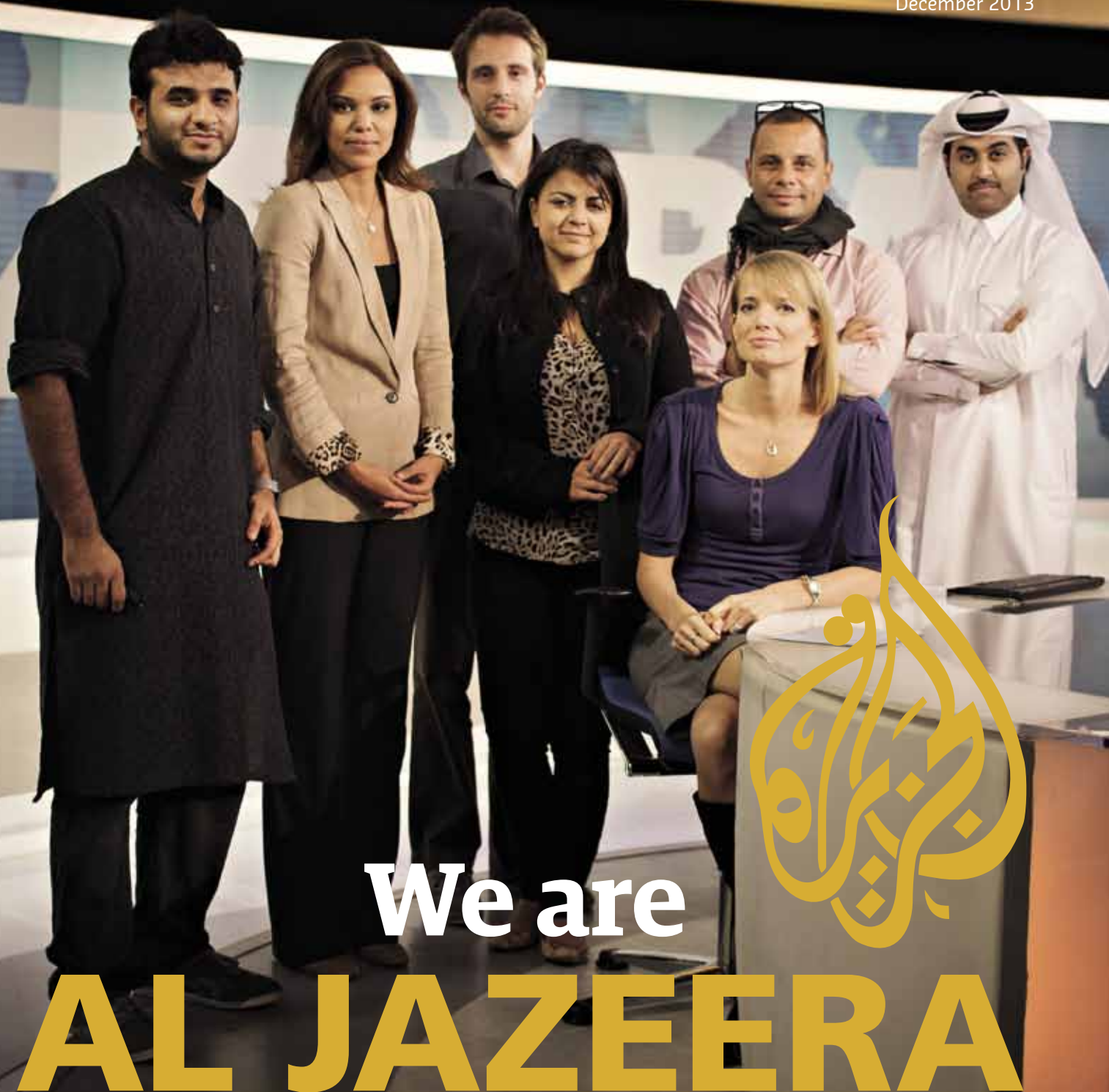


DOMO

 Ringier

In-house journal
December 2013



We are

AL JAZEERA

The DNA of the Arab news network

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Cover photo: from left to right: Azad Essa, Dareen Abughaida, Sam Bollier, Joelle Naayem, Steff Gaultier, Carlos Van Meek, Ramzan Al Naimi
Photo: Katarina Premfors

Publishing Information

Publisher: Ringier AG, Corporate Communications, CCO, Dufourstrasse 23, 8008 Zurich
Executive Director: Edi Estermann, CCO, Dufourstrasse 23, 8008 Zurich
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Proofreading: Verena Schaffner, Peter Voser (German), Patrick Morier-Genoud (French), Claudia Bodmer (English), Zsófia Vavrek (Hungarian), Adela Bradu (Romanian)
Layout/Production: Nadine Zuberbühler (Switzerland), Jinrong Zheng (China)
Image Processing: Ringier Redaktions Services Zurich
Printed at: Ringier Print Ostrava and SNP Leefung Printers. No portion of this publication may be reprinted without the editor's permission.
Circulation: 12,400 copies. DOMO is published in German, English, French, Romanian, Hungarian and Chinese.

Photos: Katarina Premfors / Getty Images (2), Christian Postl, Marco Grob, Tara Rice, Keystone (2), Chris Blaser, Karin Kohlberg



When the TV news channel **Al Jazeera** was launched in 1996, Arab potentates were shocked and the people in the streets were thrilled. Today, Al Jazeera is playing in the same league as the BBC and CNN. Its Doha headquarters employs journalists from more than 60 countries, and thanks to petrodollars they work under conditions that others can only dream about.

Text: Peter Hossli
Photos: Katarina Premfors / Getty Images

A visit with

ALJAZEERA



Seite 6 (oben): Carlos Van Meek (center, wearing a scarf) keeps a tight rein on the midday meeting at Al Jazeera English. Concentration and pace are high. He tersely states what he wants today.

It is cold in the desert. Carlos Van Meek uses a scarf to protect himself against the raw chill of the air from the a/c. «London, are you there?» are his opening words at this meeting. His accent is American. «We have two bombs in Beirut, whoever is responsible is pure speculation.» It is 1 p.m. on the outskirts of Doha in the Emirate of Qatar on the Persian Gulf. The day's managing editor, Van Meek, 45, keeps a tight rein on the midday meeting at the news channel Al Jazeera English. Taking part via videoconference are colleagues from London and Sarajevo. The meeting's pace is as fast as the concentration level is high. Van Meek quickly reports the known facts. Beirut: Twenty-two dead, including Iran's cultural attaché; probably car bombs. And here's how the story is supposed to run: «Zena is on the ground in Beirut, Soraya reports from Teheran. We need reactions from the Saudis, the Qataris, from the entire region.» It is an important story, he says, and relates why: «The civil war in Syria is spilling over into Lebanon.» A female colleague interrupts: «All this is very complex, how do we explain it?» Van Meek knows how: «Slowly, carefully, in clear and simple English.» He is an American from Miami, who has been working for Al Jazeera since

2006. «Because we still want to explain the world,» he says. «Hardly anybody else is doing this today.» Al Jazeera was launched in 1996, at first only in Arabic. It was to be an objective voice in a world full of censorship, providing a forum for all opinions. Today, Al Jazeera - in English: «The Island» - is considered «the most successful Arab project in the past twenty years,» says Mostefa Souag, Al Jazeera's Director General. 220 million households in more than 100 countries receive the channel. Journalists and producers from more than 60 countries work in Doha alone. In 2006 Al Jazeera Arabic was joined on the air by Al Jazeera English. In



Anchor Adrian Finighan worked for the BBC and CNN before joining Al Jazeera. «No presenter in their right mind would turn down an offer from Al Jazeera.» The fact that the channel does not need to be profitable is both «a curse and a blessing» for him.

summer of 2013 Al Jazeera America was launched in New York. The traffic in the wide yet congested streets of Doha is trudging ahead at a leisurely pace. Wind is blowing up desert sands. The city appears to be one huge building site. Some quarters look as derelict as Beirut, others glitter like Dubai. The neighborhood surrounding Al Jazeera's headquarters, far from the glassy skyscrapers of the city center, feels inhospitable. Behind the heavily guarded gates lies a parking lot, covered with flysheets to keep cars cool in the blistering summer heat. Satellite dishes powdered with fine sand loom against the sky behind high fences. Two nondescript buildings stand across from each other: one of them houses Al Jazeera Arabic, the other Al Jazeera English - two worlds that belong together, yet are very different. The offices of the English-language channel feel tidy and quiet, their Arabic counterparts lively and loud. The English cafeteria serves better food, they say, but the Arabs crack smarter jokes. On both sides journalists turn up to work in jeans or suits, there are men wearing dishdashas, the traditional white garment, and women with their hair covered.

It is shortly before 10 a.m. The middle of the brightly lit newsroom of Al Jazeera English is occupied by the news anchors' desk, close to the team of managing editor Van Meek. Sue Turton takes a final peek into the mirror, adjusts her hair and make-up and checks the text on the teleprompter. At her back is a moving map of the world. «Quiet, please!» a female producer calls, «we go live in twenty seconds.» Clocks show the time in Washington and London, in Doha and Kuala Lumpur.

Five, four, three, two, one. The red light is on. «Hello, this is Al Jazeera, I'm Sue Turton, and this is today's news.» With British precision she announces reports from Chile and Russia, from the Philippines and the U.S.A.

What feels as big as a basketball arena is actually the office of Al Anstey. The walls are hung with monitors. All of them are showing news. For three years now this stately Briton has been managing director of Al Jazeera English. He raves about his editorial staff. «No other network is as international as we are.» He sprawls in his comfy leather sofa. «Diversity is our strength. For each story we have somebody in Doha who relates to it.» While all other media are cutting back, Al Jazeera is still expanding. «We can still afford to go out there and tell each story that matters.»

This is the main reason why Anstey left the British channel ITN to join Al Jazeera. He explains how he once was in Bangladesh filming a catastrophic flood which left hundreds dead. No-one at ITN in London was interested, however, «because there was no connection to England.» Al Jazeera is different. «We have a more global approach, and we don't care where a story happens, if it's good, we do it.»

