



THE ROYAL MEWS

WANDER to WONDER

**THIS EDITION:
London, England**

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WANDER to WONDER

by MARTINA NICOLLS



**The world will never starve for wonder, but only for want of wonder.
G.K. Chesterson**



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editor's note

Welcome to the 23rd edition of WANDER to WONDER

This edition of Wander to Wonder focuses on London, England.

Until next edition, with another theme,

Martina

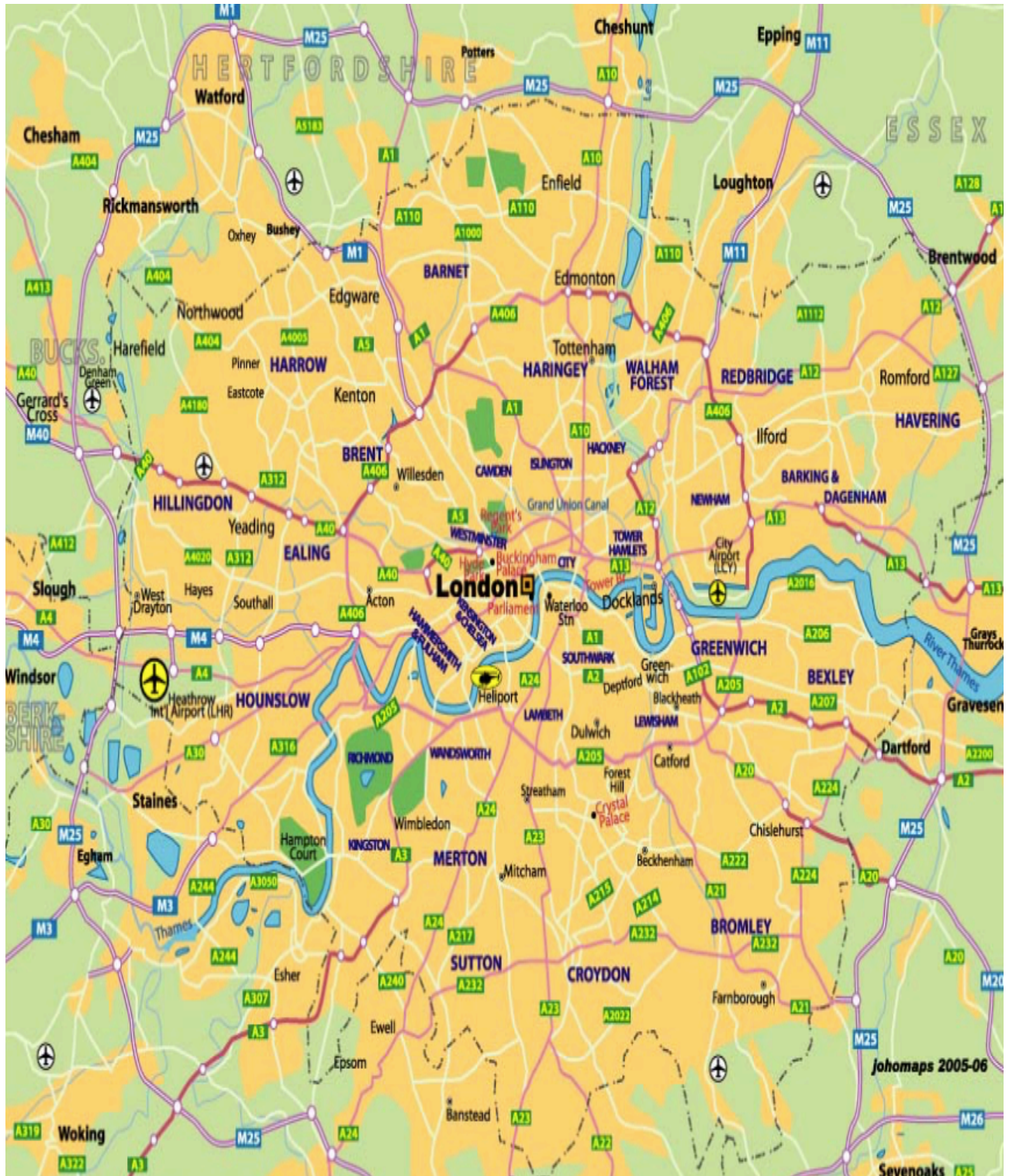
MARTINA NICOLLS



maps



maps



maps



london

London is the capital city of England and the United Kingdom. It is situated on the River Thames. The area of Greater London is 1,572 square kilometres (607 square miles), with a population of almost 9 million people. London is the world's most visited city, with 19 million international visitors in 2016.







london eye

The Coca-Cola London Eye on the banks of the River Thames was erected in 2000, originally for one year. However, it has proven to be a successful tourist attraction. Its height is 135 metres (443 feet), and the wheel has a diameter of 120 metres (394 feet). It has 32 capsules holding up to 25 people per capsule. The ride lasts 30 minutes.



trafalgar square

Trafalgar Square in Central London commemorates the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, during the Napoleonic Wars. In the middle of the Square is Nelson's Column. At the top is Horatio Nelson, the commander of the British Navy in the Battle of Trafalgar.





hyde park & christo's 'the mastaba'

Christo, the famed artist, has installed a temporary sculpture, called The Mastaba, in Hyde Park, London, *right in the middle of the Serpentine Lake*. Construction on the sculpture began on 3 April 2018. The installation will float on the Serpentine Lake from 18 June to 23 September 2018. The installation is composed of oil drums – oil barrels.

As with all of his art installations, Christo will fund the construction, maintenance and removal of the artwork. No public money is used for Christo's projects and he does not accept sponsorship. "The London Mastaba in Hyde Park will be absolutely free to the public—no tickets, no reservations and no owners. It will belong to everyone," said Christo.

