

THE EDINBURGH STAR

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Jerusalem – the View from the Haas Promenade

Welcome to the 79th Edinburgh Star. We just had time for one more before Rosh Hashanah. Read inside the Rabbi's message about the Three Weeks; and about the Shalom Festival coming up on 17 August. Also see Robin Spark's amazing tableaux on Jewish themes and Miriam Vickers' award winning show. It's amazing how much there is to report, even when nothing much seems to be in the calendar.

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Rabbi Rose's Message

We are approaching the saddest time of the Jewish year. The three weeks between the 17th of Tammuz and Tisha B'Av commemorate the destruction of the two Temples and loss of Jewish sovereignty as well as other disasters that happened during this period, such as the medieval expulsions of Jews from England and Spain. Traditionally, various mourning customs are observed during this period, such as not cutting hair or shaving and not holding weddings. In the nine days leading up to Tisha B'Av, it is also customary not to consume meat or wine, wash clothes or wash for pleasure. Tisha b'Av itself is a 24hr fast and a day of mourning, when various bereavement practices are observed such as sitting on the floor or a low stool. We also recite the book of Lamentations and poetical dirges known as 'kinot'.

The sages tell us that Jerusalem was destroyed because of causeless hatred and bring several contemporary stories to illustrate the point. The Jewish people ceased to interact properly with each other, preferring conflict to dialogue and anger to reconciliation. The result was national catastrophe. In Britain today we face a similar situation. I have never seen such anger expressed by so many people as we have witnessed in recent weeks. Our society is fractured and in danger of disintegration. The lesson of this period of the Jewish year is thus especially relevant at this time. We should remember that a society that cannot live with itself is courting catastrophe and work to repair the damage before it is too late.

Rabbi Rose's Blog

We often hear of the intolerance of Orthodoxy. Orthodox people are meant to be intolerant of women, gays and other denominations. That is, of course, at least partially true. Yet we rarely hear of the opposite side of the coin, intolerance towards Orthodoxy and those who are seen as Orthodox. This often takes a more subtle form than its opposite but is no less unacceptable and destructive. Orthodox people attempting to interact in secular Jewish settings often face ingrained prejudices that wrongly label them and assign them attitudes they may not have. I have several times been in a situation when, because I am an Orthodox Rabbi, my words have been totally misinterpreted. Orthodox people are often assumed to be only interested in a narrow agenda and are assigned a set role within wider Jewish society, whatever their real views or possible contribution. While being an Orthodox Rabbi, for example, is mostly regarded in non-Jewish organisations as an asset, in secular Jewish organisations it is often seen as a liability. LGBT people who still wish to identify as Orthodox often find that not only do they face discrimination within the Orthodox world but suspicion and rejection in the LGBT world. I've spoken to young Reform Jews who may want to be more observant, such as keeping Shabbat, who find barriers to acceptance within the Reform movement. People should be taken at face value not labelled and put in a box because they wear a certain type of kippah or have a certain level of Jewish observance. Tolerance cuts both ways and discrimination is discrimination. Orthodox Jews, even Rabbis, are also people and are entitled to be treated for whom they are and what they can contribute, not defined by other people's prejudices.

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IMAGING FAITH

Report by the Editor



Images left to right are of Michael Cohen in the Qum'ran valley, Father Issa at Wadi Qelt and Ramadan Taha at Nebi Musa in the Judean desert. Production stills of Faith, a film triptych by Isabel Rocamora. © Image by the artist, 2016. Courtesy of the artist and Galeria SENDA.