He is driven by skepticism, as are his journalists. «Here, we question everything.» Still, a certain stigma attaches to the channel. After the attacks of September 11, 2001, Al Jazeera fell into disrepute. Arch-terrorist Osama bin Laden sent video messages to Doha. Al Jazeera broadcast them.

During the war in Iraq in 2003 Al Jazeera showed stray U.S. missiles killing Iraqi civilians. «Al Jazeera promotes terrorism,» U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld raged. Today, such reservations have disappeared, managing director Anstey maintains. Only recently, Hillary Clinton praised Al Jazeera for broadcasting «real news» - unlike U.S. ▶



«We go live in twenty seconds.» Al Jazeera English anchor Sue Turton checks her text one last time. In a moment she will be presenting the 10 a.m. news program.

The modern newsroom at Al Jazeera English in Doha employs journalists from more than 60 countries. Al Jazeera offers excellent working conditions and high, tax-exempt salaries. However, many employees' families live in the West.

The control room at Al Jazeera English.



«Explaining Arab reality»

Mostefa Souag has spent eleven years working for Al Jazeera. Today he is Director General of the entire network. He had previously been the editor-in-chief of the Arabic channel. He was born in Algeria, where he still cannot send any correspondents. For Souag, Al Jazeera is «the most successful Arab project in the past twenty years».



Al Jazeera Director General Mostefa Souag in his Doha office.

Mr. Souag, Al Jazeera was launched in 1996. How has this network influenced other Arab media?

Mostefa Souag: From the beginning it was very positively received in the Arab world. But the governments were very suspicious; they considered Al Jazeera a threat. Television used to be in the service of the rulers, it was more or less a mouthpiece for propaganda; freedom was very limited. Al Jazeera was free and independent. Other Arab media organizations have been looking up to us. We showed them what journalism could be.

How has this affected Al Jazeera itself?

We've grown, we have more influence and more viewers. We've succeeded because we're free and independent, we're in the business of news, not money. Some Arab networks had more money than we have. They're gone. We owe our success to the quality of the journalists.

More than 400 journalists from over 60 countries are now working for Al Jazeera

around the globe. What kinds of people do you look for?

Genuine and passionate media people. We pay them good salaries, sometimes even better than our competitors'. We provide them with the space they need to practice their profession.

Journalists need to be independent. In the West Al Jazeera is regarded as the mouthpiece of Arab propaganda.

We're criticized because we show all sides to a story. In Iraq our reporters were not merely embedded with the Americans. We also showed how their wonderful technology missed Saddam Hussein and killed civilians. CNN and others would have loved that material, but they were not there. Our office in Afghanistan was bombed, and our reporter in Iraq was killed - because we were reporting live from there.

To what extent does the owner of Al Jazeera, the Emir of Qatar, get involved?

Al Jazeera is owned by the state of Qatar, not by a person. Nobody tells us what to report. Journalistically, Al Jazeera is completely independent.

Surely the Emir is not entirely selfless. He is paying the bills. You don't have to turn a profit.

Every government tries to gain influence, gain power. If you try to gain power with hard power, arms etc., you end up killing people. Or you can choose soft power, media or diplomacy. That doesn't kill anyone. Doha is the capital of peace negotiations. The Soccer World Cup in 2022 is important. The Emir wants to develop the country and at the same time to contribute to humanity.

Did Al Jazeera create the Arab spring, as many people are saying?

Al Jazeera has no doubt been the most successful Arab project in the last twenty years. In the Arab countries it is the channel that has contributed most to making people aware of their reality. If you want to know what's going on in terms of youth, women's roles, politics or economics, watch Al Jazeera. The Arab spring originated with the people, but Al Jazeera was there to cover it accurately. We showed how you can obtain justice if you fight for it.

What distinguishes Al Jazeera from other global news networks like the BBC or CNN?

We report on Obama and Merkel, what they're doing in their countries, but we also show people who are usually ignored. We give a voice to the voiceless.

Why does Al Jazeera hardly ever report on Qatar?

There is not much happening here that the world cares about. We don't want to create a story that is not there. We're not a local TV station - we're global. When Amnesty International presented a report [in November on the abuse of worker's rights] we were there.



Proud of Al Jazeera: Outside Mostefa Souag's office is a TV set with a gold frame. It plays Al Jazeera Arabic around the clock.



► channels. Within the Arab world, the channel was in fact «king», the U.S. Secretary of State claimed. That is a sensitive issue in Doha, especially since the Arab world has fallen into turmoil. Al Jazeera is said to have helped topple Muammar Gaddafi in Libya and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt. «The Arab spring obviously is a massive story», says Anstey. «We didn't start it, but we influenced the debate about it in the entire world.»

After the 2011 uprising in Tunisia, some 50,000 Egyptians spoke out against Mubarak on Facebook. Journalists in Doha saw this - and reported it. They also broadcast reactions to these stories from people all over the Arab world. «We highlighted a dynamic that was already there.»

You need to cross the street to get to the newsroom of Al Jazeera Arabic. Men in dishdashas are sitting in the control room. Editorial offices and newsspeakers' desk are separate, as it would be too loud to have everyone in the same room. Arab journalists are animatedly discussing politics. «Politics is much more important to

our lives than to people in the West,» says Rawan Al-Damen, 34. She runs Al Jazeera Arabic's documentary film department. «The question of who is minister of education will decide whether your kids may go to school or not. In the West everyone goes to school.» She shares her windowless office with six colleagues - from Morocco and Iraq, Jordan and Great Britain, including Muslims and Christians.

«Because this channel still wants to explain the world»

Carlos Van Meek, managing editor, Al Jazeera English

«I'm a Palestinian,» says Al-Damen. She came to Doha in 2006, «because I always wanted to work for a pan-Arabic network.»

Only when she got here did she discover the secret of Al Jazeera. «Nobody interferes, you have total control, and they have a high budget for documentaries.» She says something that Western journalists hardly ever say about their employers anymore: «Al Jazeera is successful because of its high editorial level and its budget.



Top left: A technician at Al Jazeera Arabic checks the cameras in the anchors' studio.

Bottom left: Palestinian Rawan Al-Damen came to Doha in 2006 and now runs Al Jazeera's documentary film department. «Nobody interferes, you have total control, and they have a high budget for documentaries.» She also says: «As a woman, as a filmmaker, you need to work three times as hard as others.»

Top right: Male and female presenters at Al Jazeera Arabic shortly before going live. The news anchors' desk is separated from the newsroom, as the Arab journalists' debates are too loud.

If you lose one of them, there will be no Al Jazeera.»

Just how independently can she work, though? Critics dub Al Jazeera a Muslim mouthpiece with which the Emir of Qatar spreads his own political views. «Those prejudices are wrong,» says Al-Damen. «I never in my life got a single phone call from my boss to interview somebody. At the moment this will happen I will resign.»

Working under such privileged conditions brings a great responsibility, she feels. Al-Damen cites the example of coverage of the politically fraught conflict between Israelis and Palestinians. Her trick is to let Israeli historians who are critical of Israel's settlement policies speak.

A solution to the eternal conflict in the Middle East is hardly imaginable for her, not least because of the Arab media. «We need to change the reporting, the let's-cry-together-about-Palestine,» Al-Damen says. «Let's have the success story, and the happy story about Palestine.»

Can she assert herself in her job? «Females are anchors, and normally not field directors,» she admits; Al Jazeera works like many other TV stations around the world in this respect. «As a woman, as a filmmaker, you need to work three times as hard than others.» ►



Thirty-year-old Palestinian Dalia Qader is a graphic designer with Al Jazeera. She creates subtitles for documentaries and chooses photos that are inserted on-screen. The network is planning a new look for 2014.

► Adrian Finighan, 49, lounges in his chair. This Al Jazeera English news anchor won't be going on the air for another five hours. He spent seventeen years as a presenter with the BBC, five with CNN. He did a bit of PR work, and then the offer from Doha came in. «No presenter in their right mind would turn it down,» says this Brit. «CNN is putting less money in its programming, the BBC has limited funds, we don't have the same commercial constraints.» For any story, reporters can hop on a plane. Three teams covered the typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. Like everyone else, Finighan works for four days and then has four days off. He is not the only TV star to come to Al Jazeera from a big U.S. broadcaster. High salaries lure experienced journalists to Doha. They don't pay any taxes. On the other hand they are a bit lonely. Like many Western journalists, Finighan lives in Qatar, but his wife and children don't. «We couldn't find the right schools,» he says. He often flies to London, home to his family. The money for Al Jazeera comes from the earth. Qatar is a peninsula on the Persian Gulf and at 4,500 square miles covers roughly a quarter of the surface of Switzerland. After World War II it had a population of barely 20,000, only few of whom could read or write. Today there are 200,000 Qataris - and 1,9 million foreign workers. There is plenty of oil beneath the sand and a lot of natural gas under the ocean floor. These natural resources have made the Emir of Qatar one of the richest men in the

«If Al Jazeera was biased I wouldn't be here»

Adrian Finighan, presenter at Al Jazeera English

Jazeera was biased I wouldn't be here,» the presenter says. «I have a reputation to protect.» The money is a curse as well as a blessing. «Not needing to make a profit is nice for journalists,» he says. «But it's also dangerous that we don't have the pressure to chase an audience. Sometimes, necessary changes are delayed.» On the visual level, the channel urgently needs to be made over and rejuvenated. The studio is too big, especially since people increasingly watch the channel on their smartphones. «It's hard to see the presenter on a smartphone.» This is now supposed to be changed by Ramzan Al Naimi, Manager of the Creative



DOMO author Peter Hossli paid a visit to Al Jazeera in Doha.



The Al Jazeera Arabic building also houses a small museum. One of the exhibits is the vest of Al Jazeera reporter Tareq Ayoub. He was killed by U.S. bombs in Baghdad in April 2003. Also on display are the channel's first calligraphic logos as well as old cameras and microphones.

Department. «2014 will be the creative year at Al Jazeera,» he says. Al Naimi, 33, is sitting in one of the few offices flooded with daylight, wearing a dishdasha, whose headress he frequently adjusts with nervous gestures. On his desk is an Apple monitor; the walls are hung with portraits of Steve Jobs, Einstein and Matisse.

