demands of promoting a summer blockbuster hoping to make some \$700 million worldwide.

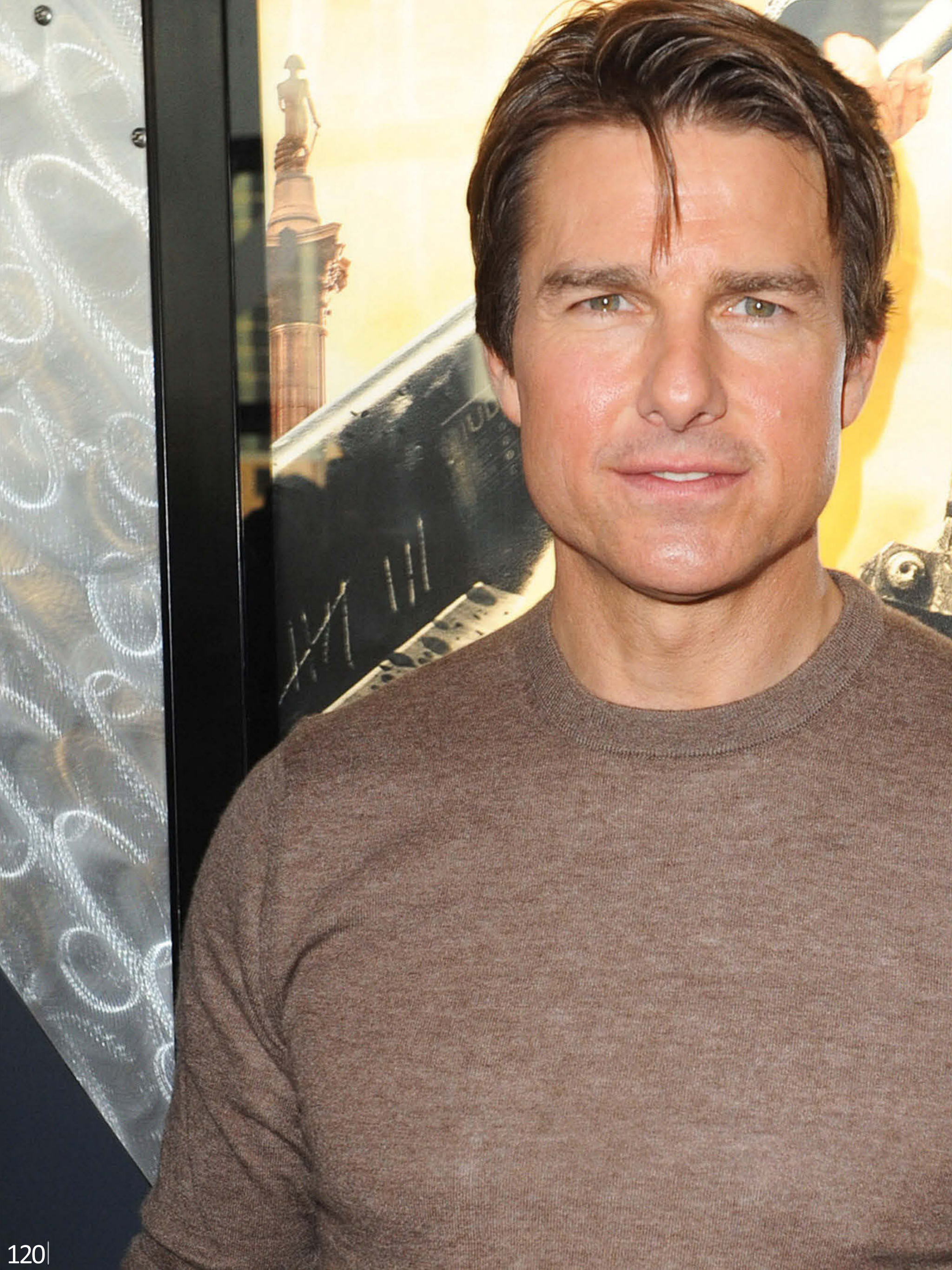
Cruise's stardom has long had a Teflon indestructability, having survived one of the most notorious of public-relations disasters in 2005 when he ditched his longtime publicist for his sister, Lee Anne DeVette, a Scientologist; dramatically wooed his eventual third wife, Katie Holmes; and jumped on Oprah Winfrey's couch.

