

CONRAD GAMBLE

FOR THE

Olivia Big Ed Phil Ryan  
Grant Ade Gray James Birch  
John Pearse Deyan Sudjic Mark Baxter Noel Clarke  
Stephen Bayley Dame Zaha Hadid  
Emma Rice Bernie Katz Tatiana Mercer  
Stephen Fry Micky Henry Holland  
Norman Jay Bobby Kasanga Dawg Roger Anne Maningas  
Sadie Coles Peter York Mavity Don Letts  
Heydon Prowse & Nazneen Rahman  
Jolyon Rubinstein LOVE Dom Joly  
Simon Russell Beale Nihal Arthanayake  
Dylan Jones Ruth Rogers Martine Wright  
Valerie Brandes Sir John Hegarty  
Lee Bofkin Fergus Henderson  
Anya Hindmarch Lloyd Bradley  
Pauline Black  
Lord Richards  
And Many  
More

OF  
LONDON

WHAT MAKES LONDON GREAT BY  
THE PEOPLE WHO MAKE IT GREAT

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# JAMES BIRCH

## RELATABLE MEMORIES OF LONDON ROARING

Growing up in Primrose Hill and opposite the old zoological gardens entrance, I would quite often be woken up in the early morning by the roar of a lion, the screech of a monkey or the call of an exotic bird (sometimes one of them would escape and land in my parents' garden, whereupon they would be rescued by some London zookeeper).

Many years later, while in a remote part of Zambia, I was forced to stay in a safari camp, as there was no other accommodation available. During the night the apes raided and screeched around the camp, but I was asleep and didn't hear them. In the morning, having breakfast in the camp, the over-excited safari guides asked, "Did you hear the noisy apes last night?" I was quite dismissive and they looked at me cynically. I replied with the most annoying thing: "I lived opposite London Zoo – have you ever heard the roar of a polar bear first thing in the morning?"

I don't necessarily like zoos or safaris, but I think London's diverse sounds contribute a great deal to this city.

The roar of a motorcycle engine, leaving Andrew's Restaurant on the Gray's Inn Road, is reiterated by the continuous roaring of motorcycles at 3, 4 or 5am. I don't find this offensive – it reassures me that life is going on in London, whatever time it may be; whereas the roar of the hand-dryer in the gentlemen's lavatory leaves me exasperated and fills me with terror.



ART CURATOR



# Stephen Fry

Comedian, actor, writer and TV presenter

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## LONDON LIKE THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

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I'll tell you what it is about London. And I'll tell you in English, because whenever I think of the English language I think of London and whenever I think of London I think of the English language. And I love them both with all my heart and soul. And perhaps for the same reasons. You be the judge.

We open our mouth to speak English and a stream of varied discourses is released. Commercial, piratical, Shakespearean, jazz, biblical, aristocratic, American, criminal, Miltonian, convict, gangster, gangsta, Australian, Compton and Cambridge...all of them jostle in the same sentence and none takes priority.

No anglophone equivalent of the Académie française exists to control, regulate, stipulate, prescribe and proscribe the English language.

And look at London's architecture:

Elizabethan, ecclesiastical, corporate, Victorian, domestic, artisan, retail, Georgian, modernist and medieval, vulgar and refined, all higgledy-piggledy and hugger-mugger.

No planner fenced off one part of London from another, herded it into a museum city.

I don't wish to insult the French language or to impugn Paris. But let's be honest, attempts to herd and control either the language or the city do not have happy outcomes.

The coexistence in London of the crass, corporate and commercial with the refined, religious and royal makes for a great vibrant and throbbingly, jerkingly, frothingly exciting clash.

And it was the Clash after all who wrote "London Calling..."



# ED GRAY

## SHIFTING SHAPES ON THE MILE END ROAD

Mile End Underground Station. This is where I arrive each morning to come to work in my studio, and where I leave to head back to Rotherhithe each evening. A microcosm of arrivals and departures, much like the East End itself.

I had made work about Mile End Park and Whitechapel before, but I'd never painted the scenes that greet me as I come up for air from the platform below. I stand in the station entrance and start to make sketches over a few days, as I usually do in any given location. I quickly realise that this time I want to work differently. I decide just to look at and memorise a different part of the scene, and then carry it with me to the studio to work on further. This way I hope the story will reveal itself to me over time.