A Qatari, he has been with Al Jazeera for fourteen years, previously having studied in Cairo. He started out operating the teleprompter. Today he is in charge of 140 employees, from Hungary and England, the U.S. and Singapore, Malaysia and Palestine. One graphic designer is from Sudan. «Many of our talents used to be journalists,» he explains. «They know the news business.» They develop and refine the look of Al Jazeera, phrasing headlines, choosing pictures, choosing the anchors' outfits, their make-up and hair-styles.

As yet, Al Jazeera English and Al Jazeera Arabic look quite differ-



Qatari Ramzan Al Naimi heads Al Jazeera's Creative Department. His job is to come up with a unified look for all of their channels.



ent. Al Naimi wants them to move closer together and adopt the modern look of Al Jazeera America. «The design should be clear, clean and simple.» His model? Apple. The midday meeting is coming to a close. The final topic is sports. «We could focus on France's Soccer World

Cup qualifying game tonight,» says managing editor Van Meek. «Should France not make it, we'll go big,» he laughs. He has no cause for glee, however. France wins and goes on to play in the World Cup. Al Jazeera merely reports the score. 🌐

Tell Africa's stories

Azad Essa, 31, has been with Al Jazeera for three years. He grew up in South Africa.



Azad Essa writes for the English-language website. Originally from Durban, he will wear jeans and a sweater one day and an ankle-length caftan the next. He couldn't establish himself as a journalist in his own country. «Everybody wanted the same stories over and over again. I couldn't do that.» Essa wanted to go further, to dig deeper in terms of content and to broaden his horizons. He started his own blog, blending journalism with sociology. His texts grew popular. A selection of his blogs was published in book form. That was the moment he applied to Al Jazeera - and got a job. Here in Doha he found a media company for which he can report on all of Africa. «They send me wherever I want to go.» From Somalia and Kenya he sent texts about the famines, from Congo he wrote about the civil war; he went to Senegal to cover the elections, and from Namibia he reported on a disastrous drought: «Nobody else was interested in that.» Sitting at a computer on the second floor of Al Jazeera English's editorial offices in Doha, he is teaching the ropes to two new employees, a man and a woman from Canada. His other colleagues are from Iran and the U.S., from Somalia, Pakistan and India, from England and Georgia. A great advantage, says Essa. «At Al Jazeera people are coming from those places, you can't be talking about a story as an outsider.» This is a huge help to him as a journalist. «All your misconceptions about foreign countries are always being challenged. You can't get away with anything,» says Essa. «Before Al Jazeera puts it on the air, somebody is bound to challenge it.» For Essa, Doha is «a strange place, a cultureless place, just money, it requires a lot of effort to dig into the society.» He is mainly here to recuperate from his assignments. «For people like me it's a place to rest and recharge, and then leave again.» In any case, he will want to go back to South Africa one day. «I want to take what I have learned here, the experience at Al Jazeera, and go back home.»

Anitra Egger

«Would you run to your letter-box every twenty minutes?»

The woman knows how to be provocative. In our modern digital world Anitra Egger claims: emails make us stupid, sick and poor; and Facebook makes us foolish, blind and unsuccessful. All this from a woman who used to be a journalist! But she promises relief from the terror of email; through what means? Digital therapy. How is that supposed to work? Put down your smartphone and read this text.

Interview: René Haenig Photo: Christian Postl

Ms. Egger, according to your website, your «e-mail opening hours» are 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. Here it is 4 p.m. And we are talking; shouldn't you be checking your emails now?

Anitra Egger: Oh, I'm cool with that. After a weeklong lecture tour I just enjoyed three days at the office and have gotten through all the work that had piled up. Whatever comes in now, I can do tomorrow. You mustn't take this as gospel: Opening hours doesn't mean that I will respond right away. Anything that isn't important or urgent can wait - which goes for 95 percent of all emails, by the way. I usually answer the important and urgent ones with a phone call. My experience is that you can spare yourself a whole daisy chain of pointless emails with a single phone call.

Prior to our interview we exchanged just one e-mail each. Is that normally the case or is it unusual?

As far as I'm concerned, that has become the norm. That's because on my website, through my books and my own way of communicating I have re-defined people's expectations of communication with me: it is driven by common sense and appreciation, not by the technological possibilities of the media at our disposal. Anyone can do that to keep the floods of emails at bay.

How exactly?

Let me give you an example. Nowadays, I only receive emails headed with a pertinent subject. Many senders nowadays phrase their subject in an attention-grabbing manner that smacks of tabloid headlines.

You call yourself a digital therapist. What do you mean by that?

We are suffering from modern widespread diseases like phone-slave-itis, Facebook incontinence, pointless surfing syndrome or email insanity. If I can help with these

time-consuming communication illnesses, what does that make me? When I started my own business I came up with the notion of a «digital therapist». In the meantime the term has become established through my books, and people understand it the way I intended it: tongue firmly in cheek.

You urgently warn people of permanent digital distraction. Why?

It is because it massively detracts from our ability to concentrate. We increasingly let the possibilities of media dictate the way we use them. Simply because we can send an email within nanoseconds, we think we have to answer it just as quickly. But that costs us life time and work time, and once permanent distraction becomes our normal state of mind, it will cost us our ability to concentrate. Harvard physicians call it the «attention deficit trait», and they believe that one out of two managers is affected.

Where have we gone wrong?

In that we don't even take the time to adjust the settings in our email program to our needs, for example. This leads to permanent distraction, because every few minutes there is a ping and we «just take a glance» to see who has written. This short glance usually turns into a long time.

But that's quite normal nowadays.

Therein lies the insanity. As humans we react manically to these distracting stimuli. Our brain becomes dependent on the dopamine and adrenaline rush accompanying such an attention stimulus. The same thing happens with every stupid spam mail: we check it immediately.

What remedy do you propose?

Deactivate everything that acoustically or visually tells you: Here is something new. Just think about it. Would you run to the letterbox every twenty minutes? Never! Ar-

range for no more than two to four fixed times per day at which you check your emails and answer them. Shut down your email program each time when you're done. You will find that you haven't missed anything and are becoming more productive again.

I could still glance at my smartphone.

There, too, my advice would be: turn off your automatic email download. The same applies to Facebook, Twitter, etc.: switch off all push notifications. You should be the one to decide when you have the time for these networks; otherwise you will fall into the pointless-surfing syndrome trap.

In your book you claim that permanent digital distraction is causing enormous losses to the economy.

Yes, there are several studies on that. According to a US survey the decrease in concentration in the workplace is causing the global economy an annual loss of 588 billion dollars.

You yourself used to send off emails at the worst possible moments, expecting your employees to read them and answer right away.

I was the worst email pest and the biggest information junkie you could imagine. I made to-do lists on Saturday nights, was always online. Your quality of life suffers as a result. In my circle of friends there are more cases of burnout than there are families with children.

You have made some interesting calculations with respect to our lifespan.

I just worked out how much time I have spent surfing the Internet, and I arrived at four years. When young people of today reach their seventy-fifth birthday, they will have spent eight months deleting unwanted emails. Whoever spends two hours a day on Facebook and Twitter will have lost six years in that way. 🌐

PERSONAL

Anitra Egger

Anitra Egger was born in Karlsruhe on June 9th, 1973. When she was eleven years old, the first email in Germany was received in her hometown; it had been sent the previous day across the Atlantic, from Cambridge, Massachusetts. Egger has Swiss roots but made her home in Vienna in 2001. In 2010 she was voted Austria's number one power woman in the category «Advertising and PR». She worked as a journalist, start-up manager and online publishing manager before going freelance. Today, the 40-year-old is a consultant to major companies like Procter & Gamble, Daimler, Tchibo or L'Oréal. Her private pleasures: her bathtub with a view of the sky, and crime novels by Michael Robotham. Her pet peeves: publishing one's relationship status on Facebook. «That only leads to trouble.»



Nighty-night, we'll take it from here!

A growing number of agencies, newspapers and news portals are opening branch offices on the far side of the globe. This means that journalist night shifts turn into day shifts, and readers get up-to-the-minute information around the clock.

Text: René Haenig. Photos: Plaetary Visions/Science Photo Library/Keystone, 20min.ch, Handout

When the computers are shut down and the lights go out at midnight in editorial offices in Paris, Berlin, Munich, Zurich or Bern, news editors for online portals like «le-monde.fr», «bild.de» or «20min.ch» on the other side of the globe rub the sleep out of their eyes, boot their laptops, grab their first cup of coffee and sift through the latest news releases. This is the beginning of the night shift, which has become a day shift, whether it is in Hong Kong, Sydney, Seoul or Los Angeles. Welcome to the world of 24-hour news!

Manuel Jakob, 34, editor with the Swiss news portal «20min.ch», packed his bags in late November and flew from Zurich to Hong Kong, 5,779 miles away from his hometown; eleven hours and 45 minutes flight time and a seven-hour time lag. The Swiss journalist is changing his place of work for six weeks. Instead of sitting in the newsroom at his company headquarters in Zurich, Jakob will be investigating, sifting news and filling the «20min.ch» website from a studio apartment on the 20th floor of a skyscraper on Hollywood Road on Hong Kong Island. This is the second time that Manuel Jakob has gone to work in Asia for his

employer, voluntarily. «A great experience,» he maintains.

«20min.ch» was one of the first online portals to move its night shift to the far side of the globe. There is a simple reason for this. The fact that people in Switzerland are sleeping doesn't mean that the rest of the world is doing the same. In addition, the proliferation of smartphones and tablet computers means that an increasing number of users are reading at night and in the early morning hours - around the world.

French daily newspaper «Le Monde» has had a similar experience. «The enormous rise of smartphones led to a major increase of nightly visits on our online portal,» says online head Alexis Delcambre. In early 2013, the Parisians decided to send two of their 75 employees to Sydney and Seoul for six months each.

Manuel Jakob's shift begins at six a.m., Hong Kong time, and lasts until 1 p.m. During this time he also keeps an eye on contributions from «20minuten» amateur journalists. «Those kinds of input have become important for us,» says Jakob. If a reader sends in a picture of a spectacular major fire, Jakob will call the sender within minutes to get background information for a story. «Checking with the police or the fire brigades at night is almost impossible.»