Ten years later, a documentary may be a seemingly small threat to a global star who has already weathered media storms over his Scientology beliefs. Or "Going Clear" could persist as an acute challenge to Cruise at a time when his box-office clout may be waning and in a media age where privacy seldom lasts.

The impact of "Going Clear" has also been unusually large. When it aired on HBO on March 29, shortly after premiering in theaters, it became a trending topic on Twitter. Critics called it a "powder-keg" and a "scorching takedown of Scientology."

Wright and Gibney insist Scientologists are free to believe what they want, but maintain the church should be held accountable for what they claim is frequently abusive treatment. The filmmakers have pressed for change in either Scientology's tax-exempt status or through its influential celebrity figureheads: Cruise and John Travolta.

"There aren't very many alternatives and law enforcement agencies are stymied," says Wright. "What's left is for journalists to call attention to what's going on and at least inform people. We certainly are singling out some celebrities because they bear a moral responsibility and we're making certain that they have to recognize that."





Travolta reacted in an April interview while promoting his latest film, "The Forger." He told The Tampa Bay Times that he wouldn't watch a documentary "so decidedly negative" when his decades as a Scientologist have been "nothing but brilliant for me."

"I haven't experienced anything that the hearsay has (claimed), so why would I communicate something that wasn't true for me?" Travolta told the paper. "It wouldn't make sense, nor would it for Tom, I imagine."

Cruise's representative did not respond to requests for comment for this article. The Church of Scientology has called the documentary "a one-sided false diatribe" reliant on the testimony of "bitter, vengeful apostates."

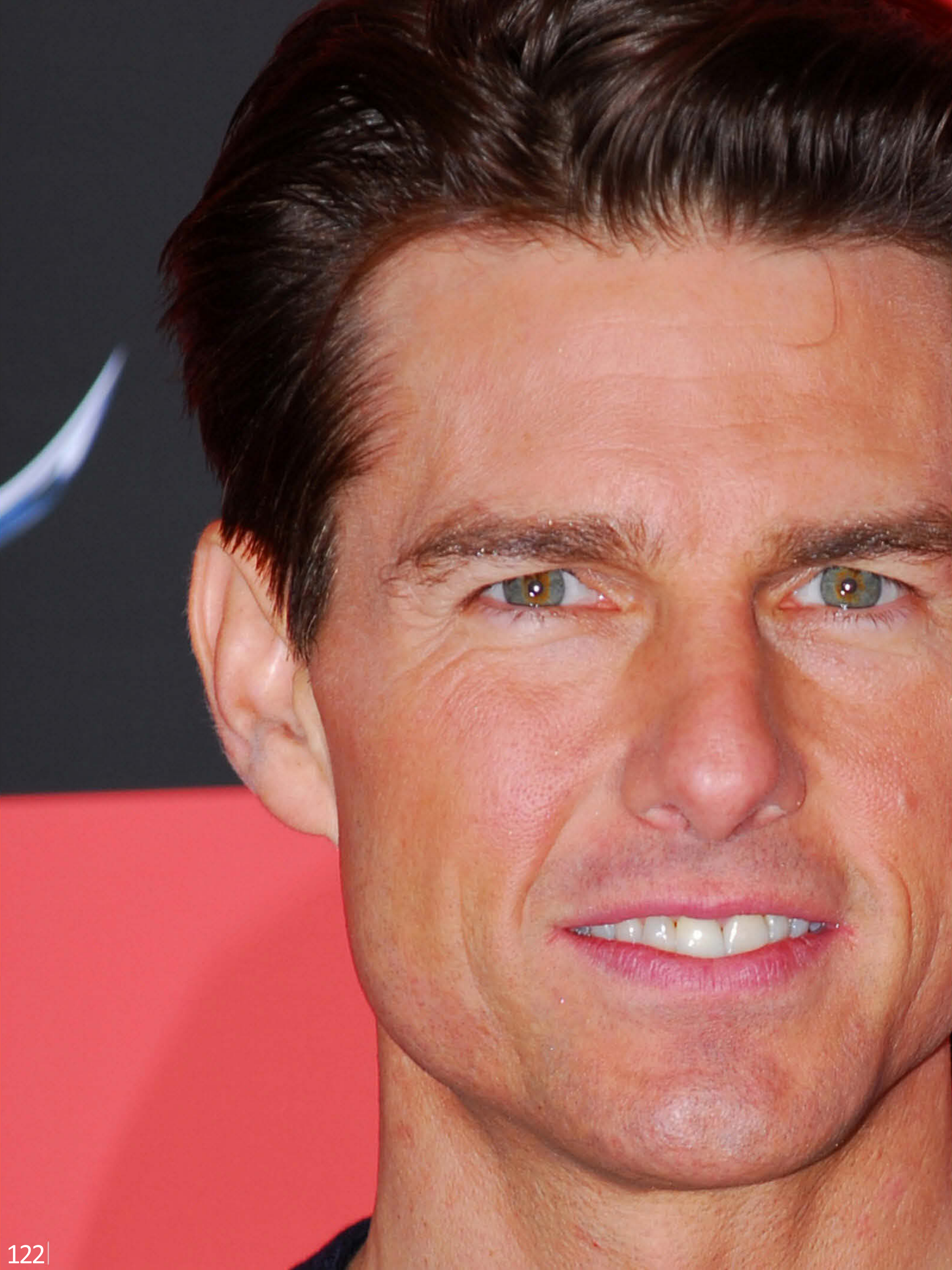
When the trailer for "Rogue Nation" debuted in late March, concerns about Scientology took a back seat to Cruise's movie stunt prowess. The clip, which has already been watched by more than 7 million on YouTube, featured the remarkable sight of Cruise hanging off the side of an airplane at liftoff - a stunt Cruise performed himself. Few theater owners at their annual CinemaCon convention in Las Vegas, where Cruise previewed the film, appeared concerned about his drawing power.

