

Letter from the Founder

"The 20th century was very different. It was a time of extraordinary technical advancement. But it was a century marred by two world wars and a cold war, where we lived under a constant paranoia that the nuclear holocaust was imminent. As a result, we were raised with a condition of fear. Our parents transmitted this fear to us, and that affected our ability to dream and to hope. Today the world is very different. We've lived in the longest period of peace the world has ever known. Yet we suffer from a kind of malaise of the soul. Today there is no longer any reason to raise our children with fear. We should instead raise them with hope, and encourage them to cast their eyes to the stars and dream."

Over cigars on the terrace of his daughter Camilla's home in bucolic Solomeo, central Italy, Brunello Cucinelli was expressing his immense sense of hope for the next generation. He was quick to point out that it was perhaps our complacency during this time of peace that allowed for the rise of the political extremism we see today. But then he smiled and said, "It doesn't bother me. I think it's a good thing. Because once this happened I suddenly saw an entire generation of young people questioning their parents' decisions. It is the first time in a long time that I've seen young people so involved, so passionate, and so ready to create positive change."

For many years Cucinelli has been an outspoken agent and prophet of that change. He was, for example, motivated — by the listing of his eponymous brand on the stock exchange — to write a book on humanist capitalism. And his philosophy essentially boils down to this question: what is the point of the luxury industry if the products it makes with the intention of evoking dreams are actually manufactured by crushing the dreams of others? This can mean the severance of the worker from the fruits of his labour, or working in sub-human conditions. Cucinelli's solution to this is to pay his workers 20 per cent above the market rate and to give them the chance to purchase his garments at the lowest possible industrial price. It can also mean a manufacturer ensuring it does not callously fuck up the environment and pollute its surrounding area. Either way, one thing is clear: if you are a luxury brand and you have not incorporated ethics — if you have not defined a way in which the making of your products enhances the lives of those doing the making while at the same time improving their surroundings your brand will, in a few years, be totally irrelevant.

Karl-Friedrich Scheufele, the co-president and co-owner of Chopard, says: "We already see a major generational shift happening. In the past the first question clients asked was, How much is it? Today, when their children come to us, the first thing they ask is, How was it made? Who was involved, how was the environment impacted?" Chopard was the first luxury brand to sign up to Fairmined gold, in which each step of the manufacturing process is traced to show that workers have been treated fairly

and the environment has not been adversely impacted. Says Alessandro Sartori, the Artistic Director of Zegna: "The values of the new generation are vastly different from the previous one. Where it was once admirable to be successful, today the first question we ask is, How did you achieve this success; did you improve the lives of others through your success?" Caroline Scheufele, the co-president of Chopard and Karl-Friedrich's sister, adds: "It's about human empathy. It's about considering and respecting other people, and I can see the young generation in my family understanding the importance of it." Cucinelli says: "It is about dignity. It is about giving each and every human being a sense of dignity that is not related to affluence. In order to achieve this we have to be fair and just in our desire for profit, and this must be balanced by our desire for giving."

As you read this, Zegna have officially joined the Fashion Pact, a coalition of luxury brands fighting for the sustainability of the Earth. Sartori says: "I have to commend Gildo Zegna in this regard. He saw early on that we had to evolve, and he invested in technology that allows us to recycle wool up to four times. By the fourth time the fibres are shorter and so the materials are used for padding or insulation. But we are already offering suits made from this 'upcycled' wool. It costs us more to manufacture in this way, but we had to be the first to make this change because, from an ethical perspective, it was important to us."

What, then, can The Rake do? I have been thinking for some time of changing the 'strap' — the line beneath *The Rake*'s name on the cover of our magazine - from 'The modern voice of classic elegance' to 'Ethics and elegance'. This will mean that the substance of the magazine needs to evolve to incorporate a greater amount of content related to ethics and humanism. The stories I would like to tell will express the philosophies not only of brands such as Chopard and Zegna but individuals such as Tom Stubbs and Anda Rowland, who last winter created a pop-up store on Savile Row to benefit Crisis, the British charity for homeless people. The stories I have in mind are too numerous and vast to fit into one issue of the magazine. So The Rake's Editor, Tom Chamberlin, and I will begin to incorporate this content into each issue as we progress. As well, with the help of advice from friends such as Hani Farsi — the film producer, hotelier and humanitarian who has just educated a generation of Arabic women filmmakers at U.C.L.A. — we will find a way beyond our fundraising initiatives for charities such as the Distinguished Gentleman's Ride and the Be Well Collective to positively impact the world around us. Because it is our responsibility to do so, just as it is yours.