A team of Christo's engineers built the installation, consisting of 7,506 horizontally stacked barrels on a floating platform in Serpentine Lake. It is 20 metres (65.5 feet) high x 30 metres (90 feet) wide x 40 metres (130 feet) long.

The standard 55 gallon barrels measure 59 x 88 centimetres (2 ft x 3 ft) and are specifically made and painted for this sculpture. The sides of the barrels, visible on the top and on the two slanted walls of the sculpture, are red and white. The ends of the barrels, visible on the two vertical walls, are red, blue, and mauve.

The sculpture's floating platform is high-density polyethylene cubes held with weighted anchors. A primary steel scaffolding frame is constructed on top of the platform and the barrels are attached to a scaffold substructure. The total weight is approximately 500 tons. The footprint of the sculpture will take up approximately 1% of the total surface area of the lake.

While the scaffolding was rented, other materials will be industrially recycled in the UK when the project concludes. The construction ensured that there was no damage to the site. No work is undertaken on grassed areas. All construction materials have been certified as having low environmental impact to preserve the ecosystem of the lake.

The artwork presents an opportunity to enhance the conservation area and associated wildlife of Hyde Park. An Ecological Enhancement Strategy was developed with The Royal Parks, which is in accordance with National and Local planning policy. In addition to ensuring that there will be no negative ecological impact on the lake, the surrounding park or its wildlife, a number of investments will be made in the park as a direct result of the project, including ecological works on the Serpentine Island, the creation of new habitats for birds and bats, litter clearance of the Serpentine Lake and re-treatment of the Phoslock system that protects the lake from algal bloom.

Loyd Grossman, Chair of The Royal Parks charity, said: "Christo is a world-renowned artist who has enjoyed highly successful exhibitions in parks and open spaces in other leading cities across the world, but has never before exhibited in London. We're

delighted to be able to facilitate his first major public outdoor work in this country in one of central London's finest and most visited parks. This will be an opportunity for park visitors to see an outstanding installation for free within an iconic landscape."