In March of 2013, German newspaper «Die Welt» also began a test run, placing a journalist in Australia. The result is that the reporting has improved, says editor-in-chief Jan-Eric Peters, 48. He feels that it is much more effective to be working down-under during the day than to be sitting alone in an office in Germany at night. Moreover, «Die Welt» was able to attach its Sydney

office to the AAP, the Australian Associated Press, with whom the German daily co-operates anyway. This arrangement permits direct communication between the Germans and their Australian colleagues. A rotation system established in September allows journalists to exchange their Berlin desks for a workplace in Sydney every six weeks.

The Swiss News Agency (SDA) also sets great store on journalistic exchange. In January 2014, four of their editors will move to the AAP newsroom in Sydney for four years each. The SDA journalists will be located in the same office as their colleagues from the Danish news agency Ritzau. Thanks to this long four-year deployment SDA editor-in-chief Bernard Maissen, 52, is hoping to achieve a certain continuity in nightly news reporting, especially in the pioneering phase. In one case the plan actually benefits one of the SDA journalists: «He is married to an Australian and had been leading a long-distance relationship.»

As of mid-January 2014, Hong Kong-based news editor Manuel Jakob will make sure that readers who take a first peek at «20min.ch» before 6 a.m. will get the latest news about events that have occurred overnight in Switzerland and the rest of the world. The out-placed night service has already proven itself. When Kim Jong-il died early one morning in December 2011, for instance, this arrangement allowed Swiss readers not only to get the news of his death; they were also given a portrait of the North Korean leader as well as additional information - courtesy of the «20minuten» night editor in Hong Kong. 🌐

Ringier wants the start-up spirit



«A new year, a sunny outside editorial office, a new spirit.» When Blick begins reporting from California in January

2014, it won't just be to make use of the time lag for round-the-clock news reporting as other media companies do. «We want to be at the heart of the digital world,» says Florian Fels, CEO Ringier Publishing.

Mr. Fels, Blick goes West - why to Silicon Valley?

Florian Fels: Because the heart of the digital world beats in the western United States. Companies like Facebook, Google and Apple are located in Silicon Valley, where a pioneering spirit still prevails. Information is easily accessible, and it is the source for worldwide trends that will eventually make it to Switzerland. Our journalists need to bring this spirit home to Zurich. **Asia or Australia would have been a better time zone choice for a 24-hour online news desk.**

That's correct, but for the Western hemisphere the digital future lies in America - and we want to benefit from that.

How exactly?

We want our journalists to provide live coverage of the latest Apple presentation, to report directly from the Google campus, maybe visit a start-up trade show or blog from Facebook's cafeteria. More importantly, our on-site journalists will allow us to feed Blick's online portals with news 24/7.

Who will get to go to California?

We would like as many journalists as possible to benefit from this opportunity and are planning a six-week rotation. Basically, journalists from any department may go - sports, people, lifestyle... Since news is our biggest department, it is only natural that some employees from that desk will go, too. A crucial point will be that our colleagues are able to operate our CMS online from the United States.

How far along are your preparations?

We are currently setting up the infrastructure, i.e. renting facilities, creating Internet connections and everything else that a well-functioning office needs. In addition, we need to procure journalist visas, and we are investigating whether it would make sense to buy a car locally.



How night editors live: This is Manuel Jakob's «20minuten» office on the 21th floor on Hollywood Road in Hong Kong. It also serves as the assigned journalist's apartment.



Ringier's best photos of the last quarter

DOMO presents four pictures from China, Vietnam and Switzerland, which have become photographic works of art thanks to a good idea, patience and skilled craftsmanship.

VALENTIN JECK Photographer
SUSANNE MÄRKI Editor

1 Precious gems, cunning thieves, crime scene investigators – Valentin Jeck, 47, got the idea for this jewelry pictorial in the Swiss fashion magazine **SI Style** years ago, when he saw a model railroad. «Sometimes you carry an idea around with you for quite a long time before you can put it into practice,» the photographer explains. When he first met with the editor in charge of the jewelry photo series «La petite nation», Jeck says it became obvious fairly soon that he would want to work with figurines. But where would he get hold of miniature thieves, forensic specialists, divers, craftspeople or museum visitors? Jeck spent hours scouring the Internet and poring over catalogs before eventually finding a company in the former GDR, which specialized in model railroad accessories. All that remained for him to do at the Ringier photo studio was to keep his hands steady, create twelve different scenes within two days and photograph them. One hour to build each set, polish the jewelry and set it in place wearing gloves so as not to mar the finish with unsightly greasy fingerprints. «Although it looks as if the set building was child's play, I was pretty wasted in the evenings and could no longer hold my hand steady. But then, my job generally involves a lot of tinkering,» says Valentin Jeck, who specializes in object photography in the luxury segment, and is very much in demand, not just at **SI Style**, but also at **Vogue** and other upscale glossy magazines.

RANSOM WINGO Photographer
XIAO QI Editor

2 Tell me what you eat, and I'll tell you who you are. The cover of **Shanghai Family's** October issue

shows two little girls with hefty helpings of junk food in front of them. Although the headline «Food Fight» suggests that the magazine will feature a story about the struggle to make healthy food palatable for children, the article is actually about something else. There is a fight going on in Shanghai, but it is not about vitamins and healthy fats. Restaurant owners are fighting for clients – more precisely: for families who dine at a restaurant on weekends, for example at places like the «Azul». As it is one of the most fashionable restaurants in downtown Shanghai, it served as the location for the shoot. Its owner, Eduardo Vargas, has been currying favor with wealthy Chinese and expats. But meatballs, chips and sandwiches did not exactly appeal to the two pint-sized cover girls. That's why photographer Ransom Wingo's main job was to make the little ones feel that there was nothing they would rather do than to sit still. «I tried to keep them happy by making exciting sounds and pulling faces. Of course, I had to come up with something new every few minutes, or they would have been bored.»

CHRIS BLASER Photographer
SABINE SENN Editor

3 What a fantastic natural spectacle! In the glow of sunset, hidden beneath a high fog, lies Lake Geneva. In the foreground on the right is the small village of Les Avants, Vaud, whose lights made it appear like a T-bone. On November 16, 2012, photographer Chris Blaser climbed the 6,151 ft. mountain «La Dent de Jaman» above Montreux, lugging about 55 pounds of equipment along with him on his back, swaddled in warm clothing and carrying a thermos with hot tea as provisions. Just before sundown at 4.57 p.m. on this November day, Blaser reached the summit. «I wanted to

achieve a well-balanced mix of natural and artificial light» says the photographer. Often out and about in nature and knowing the mountain well, he was aware that it was the ideal place from which to shoot a so-called stratus photo. This image was the first in Blaser's stratus series, which the Romandy magazine **L'illustré** published in its section «Grand reportage». It's «a weather phenomenon everybody can observe from their own doorstep,» says photo editor Sabine Senn.

TANG TANG Photographer
TRA MY Editor

4 Every month sees a new issue of the fashion magazine **Elle Vietnam**. Each one includes a fashion photo series produced under the working title «Made in Vietnam». The editorial team not only wants to pay tribute to Asian women's sense of esthetics – the main goal is to highlight the uniqueness of local designers, including their zeitgeist. That is very much in the spirit of Tunisian-born designer Azzedine Alaïa, who once said: «When I see beautiful clothes I want to keep them, preserve them... Clothes, like architecture and art, reflect an era.» For photo editor Tra My the strapless red cat suit is not just any eye catcher: «Lê Thanh Hòa is a young and very promising fashion designer, who often dresses celebrities for top-notch events.» The model, Kha My Van, is well known to Vietnamese readers. A complete newcomer, the 23-year-old won «Vietnam's Next Top Model» in 2012. The «Made in Vietnam» team's loving attention to detail is evidenced by the set design – something that female readers very much appreciate. That is why the fact that half the budget for this production went towards creating the location was graciously overlooked.

In this feature DOMO regularly presents the best photographs published by Ringier titles in the past quarter



FOCUS ON RINGIER



In this feature DOMO regularly presents the best photographs published by Ringier titles in the past quarter

Masters of the last word

They are legendary: the New York Times obituaries. In other countries people pounce on death notices and personal ads. New Yorkers, however, are obsessed with the «obits». **William McDonald** is the man who decides whose life will be honored in the NYT. Because when somebody dies, that is only the beginning.

Text: Bettina Bono. Photos: Karin Kohlberg

What is the best time to die? Hard to say. What is the best time to report the death to the NYT? Weekdays between 10 a.m. and 12 a.m. Around that time chances are good of making it into one of the three obituaries printed in the world's most influential daily newspaper; or at least land on the desk of the editor who decides whose life story is compelling enough to warrant an account in the pages of the «Grey Lady». William McDonald, 60, head of the obituaries desk, is not only concerned with big names.