It was Rabbi Rose's idea that the exhibition 'Imaging Faith' by Isabel Rocamora at Summerhall should involve a panel discussion for visitors from each of the three faiths featured, along with the artist. This took place on Sunday 25 June at 3pm at the venue. Isabel Rocamora introduced the film, which we then watched. We then had a chance to view still photographs revealing the context of Jerusalem, and some scholarly responses from philosophers and specialists in religion such as Gil Anidjar, Mark Cauchi, Victoria Rocamora and Simon Critchley, in the reading room of the exhibition. Next, we were taken to the main hall for the discussion, which involved Isabel, Rabbi Rose, Yahya Barry, the Imam from the Central Mosque, and Revd Scott McKenna, the Minister of Mayfield Salisbury Church. Each Minister had been invited to bring his flock but the Ramadan fast diminished the number of Muslims, while Mayfield Salisbury and the Jewish community were well-represented. The Imam is setting up a post-Ramadan special visit for his community in July.

As stated on the flyer, 'Imaging Faith' is a film triptych which intimately observes the act of worship of the three monotheistic religions in Jerusalem. Set against the backdrop of different locations in the spectacular Judean Hills, effectively in a Biblical wilderness, three men perform their morning rituals on three separate screens side by side. Although each inhabits their own screen, the effect of the triptych is to make it seem as if they are together, praying in harmony, despite the conflicts that rage in the city so nearby.

The three men featured are Michael Cohen, a Hassidic Jew, Father Issa Taljeh, a Palestinian Priest of the Greek Orthodox church, and Feras Kazaz, a Sunni Muslim Quran reader of Al Aqsa Mosque (although Ramadan Taha is shown in the still above). Isabel told us that Michael was first spotted busking on the violin at the Jaffa Gate, and when she bought his CD as a means of establishing initial contact, he was not able to look at her. He was equally cagey about coming to meet her for a casting and had to be reassured that the front door would be left open.

That being said, the three 'stars' were not acting. They are genuine religious leaders and they performed their rituals to camera as they would in real-life. Michael was filmed in the Qum'ran Valley, Father Issa at Wadi Qelt, and Feras at Nebi Musa, these being locations of special

significance to their respective faiths. Michael used Hebrew, reciting some blessings, Yedid Nefesh and the Shema as well as Aleinu. Father Issa and Feras both prayed in Arabic so it was not so easy for me to know what they were saying, but some familiar phrases appeared and I was pretty sure that I noticed the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the 23rd psalm, as well as familiar Suras from Islamic worship.

The effect of the whole film experience, with its stark colour palette of black and white ritual garments against the dun tones of the desert, made for a minimalist yet extremely rich experience. The way the voices were alternated, with one man singing loudly while another prayed silently, could make it look as if the Hebrew words were coming out of the Christian's or Muslim's mouth and vice versa. That was really eerie and most effective. The fact that all three were praying in a Levantine style, made the similarities seem more important than the differences and yet they were all on separate screens, therefore unaware of the others. Each of the three prayers was shot as a continuous 21 minute take; the way their actions matched was an amazing achievement down to the meticulous planning by Isabel in collaboration with her "performers" and crew, most notably Director of Photography Laurent Machuel, with whom Isabel worked extremely closely.

The discussion showed how the exhibition sparked the imagination of an audience ranging from primary age children to octogenarians. Isabel shared with disarming frankness some of the inside stories of her three and a half months in Jerusalem preparing the ground for the actual filming. The project was mainly funded by Creative Scotland.

<http://www.summerhall.co.uk/2016/imaging-faith/>

<http://www.isabelrocamora.org/home.html>



L to R: The Imam of the Central Mosque, Yahya Barry, Artist Isabel Rocamora, Rabbi Rose and Revd Scott McKenna, Mayfield Salisbury Church of Scotland.



The audience help themselves to tea and coffee before the discussion. Rachel Dorfman waits patiently (far right) along with Martin Simmen and Shari Cohn, and Merav Gardi-Kisilevitz (back row left).

PROUD OF OUR ARTISTS

Two of our own artists have had solo exhibitions in the last couple of weeks and we are proud of their achievements. They are Robin Spark, and Miriam Vickers.