Deputy Mayor for Culture and Creative Industries, Justine Simons, said: "I'm delighted that this major new work by Christo is coming to the capital this summer—free for Londoners, and for visitors from the UK and around the world to see—in the beautiful surroundings of the Serpentine Lake. To host such an important work by an internationally acclaimed artist shows that London is open to great art, creativity and to everyone."

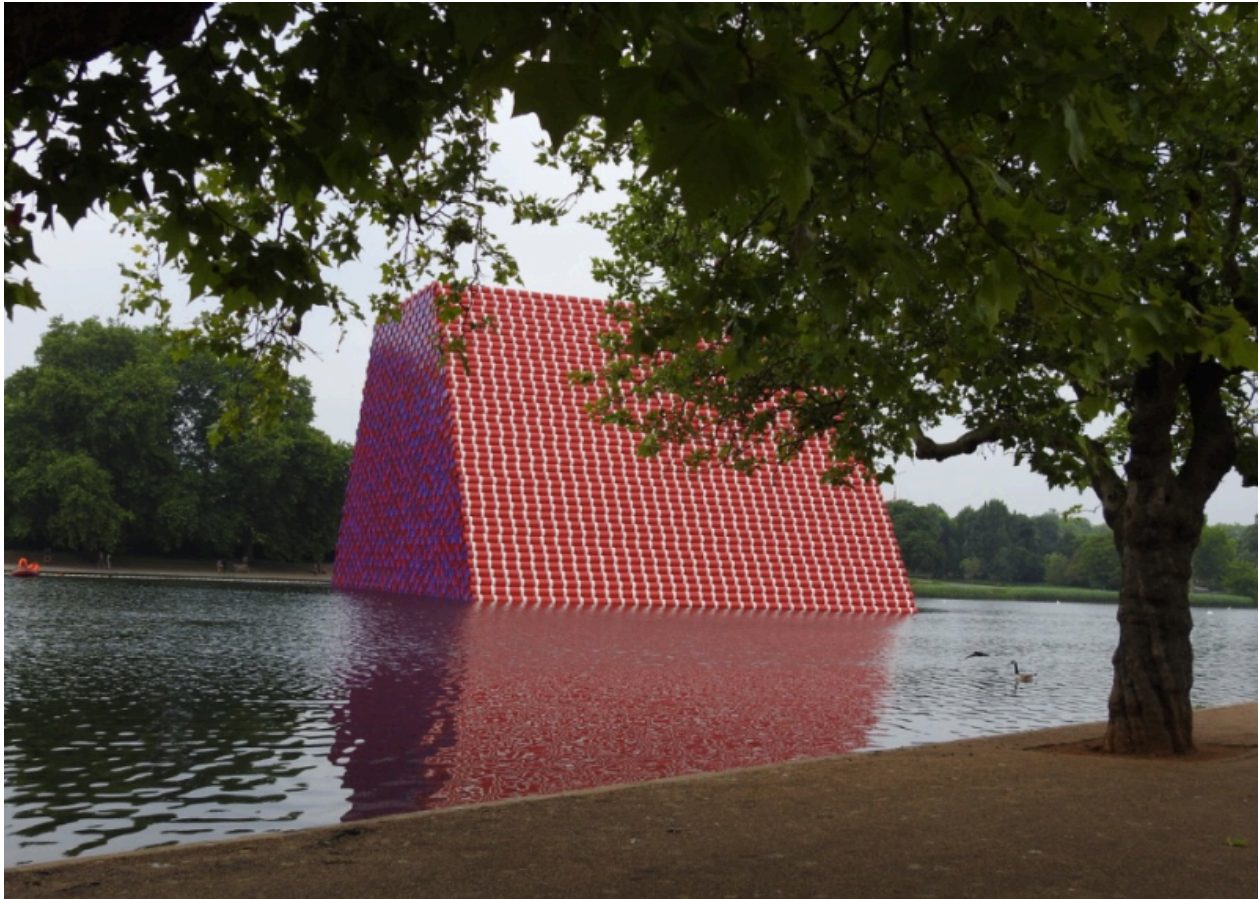
The temporary sculpture will coincide with an exhibition at the Serpentine Galleries of Christo and Jeanne-Claude's work, from 19 June to 9 September 2018, which will include sculptures, drawings, collages and photographs spanning more than 60 years. Both projects draw on Christo and Jeanne-Claude's history of barrel artworks.