«Who changed the world during his lifetime? Who made a mark? They needn't always be celebrities.» He receives an average of twelve suggestions for obituaries per day, most of them over the phone. The conversations he has with the bereaved, with managers of deceased Hollywood stars and publicists, are intense. «There are many people that you could write about. A man who polished shoes for forty years has a lot to tell. But that is a cliché that you find in every big city.» When he turns someone down, the

 The New York Times' headquarters are in Midtown Manhattan. The «New York Times Building» designed by star architect Renzo Piano is 52 stories tall. This is the workplace of William McDonald, the head of the obituaries desk.

other party often reacts with incomprehension and anger, he says. William McDonald remains calm, speaking slowly, repeating himself. He trusts his judgment. «It's tough having to say that a life doesn't satisfy our standards, that it wasn't as worthwhile as other people's.» That is a fact that cannot be sugarcoated. «It is and will remain a firm no.» William McDonald began his career in Connecticut as a reporter for a local newspaper. He has been working for the New York Times for twenty-five years. There, he has ▶

► held numerous positions including copy chief of the national news desk, deputy editor of Arts & Leisure and deputy culture editor; he was an editor on the investigations desk and part of the team that won the Pulitzer for National Reporting in the year 2000 for the series «How Race is lived in America». The obituaries desk is made up of six writers, all of whom are experienced journalists with different backgrounds: an art critic with a focus on painting; a science expert specializing in Nobel Prize winners; a former theater critic, a sports reporter, an expert on classical music and a female linguist. «We cover a very broad range of fields. Our obituary writers know who is important and why. They are well read, are knowledgeable about history, have seen a few films and know a good deal about politics.» To know what you don't know, he says, is also a good basis. McDonald puts no stock in other newspapers' custom of entrusting the writing of obituaries to young journalists as an entry-level job. «Sure, obituaries are a good writing exercise. But you need to have been around the block, to have experience and a knowledge of life.» William McDonald's team enjoys living up to the cliché that there is something morbid about writers of their genre. To get to their desk in the three-story New York Times editorial offices, you have to go past a shrine of macabre symbols like skulls, caskets and mummies. When William McDonald took over the team in February 2006, many of his friends thought it was a peculiar way to make a living. «By now, most

of them have realized what a great job it is. The best job in journalism – for me, at any rate.» Next to the sports desk, the obits provide the New York Times with its most widely read stories. George Bernard Shaw, winner of the Nobel Prize and an Academy Award, once quipped: «One reads the obituaries first in order to reassure oneself that one isn't in them.» The fact that these finely honed texts have been delighting a big fan base for so many years is due more to the very human fascination with the lives of others than to people's fear of their own mortality. «People love gossip and tittle-tattle; they are keen on biographies. Our readers know that when the NYT writes about somebody, there is something interesting to be told.» William McDonald sets great store by complete stories. «It sounds banal, but they have a beginning and an ending. Although the ending usually comes at the beginning.» The 800 to 1,500 word obits, however, are free of banalities. Standardizations are avoided. By using appropriate quotations the authors give a voice to the deceased. The texts have historical substance and often contain juicy details from another person's life. «We do mention foibles if they are pertinent, but we don't wash dirty linen,» McDonald says. An honest portrait will include divorce, the person's true age, their spouse(s), as well as the mention of suicide if it applies. Journalistic standards should be complied with, even if the bereaved may not necessarily agree with that. In times when you keep reading about Syria,



▲ They are regarded as odd birds: the New York Times' obituary editors. Doing justice to their morbid reputation they have placed skulls and mummies at the entrance to their offices.

Brussels and Washington day by day, obituaries provide a welcome contrast. The videos on the New York Times' website are a relatively new and special feature. Here, the deceased are given a chance to speak out. Macabre? «This way the party concerned gets to have the last word, and we don't have to rely on quotes from the deceased's relatives.» For six years the NYT has been recording interviews with people deemed



worthy of an obituary, posting the videos on the NYT website under the header «The Last Word» when the people in question have died. Author and humorist Art Buchwald was the first to send greetings via video from the other side. «Hi, I'm Art Buchwald, and I just died.» Sometimes the authors of the obits died before obituaries they had written were published. This was the case with Elizabeth Taylor. The Hollywood legend survived the removal of a brain tumor, her skin cancer, hip surgery – and theater critic Mel Gussow. The New York Times reacted and followed the obituary with the statement: «Mel Gussow, the principal writer of this article, died in 2005. William McDonald, William Grimes and Daniel E. Slotnik contributed updated reporting.» 1,500 obituaries have been written, 200 more are added every year. The authors of more than ten of these texts have already died. William McDonald maintains: «We encourage the journalists to write the obituaries in advance and to talk to the people – it won't be possible after the fact. Most people decline, by the way.» This is despite the fact that former New York Times editor-in-chief A. M. Rosenthal is quoted as having said: «If you have to die, it is better to die in the Times.» For every interview

conducted in advance there is an embargo that lasts until the person's death. The texts are safeguarded so no one but the obituaries editors has access to them. It would be too tempting to use a quote whose content discloses hitherto unknown facts. There is no counter-checking; nobody knows what will be printed about them in the New York Times after their death. Which names number among the «crown jewels» – the term that Richard F. Shepard, head of the obituaries desk in 1986, coined for obits already written – is a company secret. Only one thing is certain: Ninety percent of all obituaries that are published on the Times' front page were written before the honored person's demise. Even so, William McDonald's personal nightmare begins whenever he is dining at a restaurant with his wife and sees the number of his editorial office appear on the display of his cell phone. In the case of Michael Jackson's death, a team of seven editors on the East and the West Coast immediately began working on the obituary for the King of Pop. «One ground rule is to never ask why this or that obituary hadn't been prepared.» Although death itself can never be predicted, obituaries editors always have an open ear for hospital gossip.

▲ Since February 2006 William McDonald has been head of the NYT obituaries desk. DOMO editor-in-chief Bettina Bono paid him a visit. He says he hasn't written his own obit. Is there an obituary he absolutely wants to write? Yes, one about a member of «The Band»; they were his Rock idols in his youth.

Say, for example, that Mr. X is not in particularly good health, and he has been in care for a considerable amount of time. That was how, one day, William McDonald discovered Huguette Clark. The youngest daughter of a US senator and industrialist was worth hundreds of millions of dollars and owned gorgeous houses on the West Coast and an apartment in Manhattan. Her life was upscale but reclusive and according to her wishes she spent the last years of it in a hospital. She lived to be 104 years old. When she passed away, the NYT published her obituary, written in advance, on the front page. Up until that time nobody had ever written about her. Her clandestine life, blessed with immense wealth, moved people – and from then on, Huguette Clark's story was told over and over again. «That's exactly what we're after. We had discovered a fascinating personality.» Having the last word is a great responsibility. But that is exactly the reason why William McDonald loves his job. «Of all the jobs I've had this one is probably the most interesting. It is about stories and about writing.» Writing in its truest form, especially when William McDonald matter-of-factly says: «You buried the lead...»



The obituaries desk is located in the middle of the newsroom. Next to the sports section, the obits constitute the New York Times' most widely read stories.



Available in book form: a selection of the New York Times' most popular obituaries. Two volumes have been published to date.

When photography alone is not enough



Since newspapers and magazines have turned into e-papers one thing is certain: a pdf on a tablet computer feels lifeless and uninspired. But what if the shooting of a story turns the photo set into a film set? Swiss star photographer **Marco Grob** calls this «The End of Silence».

Text: Bettina Bono. Photos: Marco Grob, Tara Rice

Multimedia - this term first made it into dictionaries in the early 1970s. Even in 2013, however, many editorial teams of print products still consider it a novelty. One man, who first decided to tackle it two years ago, promptly won an Emmy for his effort: photographer Marco Grob. He was honored for his project «Beyond 9/11: Portraits of Resilience» in the category «New Approaches in News and Documentary Programming». The project was an assignment from TIME Magazine on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the September 11 attacks. For this special edition Marco Grob portrayed people who had been affected by these incidents in various ways - mothers who had lost their children, officers, soldiers, President George W. Bush, the director of the CIA at the time, and many more. Since 2011, most of the Swiss photographer's big projects, which he accomplishes for TIME Magazine or National Geographic Magazine, have

been multimedia. «One Dream», for example, the TIME story on the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King's speech «I have a dream», shows - besides portraits of witnesses of the period - footage produced by Grob and scenes with interviews that he conducted. This is far more than a mere making-of. The filmed interviews served as the basis for his documentary. The authors, in turn, subsequently used the quotes for their articles. The book «Beyond 9/11» was based on the footage. In addition, the material yielded a documentary film, a TV series, an iPad issue, a website and three exhibitions. Marco Grob: «We covered every base we could cover. Without question, this was probably the most important job of my life. At first, everything was silent, then, we added sound. The experience changed the whole ball game for me.» It also did so for TIME: Last August, the company launched Red Border Films, an online movie platform with the purpose of publish-



Marco Grob, born in Olten, Switzerland, in 1965, lives in New York and photographs everybody who is anybody. His client list includes American magazines like «TIME», «GQ» and «Esquire», major Hollywood studios and the UN. Barack Obama has faced Grob's lens, as have Hillary and Bill Clinton, Steve Jobs and Lady Gaga.

ing, a ten- to fifteen-minute documentary made in connection with the production of a photo essay every month. The film also needs to be marketable with a trailer. For photographers to take up a film camera is not entirely new. In the 1980s Herb Ritts shot the music video for Chris Isaak's Song «Wicked Game», Bruce Weber filmed the documentary «Let's Get Lost» about jazz trumpet player Chet Baker. However, good photographers do not necessarily make good filmmakers. Marco Grob: «I started getting involved in film twenty years ago. At first I tinkered around with it, now I take a more consistent approach.» Even if the rhythm and the images are there, you still need a feeling for stories. Marco Grob says: «To film an interview with Dick Cheney is more up my alley than shooting a making-of on a photo set with a few Brazilian models. Listening, and responding to your counterpart, changing the frame of the picture when things get interesting - that's a challenge. But the magazines need to figure out which photographers they can assign multimedia jobs to, and once they do, which projects they should give them.» The advantage of combining photography and film is that they complement one another thematically. The moving image explains a lot, depicts the environment and guides the spectator's point of view. Photography, on the other hand, has the effect of a time machine, freezing a

moment in a snapshot. Both of these effects are evidenced in Marco Grob's work in the context of his commitment to the UN's landmine project: While the victims' fear comes across in the faces portrayed, a mere three minutes of film manages to relay a comprehensive explanation of the problem and its background. The UN photo exhibit planned for April 2014 is conceived entirely as a multimedia show, including interviews, documentaries and full-length features. The fact that the films for such multimedia projects bear the individual photographer's hallmark is essential. Marco Grob: «I will never turn in film footage which might just as well have been made by Swiss Television. I'd rather have it look as if Martin Scorsese had been directing.» That is the quality that magazines like TIME appreciate. Kira Pollack, TIME's director of photography, explains: «The esthetics that a photographer achieves goes way beyond what a TV cameraman would deliver.» No matter how rewarding and interesting all the parties involved may find this work, it has to remain economical, and that is one of its big challenges. You cannot add equipment ad infinitum. Using the same amount of manpower you need to create a set on which you can do photo as well as film shoots. «Beyond 9/11» was filmed with three cameras, «One Dream», on Martin Luther King, was shot with four. Marco Grob operated all these cameras simultaneously. «We don't get

more money for projects like these. We lug around a lot more gear - but it is so much more fun.» The shoots, then, become more sophisticated and take up more time. The postproduction and the editing have to be covered by the magazine. Richard Stengel, former managing editor of TIME magazine, explained in 2011: «We are now beginning to try out these things. It's not just that we can do it - we need to do it.» A major magazine like Schweizer Illustrierte, for example, would have to employ at least one full-time film editor. Marco Grob: «I would go so far as to say that within five years you would need two full-time multimedia editors.» Often enough, the multimedia realization by the photographer isn't just about the moving images - journalistic sensibilities are also required. According to Marco Grob, the photo crew usually meets the protagonists alone. A list of questions from the editorial team frequently provides a good starting point, but the photographers also need to listen closely and follow up on answers. Marco Grob: «My work increasingly takes place in a photo-journalistic environment. I find that rewarding.» How many photographers are prepared to face this new challenge and have the skills to master it, only time will tell. It seems obvious, however, that a magazine must have more to tell on a tablet than it does on paper. Marco Grob: «Everything else would be like using a Ferrari to do a milk-run.»