Samuel Robin Spark has had a Retrospective Exhibition at the Patriothall Gallery in Stockbridge. The pieces on show are varied and display Robin's great versatility in a number of media. There are thickly textured oils on canvas or board, lithographs, chalk drawings on paper and silk screen prints. There are abstracts, life paintings, portraits and tableaux. A number of the paintings are on Jewish themes and these are very touching, particularly the array of men celebrating Sukkot, some holding the lulav and etrog, others getting ready to dance with the Sefer Torah. Many of the works have not been seen before.

The curators, Suzanne Higgs and Zoe Hay, are currently trying to find either a buyer or a home for some of the larger Jewish pieces. Currently they are making contact with public institutions in Edinburgh, trying to see if they would be interested in expanding their collection of art that is representative of Scotland's Jewish Community. They would also be very interested in any Jewish organisations, facilities or public spaces that might be open to owning and perhaps displaying Robin's work. They have asked the Star to publicise the work and see if anyone would be interested within the Jewish Community in acquiring and giving a home to any of the Jewish-themed pictures.



Sabbath Bride



Succot



Jewish Cycle I



Jewish Cycle II

For more information see www.patriothallgallery.co.uk or www.samuelrobinspark.com.

Miriam Vickers has had a solo exhibition in the Club Room at the Scottish Arts Club. Miriam won the Scottish Society of Arts 2014 award in 2014 'Scotland and France'. This was her award exhibition. Miriam's work is inspired by both landscape and classical architecture. She works in watercolours, copperplate etching with soft ground, and aquatint. Miriam is a member of the Lit and Sukkat Shalom.



L: Owls of Charolle
Below, Pollin, Northwest Sutherland



Miriam Vickers at the
Scottish Arts Club

EHC COFFEE MORNING – 5 JUNE 2016



Steven Hyams and Betsy Dorfman set up the
book stall.



L to R: Joyce Cram, Shirley Bennett and Jane
Rickman enjoy coffee and chat, while Norma
Brodie examines the books.



L to R: Jane Ansell, Gidona Henderson and
Janet Mundy contemplate the cake stall.



L to R: Hilary Rifkind, exchanges a few words
with John and Lesley Danzig.

LEARNING FOR LADIES (AND ANYONE ELSE WHO WANTS TO COME)



For those who don't know, Rabbi Rose has been running shiurim in people's houses every month and your editor managed to attend for the first time when the subject for discussion was 'Strands of Orthodoxy'. The group met at the home of Francoise Robertson, who provided a light kosher dinner, with the help of Elaine Levy, to start the evening off. Rabbi Rose demystified the various historical divisions of ancient Judaism – distinguishing Sadducees from Pharisees, and Karaites from followers of Rabbinical Judaism before going on to explain Chassidism and its opponents, the Mitnagdim.

Things got really interesting when the Rabbi began to explain the various movements in today's orthodox world, including the Charedi and Modern Orthodoxy. Not surprisingly, the ladies present wanted to discuss attitudes to women's issues within the different movements and how much scope there might be for women to play a greater role. Rabbi Rose also covered such issues as the different



attitudes to be found towards secular studies and scientific knowledge. He encouraged us all to read Rabbi Michael Harris's book 'Faith Without Fear'. Rabbi Harris will be addressing the Lit in November (full programme to be announced in due course).

FOR YOUR DIARIES

- Fast of Tammuz: dawn till nightfall Sun 24 July
- Fast of Av (*Tisha b'Av*): dusk on Shabbat 13th August till nightfall Sunday 14th August
- Civic Service at EHC (all welcome): Shabbat 13 August
- Shalom Festival, celebrating Israeli Culture – free during the day, Gala Concert at night £19 / £14 – Thursday 17 August at Central Hall, Tollcross
- Festival Open Day organised by the Jewish Edinburgh Group: Sunday 21 August at 4a Salisbury Road
- *Rosh Hashanah*: Monday 3rd October and Tuesday 4 October (starts Sunday 2 October in the evening)

EHC AGM



At the EHC AGM on 29 June there were some changes to the Board of Management. The new Board is as follows: Raymond Taylor (Chair), Hilary Rifkind (Treasurer), Jackie Taylor (Secretary), Michael Adler, Carole Cowen, Eli Atad-Ettingui, John Danzig, Steven Hyams, Susie Kelpie, Elaine Levy, David Neville, Elaine Samuel. The senior Warden is Arnold Rifkind and the junior Warden is Lawrence Taylor. Thanks were given to Micheline Brannan and Tony Gilbert who were standing down.



