

## **NEWS ROUND-UP:**

### **Washington - Trump's next move...**

What will be President Trump's next architectural project after demolishing the East Wing of the White House in order to replace it with a Ballroom? He's already hinted that he would like to be added to the Four other Presidents on Mount Rushmore, South Dakota: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Theodore Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. How might this pan out?

In terms of prestige this suggests the President believes he has already achieved as much as the Quartet did. Or, if he hasn't yet, that he confidently expects that he will. And perhaps there is a hint that he will need another two terms to do so. The Constitution only allows Presidents two terms so perhaps this is a hint that the Constitution itself needs to be changed.

And is the message also that one of the Four needs to go to make room for Mr Trump himself. Or perhaps all of them, depending on the size of the new Head. Which must surely be enormous.

Other questions remain. Who will design it? It's hard to imagine that Jeff Koons work appeals to Mr Trump? Who will build it? If made of granite like the existing sculptures it will be quite a supreme feat of engineering. And would it be coated in gold, a favourite colour of the President? Then how will aircraft, satellites, and birds be protected from the heat and glare and ice of the area's very hot summers and very cold winters.

Bearing in mind Mr Trump's criticism of the Time Magazine Cover Photograph that showed an under view of his chin and rendered his hair invisible, how would the designer display these? Would he insist on a full figure image of himself as more suitable, perhaps mounted on a rotating wheel that would display the hair but also have a sliding door into which the chin could be retracted as required.

Other issues concern the possible resistance of local inhabitants who strongly opposed the original installation. And of course there are the costs of the whole enterprise: construction, insurance, and maintenance. The very size of the Statue would make it difficult to control photographic and other copyright issues.

Some experts have suggested the rotating wheel option could earn vast sums from tourists eager to circumnavigate the President. Though Others disagree.

Still the President is not used to losing and once committed will be determined to succeed. But perhaps he will listen to other

advisors who recommend he start with his own Broadway Musical, provisionally entitled, *Hi, World. It's Me!*

Early reports from the Trump Team suggest it will easily 'Out-Hamilton Hamilton. Perhaps the two projects could be combined?

### **Paris - The Mona Lisa code... The Picasso Surprise**

Ex-Inspector Maigret put the phone down and told his wife, "They're calling me out of retirement."

"They're whatting you out of what?" asked Madame Maigret, who had, as usual for breakfast, only pretended to have forgotten her hearing aid. But being an adept lip-reader she didn't need it and so didn't really need *to prick up her ears* as the English so innocently expressed it.

(She had often amused the others at Club Anglais by wondering if Jane Austen herself had ever used the phrase, or had any idea what it might really mean. Speculation quickly gave way to hilarity. Which after all, is what a *Lady* should be able to enjoy in her – Retirement. Which itself, for women such as her, is somewhat ill-defined.)

Feigning deafness, she could freely enjoy her husband's muttered involuntary asides on a range of subjects from the mundane to the utterly scandalous. Which of course he foolishly assumed enjoyed the secrecy of the confessional.

In fact these secrets were eagerly consumed by his wife's English Club Friends for their entertainment value. However, this informal sharing had also quietly assisted in the solution of various crimes in the Capital and beyond. Back then M. Maigret was a Commissioner of the Brigade Criminelle. But those days were long past.

Or were they? Madame Maigret pricked up her ears...

"Why you, cherie? Why recall you? Is it l'affaire du Louvre?"

Maigret's vanity made his head nod vigorously

"Pourquoi?" said Madame, pretending to pop in a hearing aid.

Her husband shook his head: "I...I... Still have contacts in that world."

Madame Maigret has long ceased wondering exactly what that meant.

*Assuredly, long nights in the bar with Lucas and Lapointe.*

“Ha!” laughed her friend Sylvie. “One never married. And the Other? Over-married.” An old joke but laughing was a joy rather than a duty.

At that moment the three seasoned detectives, plus Bregsit the new boy, were staring at 3 drawings of a Woman found in a waste bin by Lapointe whose years living rough had left him with an incurable addiction to rummaging through bins.

“She is plainly a master criminal,” said Bregsit who had a degree of some kind and was eager to impress. “In this one 'she' has disguised herself with a curly beard the better to 'case' the joint.”

They all agreed she looked familiar, each having seen her 'hanging around' in the Gallery at one time or another. Maigret lit a ruminative pipe, only hiding it under his hat when the Waitress walked by.

“We must copy these images and send out all available operatives to find her before she leaves the country,” said Maigret with the over-emphatic force of one whose words are generally ignored. “Toute de suite. I shall enjoy wiping that silly smirk off her face with the surgical force of my midnight interrogation.”

“Hurrah!” cheered the others. “The old firm back in business!”

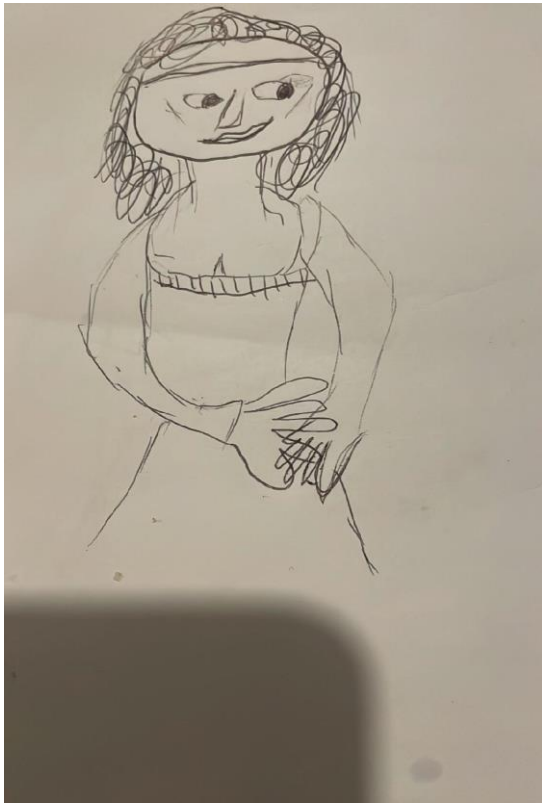
“My Granny told me about you,” said the Waitress. “While it is an honour to meet you be aware that I will throw you out on your enormous ear if you don't extinguish that pipe. Get back to work.”

The next morning Mme Maigret and her Club Anglais friends gathered to read the headlines and laugh.

“FATUOUS MISDIRECTION OF POLICE ENQUIRY ALLOWS GANG TO ESCAPE!”

“How did you do that, Mona?”

“Easily, with your help, of course. But look at this. On the way here I found this genuine Picasso painting the size of a Rice Crispy Box! Left outside someone's front door! Bless those dim on-line retailers! Shall we cut cards for it?”



By artists  
Lyle and Wyatt Clover

**(RIP David Bellos, Author and Translator of classic French modernism, who died Sunday, 26 October, 2025.)**

~~~~~