Previous page: «Beyond 9/11: Portraits of Resilience» Marco Grob portrayed, among others, George W. Bush. In the filmed interview, the 43rd US President talks about his «first pitch» in the first World Series in New York after the September 11 attacks, saying: «It was the most dramatic moment of my entire presidency.»

This page: Further portraits from the «Beyond 9/11» series - (from left): Dick Cheney, US Vice-President, 2001-2009, and Cindy Sheehan, anti-war activist. On assignment for UNMAS (United Nations Mine Action Service), Marco Grob documents the fight against land mines - the example here is Pen Narin (at right), Siem Reap, Cambodia.

Merry Christmas

This year's Ringier Christmas card was photographed by Marco Grob. His model was New York's most famous Santa Claus performer. The result: «The Evolution of Santa!»



For thirty minutes Kris Kringle, 54, mimes Santa Claus in front of Grob's lens - sometimes sweet like a gingerbread man, sometimes grumpily holding up a warning finger. Kringle's career began twenty-six years ago, when his beard was still red and had to be dyed Santa-colored with white shoe polish. From November to the end of December, Christmas parties, appearances in shopping centers and traditional house calls are on his agenda. As Santa Claus he has pulled engagement rings from up his sleeve, held four-day-old infants in his arms in hospitals and given a fifteen-year-old girl with cancer her last visit from Santa. The top two questions children ask him - «Is your beard real?» and «How is Rudolph doing?» - have recently been joined by: «Can you find Mum or Dad a job, please?» One thing has remained the same, though, over all these years: The most popular Santa gift for girls is still the Barbie doll.

«We've reached one hundred!
– and we're here to stay»

Holger Liebs, Monopol editor-in-chief

Alle 100 auf einen Schlag

Unsere Cover, die Gesichter von Monopol – hier sehen Sie alle 100, mit dem oft kopierten Button. Das erste zierte Elizabeth Peyton (links oben), Nummer 99 Isa Genzken (rechts unten). Die Monopol-Titelbilder bekamen Preise, riefen Empörung hervor, einige sind jetzt schon Klassiker. Nur gleichgültig ließen sie kaum jemanden. Wen wundert's!



They have won awards and provoked outrage - the covers of **Monopol** magazine. December 2013 will see the publication of the 100th issue of this magazine for art and life, which will feature an anniversary portfolio of the present, both personal and passionate.

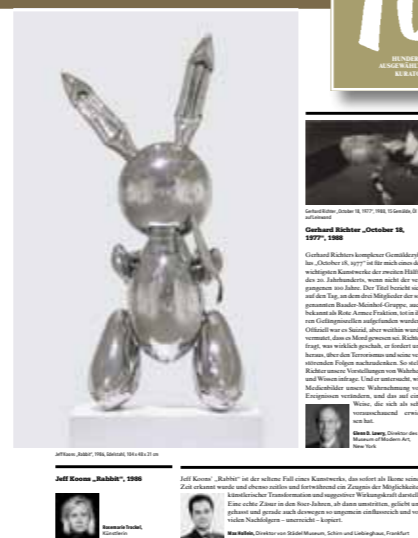
100

MEISTERWERKE

Was ist Ihr Lieblingswerk der zeitgenössischen Kunst?
Welches ist Ihnen besonders wichtig? Das haben wir 100 Persönlichkeiten aus der Kunstwelt gefragt: Künstler, Kuratoren, Kritiker, Sammler, Auktionsatoren und Museumsdirektoren. Sie alle waren auf die eine oder andere Weise Wegbegleiter unserer ersten 100 Ausgaben. Die Resultate haben uns überrascht. So fehlt manch wichtiger Name – aber es ging ja nicht um Vollständigkeit, sondern um persönliche Vorlieben, um Leidenschaft, und ohne Leidenschaft keine Kunst.

Auf den folgenden Seiten finden Sie vielleicht keinen neuen Kanon. Aber Sie erhalten eine Vorstellung davon, was von der Kunst unserer Zeit bleiben könnte. Unsere Zeit, das heißt die vergangenen 50 Jahre, angefangen bei Andy Warhol, Übrigens, falls Sie mal durchzählen: 100 Kunstliebhaber haben nicht ganz 100 Kunstwerke ausgewählt – warum die Rechnung trotzdem aufgeht, erfahren Sie in unserer Statistik auf Seite 84.

Voilà: Die Monopol-Galerie der Gegenwart!



Gerhard Richter, *October 18, 1977, 1988, 15 Gemälde*, Öl auf Leinwand

Gerhard Richter's komplexer Gemäldereiz lässt „October 18, 1977“ für mich einen der wichtigsten Kunstwerke der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts, wenn nicht der vergangenen 100 Jahre, der Titel beschränkt sich auf den Tag, an dem die drei Mitglieder der sogenannten Roter-Maoist-Gruppe, auch bekannt als Rote Armee Fraktion, tot in ein Gefängnismauerfeld aufgefunden wurden. Offiziell war es Suizid, aber weithin wurde vermutet, dass es Mord gewesen sei. Richter fragt, was wirklich geschah, er fordert uns heraus, aber den Terrorismus und seine zerstörenden Folgen nachzudenken. So wie Richter unsere Vorstellungen von Wahrheit und Wissen in Frage stellt, so stellt er auch Medienbilder unserer Wahrnehmung von Ereignissen vorfindend, und das auf eine Weise, die sich als sehr vornehm heraus erweisen hat.

Olav M. Levy, Direktor des *Museum of Modern Art*

... eines Kunstwerks, das sofort als Ikone sein-
und fortwährend ein Zeugnis der Möglichkeits-
... und suggestiver Wirkungskraft darstel-
... fore-Jahren, ab dann umstritten, geliebt we-
... und deswegen so ungemein einflussreich und ver-
... erreicht - kopiert.



Back row, left to right: Sebastian Frenzel, editor; Robert Pitterle, head copy editor; Cordelia Marten, copy editor; Isolde Berger, photo editor; Silke Hohmann, editor; Kerstin Haupt, editorial assistant; Daniel Völzke, editor and head of online; Julia Vukovic, art director; Catrin Sonnabend, deputy art director; Jens Hinrichsen, editor; Andrea Haase, managing editor; Antje Stahl, editor; Florentine Barckhausen, deputy duty editor; Diana Obst, photo editor. **Front row, seated, left to right:** Holger Liebs, editor-in-chief; Elke Buhr, deputy editor-in-chief
Photo: Dirk Schmidt



Monopol

- ▶ Magazine for art and life
- ▶ Published monthly
- ▶ Circulation: 40,000 copies
- ▶ Team: 13 editorial employees and eight regular freelance contributors
- ▶ Germany's market leader among magazines on contemporary art
- ▶ Monopol has established itself as an innovative art and lifestyle magazine and has repeatedly won the Lead Award for Best German Art Magazine
- ▶ Monopol's target audience are people of unspoiled mind with a sense for the beautiful things in life

www.monopol-magazin.de



The smart rock star and the unpopular President

In late October, rock legend **Lou Reed** died at the age of 71. When Ringier writer Peter Hossli interviewed him nine years ago the cool New Yorker first appeared absent and arrogant. A few unusual questions, however, mellowed him almost to the point of bestowing a compliment.

Text: Peter Hossli

Lou Reed was a New Yorker and a rock star. New Yorkers and rock stars have to be one thing above all else: cool.

He turns up half an hour late for our interview, without saying hello or even looking at me. He is hungry, and hunger comes first. And so, he orders his female assistant to rustle up a hamburger.

Only then does he ask me into his rather spartan if stylishly furnished office. It is located in the middle of Soho, a formerly sleazy New York neighborhood that is now one big shopping center crammed with pricey boutiques and lots of lousy restaurants.

It is springtime in 2004; New York is still reeling from the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. America is at war, and Lou Reed, who has just turned 62, has a new album out. He is rather resentfully publicizing it by granting interviews. A white t-shirt covers his not entirely flat stomach, and he is wearing jeans and sneakers. His face is adorned with a pair of round-framed spectacles. There is a professorial air about him.

Suddenly, his cellphone rings. «Is that yours?» Reed asks, visibly enraged. «Switch it off, please.»

Without bothering to apologize for the false accusation he eventually takes the call, leaves the room talking on the phone, comes back. «You have exactly thirty minutes,» he says grumpily, glancing at his watch as if he wanted to time his interviewer. Reed explains why he has included

the long forgotten song «The Day John Kennedy Was Shot» on his new live album «Animal Serenade». «Because of Bush,» he says, referring to the US President in office at the time, George W. Bush. «The song is about a president whom people had really admired. This is no longer the case today.»

Reed enjoys talking politics, shrewdly describing the United States as a divided nation. «America was founded by rebels and then the Puritans came.» Even today, 50 percent are rebels and 50 percent are Puritans; that is why sometimes you have a Democrat in charge and sometimes a Republican. He hopes that Bush will be voted out of office come autumn. «I don't care if a local dog-catcher runs against him or this chair here; we just need to beat him. He has to get the fuck out.» Why? «It looks as if he's going to blow up the world.»

Reed has spent his whole life speaking his mind, and many admired him for it. But should musicians like him even talk about politics? «John Lennon once said that anyone who is interviewed by the press should take advantage of that opportunity,» Reed replies. «As I'm being interviewed I will talk about it. I am a citizen. A citizen is entitled to his own opinion.»