EDITOR(S) NEEDED

On my recent visit to Jerusalem I found the old Knesset Building on Hamelech George being refurbished as a museum. This sign was above a display board of the first Speaker meeting an Israeli schoolboy, and I said to myself 'If only they had an editor'.

The Star needs a new editor or editors as I move my centre of gravity towards Glasgow, having been made the new Chair of the Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC). While I love editing the Star, it will not be possible to issue the new style Star with the same frequency and quality if it is left to me.

So please come forward and volunteer to edit the Star, even if it is only one or two editions. We need you!

The Star gives a hearty thank you to our patrons.

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FRINGE CELEBRATES ISRAELI CULTURE

A MAJOR event in support of Israel is being held as part of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe

The inaugural International Shalom Festival will take place on Wednesday, August 17 in Central Hall, 2 West Toll Cross, Edinburgh.

It is being run by the Confederation of Friends of Israel Scotland (**COFIS**) in association with StandWithUs UK, with the aim of building further cultural bridges between Israel and the UK.

Event manager is Glaswegian Kirsteen Lupton, who said "I am so excited that we are putting together such a terrific line-up of brilliant performers that will light up the Edinburgh Festival Fringe".

A free exhibition, from 11am to 4.30pm, will showcase examples of cultural diversity in Israel together with a photo-banner display of cultural co-existence in practice.

Highlights include a Bedouin demonstrating hospitality in their tent; meeting a real-life Samaritan; a Druze-Israeli cookery masterclass; learning Hebrew and/or Arabic in 30 minutes; an Israeli dance workshop; a film theatre, and a Krav Maga (self-defence martial arts) demonstration.

A gala concert from 7pm, hosted by comedienne **Hadar Galron**, will feature Israeli bands **Yamma** followed by **Anna RE**.

Festival chief executive Nigel Goodrich said: "The world's premier arts festival deserves a taste of the rich and vibrant culture of Israel." "We hope that lasting friendships will be made between people of different cultures and lead to greater dialogue, and hence shalom - peace".

To book tickets for the concert contact the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Box Office

<https://tickets.edfringe.com/whats-on#g=%22International%20Shalom%20Festival%20Gala%20Concert%22>



INTERNATIONAL

Shalom Festival

Building Cultural Bridges

Gala Concert

7.00pm - 9.45pm
 Tickets: £19.00 /
 £14.00 Concessions.
 17 August 2016



This will be a Fantastic evening of entertainment, compèred by Comedienne, Hador Galron, who will introduce Acts that include two of Israel's top bands, Yamma & AnnaRF.

Yamma

Yamma Ensemble offers a mesmerising integration of musical elements from the Middle East with Western music forms. Singer, songwriter, producer, Talya G.A. Solan bewitches us with her colourful, nuanced, expressive voice against a backdrop of instrumental excellence.

AnnaRF

AnnaRF began in the tiny desert village of Shahrut in southern Israel. Together they have created a new sound. A mix between the East and the West, blending ancient and modern instruments combined with an electronic touch. Past meets present into a future sound. The word AnnaRF is an Arabic - Hebrew expression which has a double meaning. "I know" and "I don't know", that represents the concept behind the philosophy of the band.