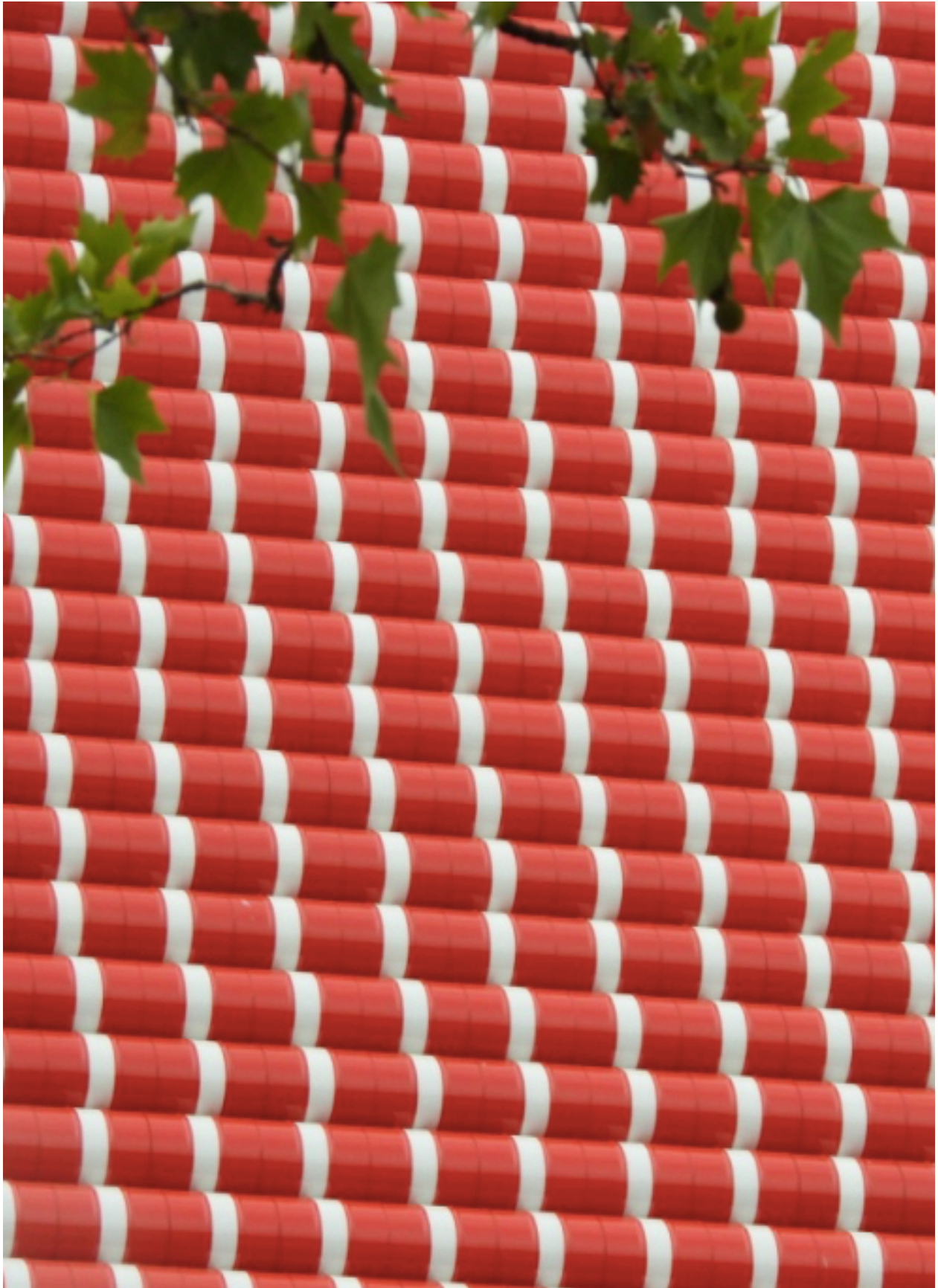
Christo said, "I am looking forward to the Serpentine Gallery exhibition exploring the use of barrels in my works from 1958 to today, which will provide important context for *The London Mastaba*." The barrels were chosen for their sculptural effect and low cost.

Supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, the Gallery exhibition will offer a historic context to *The London Mastaba* sculpture situated close by. Yana Peel, CEO and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Artistic Director, Serpentine Galleries, said: "In keeping with our mission to inspire the widest possible audiences with the urgency of art and architecture, the Serpentine Galleries' exhibition has been thoughtfully curated to coincide with *The Mastaba (Project for London, Hyde Park, Serpentine Lake)*. Christo's project will challenge where art can be encountered and by whom and—together with the Serpentine show—provide the UK public with an unprecedented insight into Christo and Jeanne-Claude's work."

"Christo is an imaginative visionary who conceives big ideas and brings them to life with relentless determination," said Michael R. Bloomberg, Chair, Serpentine Galleries.









elizabeth tower

At the north end of Westminster on the banks of the River Thames is the most famous tower, the Elizabeth Tower (named in 2012), commonly known as The Clock Tower and erroneously known as Big Ben. The tower is 96 metres (316 feet) tall. Edward John Dent built the tower in 1859, designed by Augustus Pugin. The clock has four dials 7 metres (23 feet) in diameter, made of milk glass, which are lit at night. The hour hand is 2.7 metres (8 feet 10 inches) long and the minute hand is 4.3 metres (14 feet) long. Big Ben is actually the bell in the Clock Tower, which cannot be seen from the outside. The tower is currently under repair due to it leaning.









tower of london

The Tower of London, officially Her Majesty's Royal Palace and Fortress of the Tower of London, is on the north bank of the River Thames. William the Conqueror built the castle in 1078 with defensive walls and a moat, and it has been expanded many times since. It was used as a prison from 1100 to 1952, as well as an armoury, a treasury, a zoo, the royal mint, the public records office, and the home of the Crown Jewels of England. Today it is a tourist attraction, and is protected as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



tower bridge

The Tower Bridge was built about 120 years ago. It is one of London's favourite and instantly recognisable icons. However, people think it is the London Bridge, but it is not. The Romans built the first London Bridge and there have been five bridges since, including the one that was burnt in a fire in 1212, 1381, 1450, 1633, and during the Great Fire of London in 1666. Today's London Bridge next to the Tower Bridge is not as elaborate.