One opinion in particular mattered to him at the time: The US should pull out of Iraq - «and go after the real terrorists.» He couldn't understand why terrorist leader Osama bin Laden was still at large. «They want us to believe

that a guy who's six-foot-four and hooked up to a kidney machine can't be found? That's a joke.»

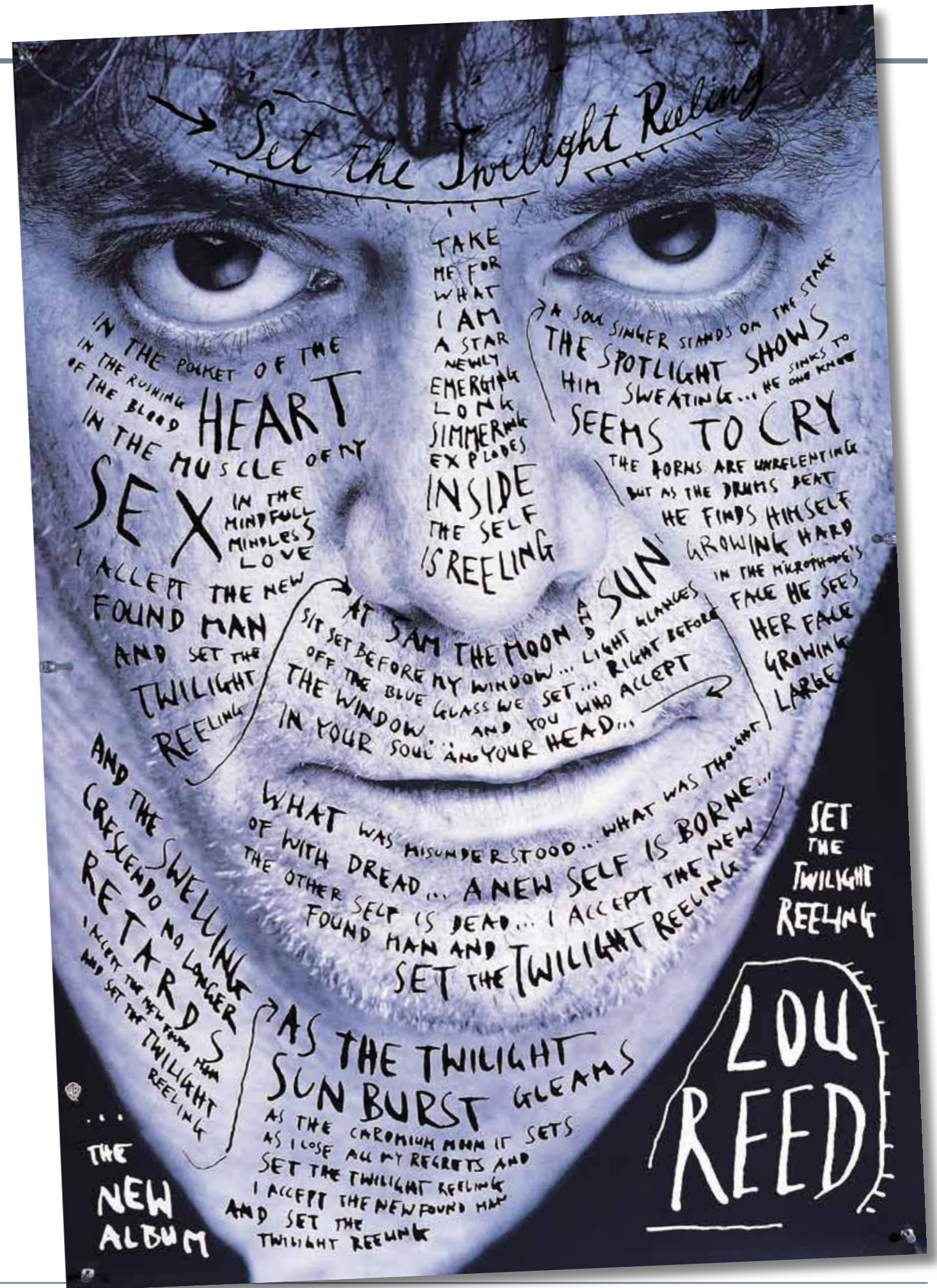
Reed was born in Brooklyn in 1942, grew up in suburban New York, later met the gifted musician John Cale, with whom he went on to found «The Velvet Underground» in 1965. In the Seventies he began a solo career, singing and playing guitar. After his death in late October this year critics wrote that his music had always been honest. «Surely that's the least it should be, for Christ's sake,» Reed told me at the time. «I've been doing this shit for 35 years now. I never fucked anyone over then and I'm certainly not about to fuck anyone over now.» He pauses. «How can an artist be anything but honest? Being honest is the definition of an artist.»

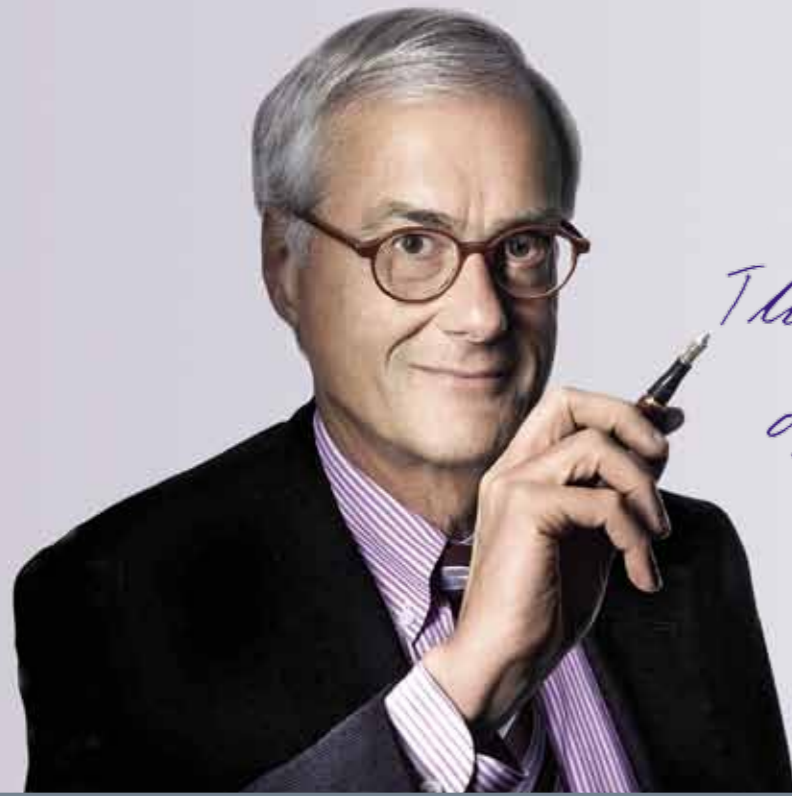
He raves about New York, the city he was born in, where he has lived and loved and in 1989 created an album entitled «New York» that is one big declaration of love. «I love New York more than ever,» he says fifteen years later. «I recently went to Brooklyn. Riding across the Brooklyn Bridge by night is one of the most beautiful things in the world. I go weak at the knees merely thinking about the beauty of New York.»

After thirty minutes it's over. Politely, but firmly, Reed asks me to switch off the recorder. Then he comes up with one of the nicest compliments I ever got and one of the harshest judgments on us journalists I have ever heard. «Thanks a lot for coming prepared,» says Reed and shakes my hand. The cool rock star looks at me appreciatively. He has nothing against journalists, he maintains, but most of the ones that come to meet him just put their recorder on the table and say: «So you have a new album out - tell me all about it!» He's fed up with that, and he has found a way to fight back: «I just put my own recorder on the table, play some pre-recorded answers - and get out of there.»

Well, that day he didn't..

Ⓛ Lou Reed died in his house on Long Island on October 27th 2013. Half a year earlier he had undergone a liver transplant. As a member of the band «The Velvet Underground», Reed was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1996.





*The importance
of language*

Michael Ringier, publisher. That's what it said on the guest list of a reception by the Duke of York some weeks ago at Buckingham Palace. Andrew, prince, is what I guess they would have had to put down for him. Princes and publishers have one thing in common: each has a title but no profession. Neither position is something you can train for or get a degree in.

What do I actually do? I trade in language and pictures and hope it results in decent figures. Over the course of the past decades, the significance of images has grown and the Internet has further accelerated this development. However, the fact that this company is still owned by the same family after 180 years, is due not to pictures but to language. Language is the only reason we continue to have national markets in this industry. If you want to pursue our kind of business in Hungary, Vietnam or Switzerland, you can only do so in the national language. Exporting won't work. That is why my photo accompanying this column is the same in every edition of DOMO; my words, however, need to be translated laboriously into different languages. Language restricts us, but it protects us, too. Or is that no longer the case? BuzzFeed, that widely praised website, claims to have found the solution: its editions in French, Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese are to be translated by language students who learn English by means of an app called Duolingo. Happy translating.

When our daughter was quite young, we employed a Czech nanny, a warm-hearted woman who handled an immense workload. But, within two years we had to find her a different job. One evening, little Lilly wanted us to read her a story and announced this by saying: «You booky me get.» That's when I realized: we need a nanny who is a native speaker. Language is more than just a means of communication. It is the basis of our industry. It may even be a competitive advantage. However, if we want it to be those things we need to take very good care of it. Neither e-mails nor text messages are exempt from the rules of grammar and punctuation.

Michael Ringier



Art: Igor Kravarik

Employee questions

In Switzerland, Blick am Abend's new online platform is currently causing a huge buzz. What makes it so special?

Florian Fels, CEO Publishing, Ringier AG:

Until recently «Blick am Abend» didn't have an online platform of its own to appeal to its young, urban readers, who communicate via Internet. The new platform is tailored to the free daily's readers and offers vast possibilities for interaction with lots of moving images and easy-to-read news. Users may share links, create links and chat online. As for the platform's look, we took our lead from internationally successful platforms for digital natives, such as BuzzFeed, Huffington-Post co-founder Jonah Peretti's online portal.

We have created new forms for the advertising market: The magic word here is «native advertising». The term describes categories that are co-sponsored by commercial partners and are clearly recognizable as such.