Central Hall, Tollcross, Edinburgh EH3 9BP. www.shalomfestival.org

PEOPLE AND PLACES



Edward Green snapped Judy and Tony Gilbert at the Royal Garden Party at Holyrood House. Aren't they a great couple! Judy edited 17 editions of the Edinburgh Star and works tirelessly for the community. She takes photographs of all key events and is the Lit's Tea Lady. In between these roles she finds time to look after 4 generations of her family, shuttling from Edinburgh to London and to the States. Tony recently stepped down after many years on the Board of Management of EHC. His main role was to take the minutes – no easy achievement as the cut and thrust of argument flew about. Tony continues as Secretary of the Lit, having served a record number of years in this capacity. He keeps the Lit Committee on its toes, ensuring that everyone does what they were meant to do and meetings take place smoothly. Tony also draws amazing posters to advertise each meeting. These can be seen on the Lit's website

<https://ejls.org>



Wendy Goldberg, who grew up in Edinburgh (daughter of Leila and the late Philip Goldberg) and who now lives in New York, pictured after completing the Edinburgh Marathon on 29 May. On the right are her support team of L to R: Jonathan Goldberg, Juliette Cohen, Yvonne Berger and proud mother Leila Steel.

The Edinburgh Star is deeply saddened to note the passing away of Ian Shein, at the age of 91. Ian lived in Edinburgh all his life and was married first to the late Joyce Shein and second to Pearl Shein who survives him. Ian was a regular contributor to the Star in the Shein Scene, a roundup of local events. Our deepest sympathies go to Pearl and to the whole family. Tributes to Ian will be included in the Rosh Hashanah Star.

ORGAN DONATION AND GENETIC DISORDERS

The President of Giffnock Shul, Ken Gerber, has given the Star permission to reprint the following information.

Organ donation

Many people believe that it is contrary to Jewish Law to donate organs, as it results in the donor not being buried intact. However, it is permitted to donate an organ while you are alive or after your death, provided it is to save someone else's life; (therefore donating one's body to a medical faculty is not halachically ok). There are very strict medical ethical codes of conduct that apply in the UK and in many other western countries to protect the donor. It is never ok to hasten or risk hastening a person's death by testing or removing an organ, even if this is to help save another person's life. There are differing views on whether it is ok to donate when you are brain stem dead where the heart is still functioning due to artificially being kept alive on the one hand, and where there is cardiac and respiratory failure on the other hand. There is material published by Aish, Chabad, and others available on the Internet (www.myjewishlearning.com › Jewish Bioethics, www.chabad.org › Death & Mourning › End-of-Life › Readings, www.aish.com/ci/sam/48936217.html).

A Jewish organisation, based in USA, called Halachic Organ Donation Society, actively promotes organ donation and their web-site contains very helpful information@ www.hods.org

Jewish Genetic Disorders

There was a very good article in the Jewish Telegraph on 1st July, summarising many of the points covered at the GLP talk. Genetic disorders exist throughout mankind, but certain of these are more prevalent in ethnic groups. There are over 30 genetic disorders that are commonly found in the Ashkenazi Jewish communities (such as ours), and 9 of these disorders are serious, and some of these result in extreme life shortening. Statistics show that 1 in 25 of us is a carrier of at least one of these genetic disorders. If two people who are carriers of the same disorder conceive a child, there is a high probability that the child will be born with that disorder, even though the parents are symptom-free. The risk of having a child with one of these disorders can be very significantly reduced by screening in the form of a simple blood test, which tests against the nine most adverse conditions; this test is not 100% accurate, but is very close to that standard. Testing is not generally available on the NHS, but can be done privately, or through the Jewish charity "Jnetics" which is based in London, or by arrangement at Guy's Hospital in London. If one gets screened through Jnetics, they subsidise the cost so as to bring the price down to £195 per person. Jnetics usually do screening at one of the Shuls in London, but have also done a session in Manchester. If there is sufficient demand, they might arrange one in Glasgow. They have a very helpful website www.jnetics.org.uk which has a lot of useful information. It is worth taking a few minutes to visit their website....please do tell your loved ones about this – it is better to know that there could be a problem and take the test to find out whether or not a problem could exist, than to stumble unknowingly into a highly distressing situation. If you or someone you know would be interested in being screened, and would like to attend a screening session in Glasgow if one could be arranged, please do let the Giffnock Shul office know (by emailing admin@giffnockshul.co.uk)