"As long as he makes a good film, people are going to come watch it," said Morris Schulman, president of Texas' Schulman Theaters Inc.

"'Mission: Impossible' is a great franchise and we're excited to have it this summer. Hanging on that plane? That's pretty spectacular. That's cool."

But some believe Cruise is facing a crossroads. Jeetendr Sehdev, a marketing professor at the University of Southern California and a celebrity branding expert, says people feel increasingly uneasy about Cruise and that his kind of "contrived celebrity" is outdated.

"The documentary is going to have an impact on 'Mission: Impossible' when it comes out," says





Sehdev. “Secrets in Hollywood are really no longer sexy. Audiences are looking for transparency and authenticity in their celebrities more than ever before.”


“Mission: Impossible - Ghost Protocol,” which reunites Cruise with Christopher McQuarrie (director of “Jack Reacher” and screenwriter of “Valkerie” and “Edge of Tomorrow”), comes on the heels of several underperforming releases from the 52-year-old actor. His last three films - “Jack Reacher,” “Oblivion” and “Edge of Tomorrow” - have failed to crack \$100 million at the North American box office.

While Sehdev believes it’s imperative for Cruise to address “Going Clear” and to refashion his image for media-savvy millennials, Amy Nicholson, film critic for LA Weekly and author of “Tom Cruise: Anatomy of an Actor,” thinks “it’s unfair that we obsess over this religion and this church when he obviously believes it very much.”

Instead, Nicholson says Cruise needs a makeover not in public relations, but movies.

“I get frustrated with the last decade of his career,” she says. “He’s not doing ‘The Color of Money’ anymore; he’s doing the ‘Mission: Impossibles.’ I think he feels sort of cornered. He needs to prove that he’s the biggest box-office star in the world again before he goes back to acting.”






Miley Cyrus on Bruce Jenner, Pink Armpits, Her New Charity

When Miley Cyrus wears pasties or posts photos of her pink armpits, it's not to be a provocateur. The 22-year-old says she's just being herself, and she wants all young people to have that same opportunity.

That's why she's launching the Happy Hippie Foundation to help homeless and LGBT youth, adding that not all her past relationships were "straight, heterosexual" ones. Cyrus didn't elaborate.





“The position I’m in, I feel like I’ve got a lot of power,” she said in a Monday phone interview with The Associated Press. “But so many kids don’t feel that way. They’re under their parents’ rule.”

Cyrus, who famously asked a homeless man to accept her Video of the Year trophy at the 2014 Video Music Awards, said she was inspired by the attention generated by that gesture. And she was further moved by the suicide of transgender teen Leelah Alcorn in December. More than 1.6 million young people are homeless in the United States, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless. Cyrus said 40 percent identify themselves as LGBT.

An entertainer since age 14, she wants to use her fame for good, calling Bruce Jenner “my hero” for shining light on transgender issues.

“When you have all eyes on you, what are you saying? And that’s what I had to ask myself a lot,” she said. “It’s like, I know you’re going to look at me more if my (breasts) are out, so look at me. And then I’m going to tell you about my foundation for an hour and totally hustle you.”