A Ringier in-house project team conceived the new platform and we created new editorial jobs in our Newsroom to run it. While other media enterprises have begun undertaking similar projects, our project team's excellent work has

allowed us to assume a pioneering role.

Ringier's top executives have been meeting for their annual Ringier Management Conference – RMC – once a year in one of the countries in which Ringier is operative. In 2014, the conference is said to have been cancelled. Is this true, and if so, why?

Edi Estermann, Chief Communications Officer Ringier AG: The Ringier Management Conference has evolved into an excellent platform for advanced training and networking for Ringier's top executives. Despite this fact, the group executive board has decided to hold the RMC biannually henceforth. That is not least due to our

«Our health program is brought to life by the commitment of our employees»

Jutta Schilke
Head Human Resources
Ringier AG



cost-consciousness regarding the company's overhead.

In Switzerland, Ringier's employee wellness program «fit&health@ringier» is very successful. What does it involve?

Jutta Schilke, Head Human Resources Ringier AG: «fit&health@ringier» includes activities in the areas of «nutrition and fitness» as well as «exercise and fitness». All employees of the Ringier Group are entitled to profit from these offers. We have had some positive feedback regarding the lectures we conducted on the subject of sleep. These will be followed by a series of lectures on nutrition. The program also covers topics like «family and job» or «work-life balance». In October our employees were entitled to free flu shots.

The program works as follows: HR puts together a basic line-up by finding attractive topics and interesting lecturers, thereby ensuring a good mix of the subjects on offer. In addition, there are groups for mountain biking, soccer, swimming and ice hockey. The concept of «fit&health@ringier» is brought to life by the commitment of our employees. All of the exercise sector groups mentioned above are self-organized and deserve our sincerest thanks. 🌐



10 YEARS:

Puddu Francesco, Ringier Print.
Marti Christoph, Ringier AG.
Hašek Martin, RASMAG.
Navrátilová Jiřina, RASMAG.
Janoušek David, RASMAG.
Valíčková Kateřina, RASMAG.
Šimková Eva, RASMAG.
Juchnowiczová Eva, RASMAG.
Hodálík Ondřej, RASMAG.
Staněk Jozef, RASMAG.
Wang Yinhao, Ringier China.
Lillian He, Ringier China.
Lien Wan, Ringier China.

Mireisz Sándor, Ringier Hungary.
Németh Attila, Ringier Hungary.
Wirth-Sándor Adrienn, Ringier Hungary.
Csatlós Adrienn, Ringier Hungary.
Balog Zoltán, Ringier Hungary.
Szoboszlai László, Ringier Hungary.

20 YEARS:

Ming Stefan, Ringier Print.
Passalacqua Christine, Ringier AG.
Pintilei Mihaela, Ringier Romania.
Schuster Roman, RASMAG.
Tesař Milan, RASMAG.
Hrušková Jana, RASMAG.
Turková Blanka, RASMAG.
Rumlenová Renáta, RASMAG.
Pokorný Jaroslav, RASMAG.
Pískó László, Ringier Hungary.

25 YEARS:

Purtschert Ruth, Ringier Print.
Hirt Marco, Ringier AG.

30 YEARS:

Terzoni Daniel, Ringier AG.

35 YEARS:

Blanco Jaime, Ringier Print.
Zuberbühler Markus, Ringier Print.
Lehmann Silvia, Ringier AG.
Nikli Georg, Ringier AG.

40 YEARS:

Degelo Konrad, Ringier Print.
Konrad Josef, Ringier AG.

RETIREMENTS:

Linggi Rolf, Ringier AG.
Müller Elsa, Ringier AG.
Staubli Otmar, Ringier AG.
Schlatter Lea, Ringier AG.
Moser Kati, Ringier AG.
Miron Gabriel, Ringier Romania.

DEATHS:

Schneider Erwin, 1.7.2013
Huber Josef, 27.8.2013
Lötscher Alois, 31.8.2013
Stéphane Carpentier, 19.9.2013
Erni Anton, 25.9.2013
Weissberg Alfred, 10.10.2013

An artist among the best

Once upon a time she was too small to join Swissair. At Schweizer Illustrierte magazine, however, she has been «The Best» for years. Now she is officially retiring, but will she stop? No way!

Photos: Geri Born / Handout

I'll be at the movies. Whenever her colleagues would leave for their lunch break shortly before 12 o'clock, wishing each other «bon appetit», Katalin Ilona Moser, Kati for short, would make her way to a movie theater - all part of her job, of course. For years, this Hungarian-born editor at Schweizer Illustrierte has been praising or panning works of art, books, plays or indeed movies under the heading «The Best». If Kati came back to the office wearing her sunglasses despite rainy weather you knew that the movie had been sad. Mind you, Kati would often ask herself why she had left the cinema weeping when none of her fellow critics had apparently stifled a single tear. Speaking of lunch breaks: Eight to ten times a year Kati, who, based on her appearance, could pass for Queen Elizabeth's younger sister, would pack her bags and take a trip. Apart from visiting art exhibitions she also checked out new holiday destinations all around the globe with her travel reports quenching readers' wanderlust or stimulating them to pack up and go themselves. She cared little as to where the road would take her. Moser's motto was: «Wherever people live, it's bound to be exciting!» Eating well mattered more to her. «Then again, that isn't always possible.» One time she came close to eating



Kati Moser studied at the Academy of Fine Arts of Brera in Milan. Her self-portrait is seen on the right.

sheep's eyes, and in Iceland some colleagues played a trick on her: The islanders consider whale meat that has been buried for three months a delicacy. Unsuspecting, Kati popped a piece of the stuff, which had been marinated in oil, into her mouth. «My only options were: spit it out or swallow.» With regal stoicism she decided to swallow - and washed the thing down with five shots of liquor. Now, after nine years with Ringier, Kati Moser is retiring - officially. However, she will go on travelling, writing, critiquing and acclaiming as a regular freelance contributor. After all, the Queen doesn't just get to hang up her crown, either.

R.H.



Not «out of Africa» but right in the middle of it: as a travel writer on safari in Kenya. This is the Kati people know: always cheerful.



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by Marc Walder

Are you an avid reader? Ready for something new? Marc Walder tells you which books he has been reading and why they fascinate him.

RENÉ STAUFFER

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LIONEL BARBER

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ORI BRAFMAN

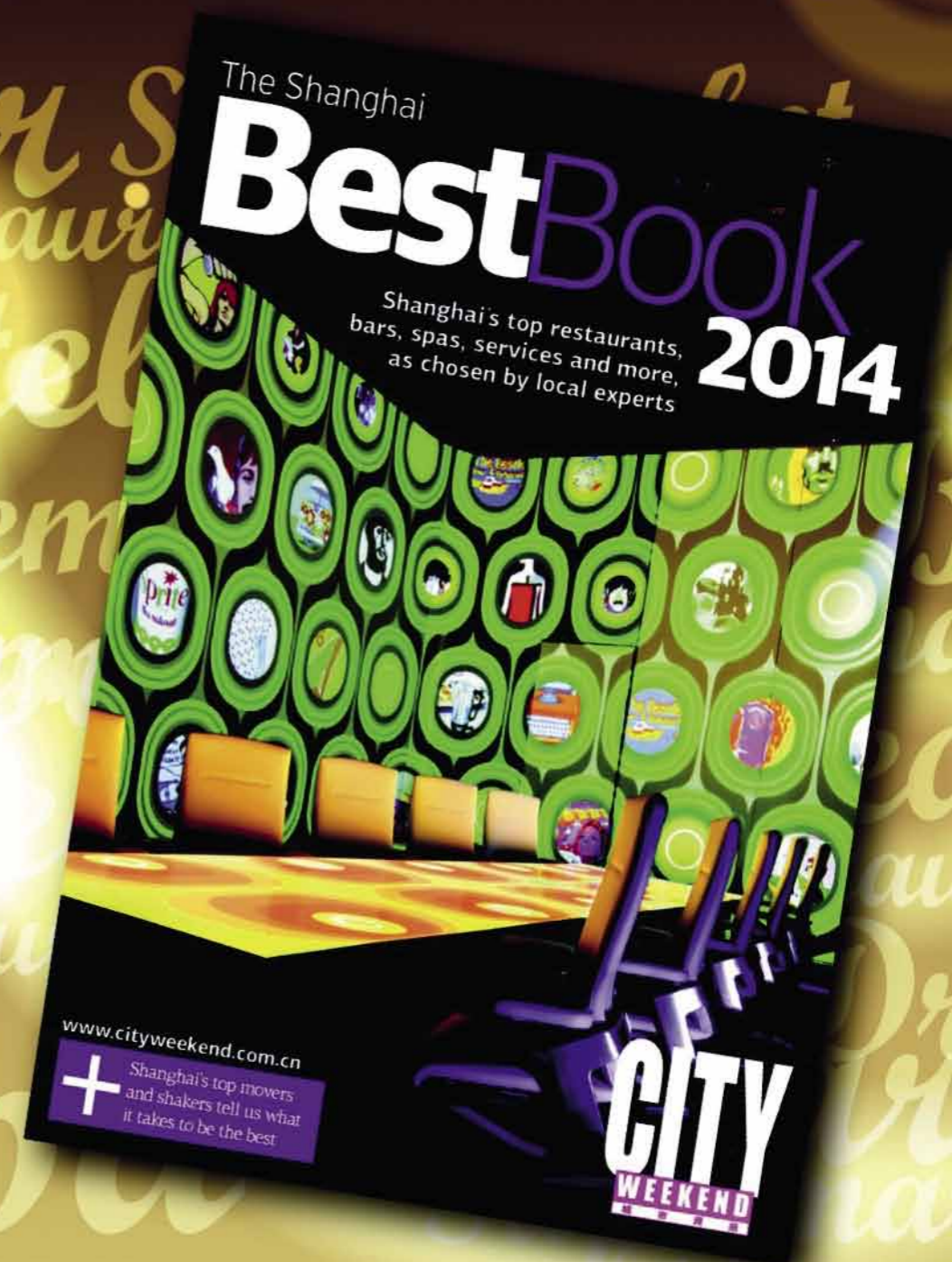
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