The Star gives sincere thanks to Peter Phillips of Splash Bathrooms for printing the Star to send to those readers who do not receive email. Splash Bathrooms can be found at 164 Lanark Road West, tel 0131 449 9585 email splashofedinburgh@gmail.com website www.splashbathrooms.net



WHERE IS A RABIN WHEN YOU NEED ONE?

By Jo Capek

Assuming you were part of the selection panel, would you employ

- 1) a 45 year-old PR guru as headmistress of a 1,200 pupil inner-city comprehensive school?
- 2) a 40 year-old accountant as captain of a frigate?
- 3) a ham-fisted 55 year-old lawyer to head the Ophthalmology Department of a 600-bed general hospital?

I am hardly going out on a limb guessing you would bin such applications. Nevertheless, stay with me and assume that by some mischance this trio were appointed, and not just to these positions but as Secretary of States for Education, Defence and Health respectively. Given a couple of years they may even be gaining some competency in their new careers, whereupon a Premier with a background in finance decides it is time to reshuffle their Cabinet.

Allow another 2 or 3 years to elapse and, glory be, we get the opportunity to eject these square pegs from their round holes and find more circular Ministers. But what happens? Nothing apart from the accountant being junked in favour of a unionist who could not achieve even failure. This paragon is then permitted no responsibility greater than responding to a 3-line whip: whilst regaling us on any subject they see fit.

I now ask the most important question of all. How on earth did we let such a system come about and then put up with this shambles for so long?

Thinking back over the post-war years, how many of those selected by this ridiculous method actually accomplished anything worthwhile? The most the majority achieved was limiting the mess their predecessors left behind without making the situation worse. Is it any wonder I cannot believe in a system that deems the views of 2 ignorant imbeciles outweigh the opinion of 1 informed intellectual.

So where did these dark thoughts arise? Not because at the general election, out of all the nincompoops seeking my 'X', I found myself reduced to voting for the 'Damage Limitation' candidate. Not because others will shortly be going through the same pointless rigmarole in order to fill other Parliamentary vacancies. They arose upon realising 20 years have passed since Rabin's assassination and since then the political elite of half the globe have achieved the square root of b*gg*r all in The Middle East. In fact, as a result of these democratic worthies' interventions, the situation is now infinitely worse than 2 decades ago.

I am no historian but surely I am correct in recognising a pattern has developed. Two of my post-war heroes are Mandela and Havel and it is no coincidence neither sought power. Both were idealists who found that by some quirk of fate, Havel would have called it misfortune, they were unintentionally propelled into leading their nations to independent statehood? Israel's founding fathers were similarly idealistic and many were taken by complete surprise to discover that against all expectations they had a country to run. Since power was their last motivation, and thus its retention was similarly unimportant, they made a remarkably good fist of administering their fledgling nation.

Like me, Rabin (pictured above) was born of that Zionist generation; but whilst I had the good fortune to have parents who removed me from a war zone, he remained to become a hero of 3 conflicts. In other words, like Mandela and Havel, he made his very significant mark in a field far removed from government before finding himself the head of one. For me, the only reason Rabin does not stand alongside my 2 other idols is that some zealot, and tragically an Israeli extremist, removed him from office before he could finish the task of bringing about peace and thus joining them in a troika of the blessed.