Cyrus is passionate about a lot of issues, from climate change to animal welfare, but said she chose to focus on youth homelessness because it’s specific and tangible.

“It’s something that everyone sees,” she said. “It’s like the birds chirping. We’re consciously ignoring it at all times, but it’s always happening right in front of us.”

She plans to remain focused on increasing acceptance for LGBT youth and improving homeless kids’ lives for at least five years before broadening her scope.

“It’s not going to be an overnight process,” she said. “You’ve got to get into a lot of people’s brains and you’ve got to really make this a topic.”

Funds raised by Happy Hippie will create digital





support groups for LGBT youth and their families. The foundation is also aiding My Friend's Place, a center for homeless youth in Hollywood.

To launch the Happy Hippie Foundation and raise money and awareness for its programs, she's unveiling a collection of music video collaborations with artists such as Joan Jett and Ariana Grande. The Backyard Sessions will be available on the foundation's Facebook page beginning Tuesday.

Cyrus is also writing songs about loving one another and being true to one's self. Which comes back to why she dyed her armpit hair pink.

"The pink pits are saying, 'Don't tell me what to do,'" she said. "It's back to what I'm preaching in a way, you know, telling these kids. I'm not just saying you be yourself and I'm going to go be Miley Cyrus. I'm saying I'm going to be my (expletive) self, too."

Follow AP Entertainment Writer Sandy Cohen at <http://www.twitter.com/APSandy> .

Online:

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Beyonce Shuts Down The Met Gala In Peekaboo Givenchy

Rihanna shut down the Met Gala's red carpet in a regal yellow coat. And then came Bey.

Dressed lavishly by Chinese designer Guo Pei, Rihanna clutched her fur-trim frock closed and dragged a mammoth train up the grand staircase Monday during one of fashion's biggest nights of the year.

She was a latecomer, but Beyonce was even later, wearing a peekaboo custom Givenchy Haute Couture by Riccardo Tisci adorned with multicolored crystals and stones. Her high ponytail and barely there ensemble were playful counterpoints to Rihanna's swirls of royal gold and matching headpiece. (Note: No Bey-Jay-Solange elevator smackdowns like last year, as far as we know.)





The evening, aimed at raising millions for the museum's Anna Wintour Costume Center, was inspired by the Met's new exhibit, "China: Through the Looking Glass." While some in the parade of celebrity guests embraced the East-leaning theme, others looked more ready for the Waldorf than the highly anticipated Met Gala.

Some highs and not-so-much:

THE ROYAL PALETTE

Reds and golds ruled, but Uma Thurman (killer jade column earrings), Selena Gomez (in Vera Wang) and Sofia Vergara (with Joe Manganiello) represented in white. So did sexy Kim Kardashian, in the first design by Peter Dundas for Roberto Cavalli. Kardashian's sheer lace with feathers at the bottom had some people online making comparisons to a similar Givenchy gown in black that Beyonce wore to the Met Gala in 2012. Thurman had hotelier Andre Balazs back by her side.

THE BOYS

Justin Bieber broke away from George Clooney's traditional tuxedo tails and the white ties of Neil Patrick Harris and his husband, David Burtka, with a loud black jacket screaming gold dragon motif. Jay Z went for a classic black tuxedo when he walked wife Beyonce up the stairs. That's about it for the men.

SARAH JESSICA PARKER'S HEAD

Her black dress was an H&M creation made of repurposed fabrics. On her head was a creation all its own, a fiery red headpiece from one of her regular collaborators, hat designer Philip Treacy. It had long tassels and touches of silver as it towered high. Of the dress, Parker said it was embellished with vintage fabrics and old beads sent from Sweden.





ANNE HATHAWAY'S HOOD

Star Wars, declared the peanut gallery. She wore a hooded, cap-sleeve Ralph Lauren Collection custom gold lame column evening dress - HOOD being the operative word. The company noted the fabric was made from real metal fibers milled in Italy.

GAGA AT THE OPERA

Lady Gaga donned a velvet net evening coat hand-embroidered with black rhinestones and 14,000 feathers, according to the design house, Balenciaga. Underneath was a black crepe jumpsuit sparkling in Swarovski crystals. The whole deal was wrapped up with a huge silk sash ala traditional Chinese opera gowns. Nobody can say Gaga, like many others, didn't run with the idea of China, custom hair combs and all, thanks to Balenciaga designer Alexander Wang.

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