london bridge





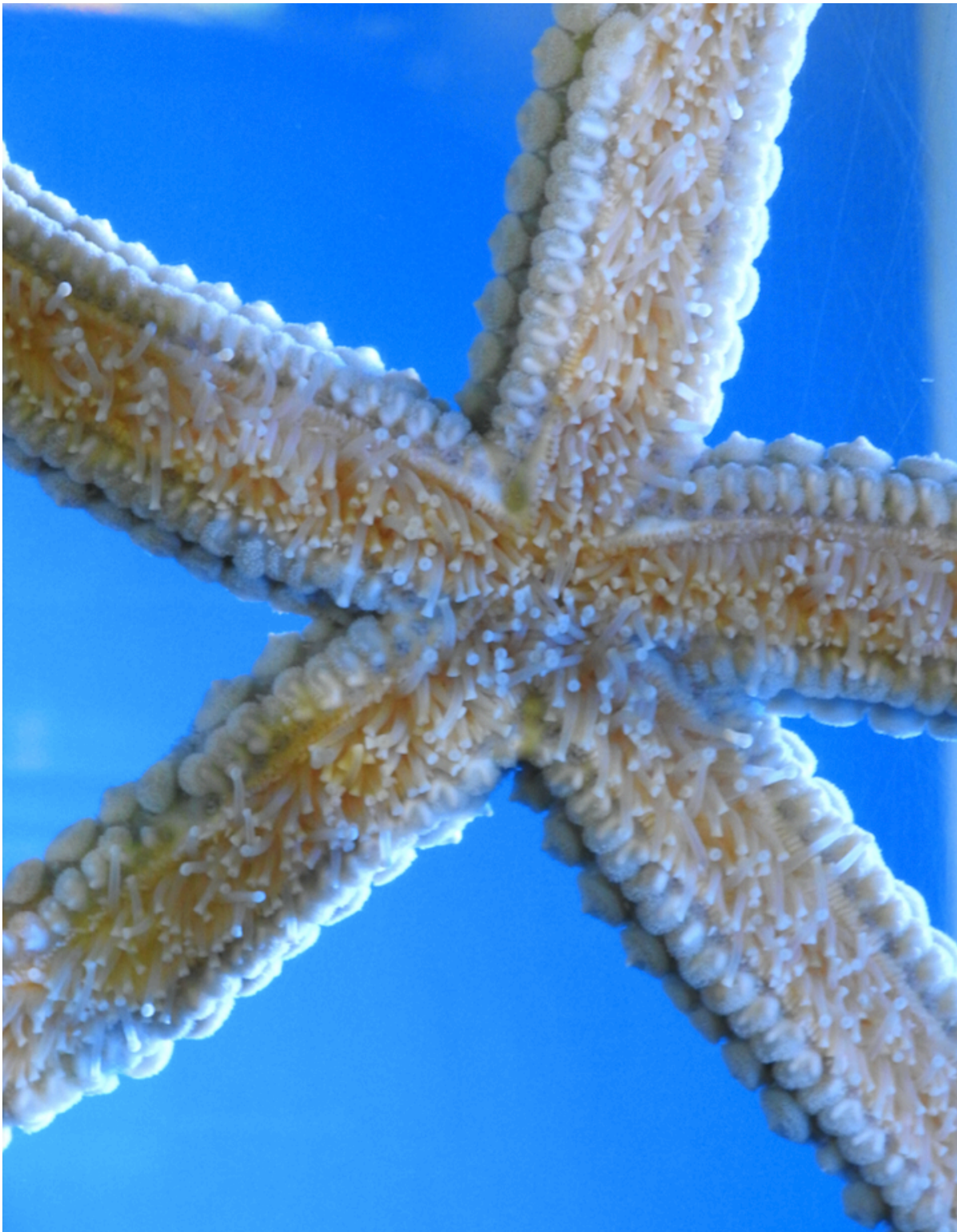


zoological society of london





sea life: london aquarium





museum of zoology





british museum







royal academy of arts





the author: Martina Nicolls

I am an author and humanitarian aid consultant with over 30 years' experience in the management, implementation, and evaluation of international aid development projects, particularly in post-conflict environments and countries with transitional governments, such as Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Darfur, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Pakistan, Iraq, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Georgia, Kosovo, Rwanda, and Sri Lanka, and also Mauritius, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia – and others. I provide technical advice on areas such as peace-building and conflict mitigation, education, poverty reduction, human rights, child labour, data quality and financing models.

But mostly I am a wanderer. Wherever I am and wherever I go, I take photographs and I write. My books include:

Similar but Different in the Animal Kingdom (2017)
A Mongolian Lament (2015)
The Komodo Verses (2012)

Liberia's Deadeast Ends (2012)
Bardot's Comet (2011)
Kashmir on a Knife-Edge (2010)
The Sudan Curse (2009)

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