As for the present incumbent as head of the Knesset, on the very night of Rabin's murder, at a time when the Oslo Agreement was finally bearing fruit, he was at his party's political rally denigrating his Prime Minister in language Mugabe reserves for white farmers. In Bibi our hopes now lie - may the stars preserve us!!! Well what do you expect? He is a democrat. As a not insignificant aside, it is noteworthy that Barak (pictured below),

another ex-general and Chief-of-Staff, offered the Palestinians more than they could ever have hoped for and so one side's politicians demanded still more whilst the other side's politicians forced him from office within a few short months? Let us also not forget that Rabin and Barak believed in peace so fervently because they fully



understood that when politicians, elected democratically or otherwise, make a boo-boo, all too often it is the military that die digging them out of the doo-doo.

By now, you may be sensing my disillusionment in a governmental system that only those running it could proclaim is superior to any other. However, lest you think I am entirely negative, let me assure you I have discovered there is a superior way of selecting our governments – and what is more governments that improve matters.

Sadly, my first notion came to nought as its simplicity appealed. This was to ask J.K. Rowling if she had a Sorting Hat going spare, but apparently this otherwise ideal piece of headgear is fictional – just like manifestos. Idea number 2 was that politicians of whatever persuasion constantly refer to ‘the greasy pole’ and so I considered a climbing contest may provide a solution; a competition where the candidates out-perform each other rather than out-promise one another.

It was then, with searchlight clarity, I had the answer. In a flash akin to Archimedes and his rubber ducky, Newton and his Bramley or Schrodinger and his moggy the solution appeared fully formed. Since everybody watches Celebrity Big Brother or The Apprentice on television, why not employ a similar format to choose our leadership from the pool of wannabes.

If someone wishes to be Secretary of State for Education, have them deliver, late on a Friday afternoon, a 45 minute lesson on clause analysis to 15 year-olds with English as their second language? If somebody's ambitions are to become Health Secretary, have them work a week of night shifts on a geriatric ward with a significant proportion of dementia patients. Incidentally I rejected my first notion of having them perform an appendectomy on the grounds this task may prove unpopular with risk-averse individuals.

If somebody has designs on the Ministry of Defence ...; well you get the picture. The candidate who does best would be appointed to the post by a panel of proven authorities on the matter. They would also announce the dread words, “You're fired!” to the wannabe who made a complete hash of the assignment. Next the viewing public could vote off those with the worst haircut, most irritating laugh, most implausible hardship story or whatever other criteria they deem appropriate to eliminating their least favourite parliamentary candidate.

The TV companies would fall over themselves to buy the rights and thus the process should be highly profitable rather than an expense because the franchise could be sold world-wide. Most importantly, the selections and ejections must be carried out in reverse order of responsibility, e.g. a junior pensions minister near the beginning and Home Secretary very near the end. Best of all no-one could seek the top job. If David, Nicola, Angela, Bibi or Hilary under-performed in the early tasks to avoid becoming number 3 in The Transport Department and thus remain in the mix come more senior posts, they run the risk of being shown the door with no office whatsoever. Also think of the tension come the ‘final’. Two outstanding competitors, in that they must have been reasonably competent at all the tasks and also sufficiently affable, empathic and sensible to survive the expulsions, would be set against each other in a ‘winner takes all’ where neither could have set out to be victorious. The loser could be ‘rewarded’ with becoming Head of an NGO.

Surely a process such as this must produce more Mandelas, Havels or Rabins than our present system where only those with the hubris to believe they deserve an ‘X’ beside their name can gain appointment? Surely it is an improvement on a practice which over 2 millennia ago reduced Plato to complaining, *“In politics we presume that everyone who knows how to get votes knows how to administer a city or a state. When we are ill, we do not ask for the handsomest physician, or the most eloquent one.”*

Before we commence this arrangement there is still one teensy-weensy difficulty to overcome: the obvious title of the ‘The X Factor’ is currently unavailable. Nevertheless, adopting this system is now imperative as the only alternative is to admit defeat and concur with Mark Twain who quipped both in sorrow and in anger, *“If voting made any difference they wouldn't let us do it.”*

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Other Organisations

J-Events
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Other Organisations contd

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