I first notice the way Gary the newspaper seller is the anchor of the scene in the morning – chatting each day with anyone or simply watching people make their entrances and exits. In the evening the African preacher arrives. He cries out to the multitude that they “will be cast into the fires of hell for all eternity!” He spits out words to the tearful drunk in the old military greatcoat and the commuters of all faiths and none. Undeterred, he seeks only to cleanse them. Some 150 years ago William Booth's Salvation Army found a voice here preaching against the Demon Drink.

The East End has been a centre of faith ever since the 14th-century White Chapel gave its name to the area, so fire and brimstone have been burning the ears of East Enders for a long time. Even today the bells of the Whitechapel bell foundry and the PA system for the call to prayer from the East London Mosque are to be found within earshot of each other. New faiths have always come here with every new wave of arrivals across the seas – the Huguenots, the Jews, the Bengalis, the Irish. Each one lit with their own light in the darkness of a foreign land they would come to call home. Be it through persecution,



## ARTIST CHRONICLING LONDON



# Dame Zaha Hadid

**Architect; twice-winner of the RIBA Stirling Prize and first female winner of the Pritzker Architecture Prize**

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## LONDON'S UNIQUE POTENTIAL

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I can say from my personal experience it is a very liberating experience living in London. My own work developed entirely because I live in this city. It is a very British situation; the UK has traditionally given a platform to those from around the world who want to research and innovate. London, in particular, has always welcomed and encouraged a tremendous degree of experimentation. What is very important to me as an architect is the remarkable knowledge and skills of the city's engineers and consultants. There is a uniqueness to London – anything you want, you can find someone in London with tremendous experience to advise you.

A seminal London figure for me was Peter Rice, an engineer with the design consultancy Arup. He was the first of his generation to match innovative engineering with new, untried ideas and concepts. We did a project more than 20 years ago at the Architectural Association where we drew lines through a map of the city and then travelled along these lines, documenting everything. It was a very interesting project because, first of all, it showed that certain components were aligned with each other, but that others – when you jumped from one level to next

– were tremendously varied. These extreme adjacencies are what make London so unique. It's a great city that has become very layered with traditions, histories and cultures.

I really like the brutalist 1960s and '70s buildings on the South Bank – the Hayward Gallery, the National Theatre, all that area. They're among the few examples of that style of work remaining in London. This architecture has fallen out of favour and most of it is being demolished, but it's actually some of the best architecture we have in London.

Unlike most European cities, London still has large gaps that allow for major urban intervention on an interesting scale. Look at the site for the 2012 Olympics, for example. We did a drawing more than 15 years ago about how London should be developed towards the east and it's fascinating to see this becoming a reality with the Olympics as a catalyst. It has offered the possibility of some very positive interventions with interesting solutions. There is tremendous potential here in London, and often the more radical it is, the more appropriate it is for the city.

*Dame Zaha Hadid, 1950–2016*



# LAL HARDY

Founder of the New Wave tattoo studio, Muswell Hill

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## LONDON IN MY HEART

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London, a city of so many constants yet so many changes. A place I love and sometimes hate!

My home for 57 years – a wealth of memories, the pubs, clubs, haunts and venues of my youth. The Lyceum packed with teddy boys and girls rockin' and rollin' the night away; the King's Road, Chelsea, with its punks and the Nutty Sound of Madness in Camden Town; rock nights at the Astoria and drinking nights at the Intrepid Fox, Soho.

The tiny little tattoo shop owned by Big Jock in King's Cross with its eclectic mix of clients, ladies of the night, rough tough hard-drinking men, tourists, thieves, criminals, lost souls, the lonely, runaways – a world of its own the likes of which most will never experience – a true education. So many pubs of London with their particular uniqueness and rich array of characters are being lost for ever.

The costers of Petticoat Lane, Tubby Isaac's shellfish stall, pie 'n' mash, Cockney rhyming slang, wheeling and dealing – that was Sunday

mornings in Middlesex Street, along with the sad sight of the animals of the Club Row live animal market in my youth.

Nowadays I love early-morning London, before all the hustle and bustle starts – walking to work through some of the little hidden green spaces known just to locals, the flash of green as a woodpecker starts and makes his undulating flight, the urban fox strolling without a care.

I love the view on a clear day from Ally Pally looking across London's vast expanse. On a dark crisp night the view is equally stunning with the city illuminated against its dark backdrop.

I love the journey to White Hart Lane to see the Spurs, the anticipation on a derby day, the banter, the tension, the noise.

I love my red heart tattoo with London emblazoned across its banner.

I love that wherever you are from, if you make London your home you become part of it – WE ARE LONDON.