> -Wei Koh, Founder & Editorial Director @wei_koh_revolution





Letter from the Editor

Over the next few weeks there will be another period of collective tension in the U.K. The supposed final furlong before Brexit day on October 31 (or 'B-day', if ablution-related humour appeals to your sensibility on this issue) will ensure all sides draw their whips and thrash their horses as desperately as possible, some hoping they were right about the predicted outcome, some wishing they were wrong. I admit that the Brexit debate has forced me into my most stubborn act of fence-sitting since my doctor gave me the choice between a strong suppository or weaker oral painkiller following a nasty boat-propeller injury to my leg when I was seven.

There are many consolations to being the editor of the world's finest and most trusted source on all things sartorial and grown-up. On the one hand I can't take the blame if it all goes to shit, but on the other I am happy not to take the credit if team Leave succeeds. What can be relied upon is that, either way, there will be an overdue realignment of priorities, and people will smarten up again. If we are indeed about to witness an avalanche of cash spewing from Her Majesty's Treasury, or from the Department for International Trade and every farm and fisherman's village in the land, we will all have an excuse to splash out a bit. If the opposite happens, well, pride will kick in and our purchases will become more considered, with the long term in mind. The alchemy produced by self-consciousness and caution leads to a reliance on the classic codes of style that have been this magazine's meat and drink for 11 years now, and part of the reason we were so well received when we launched in 2008.

This issue of *The Rake* focuses on ethics in the luxury menswear

industry. It could, it is true, be a wretched time to go anywhere near 'ethics'. The jostling for position of moral authority is the battleground of 2019. We are an argumentative species that seems to have reached the point at which political or cultural opponents can be defeated only by their delegitimisation as immoral people. As Evelyn Beatrice Hall, or Voltaire, depending on your allegiance, said: "I disapprove of what you say but I will defend the right to call you a fascist until everyone thinks you can't be trusted." Everyone is tainted; no one gets out alive. Heroes and national icons of state are targets because their admirers have political opponents. Received wisdom was that we were the good guys, but no, we have become victims of the conflict between the good and the perfect. The way we have allowed these two to become enemies, and how we have allowed words such as temperance and compromise to become tainted, will leave a chasm for those with 'simple' solutions. As much as we need to approach things with a sense of humour, if you are feeling frightened, it is fair enough.

By the same token, there has never been a more important and interesting time to run an ethics issue. When this madness ends I imagine a semblance of normality will return, but that will only come to pass should normal people take charge. And by 'normal' I mean folk who have moderation and honesty at the heart of their ambition. There are many people like this walking among us, and some of them are featured in this issue of the magazine, which we hope will serve as a well of ideas and inspiration, sartorially and ethically.

What do we mean by ethical? It's about the people who stick their head out of the covers and find ways to do good, to help others, to be kind; people not prepared to wait for the world to fix itself — Pied Pipers who want only to get rid of the rats, and those who inspire others to follow suit (see what I did there).

Moreover, an ethics issue with Sam Rockwell on the cover is deliciously apt. If we want to feel a celluloid-induced warm glow, we turn to Tom Hanks; if you want to get a hit of adrenaline, you can turn to Tom Cruise; but if you want to be challenged — and to make internal, spiritual and moral judgments of a fictional character that will, in turn, reflect something of your own character — you will turn to Rockwell. He is the keymaster of our darker desires, our guilt, our nefarious machinations, neatly laying out for us our distortions, diversions, delusions, evasions, justifications, rationalisations and psychological game playing. The effect of his work can be both uncomfortable and uplifting, but will often require a lie down afterwards — for which you could follow Sam's example in our photoshoot (page 102) and kick back with a Partagás Maduro No.1.

The luxury industry's cup overfloweth with examples of largesse, none more so than from the hand of Brunello Cucinelli, whose path to success has been strewn with the values and teachings of great philosophers such as Marcus Aurelius. His company's mission — other than creating beautiful and high-quality clothing — is to "restore human dignity", he tells *The Rake*'s founder, Wei Koh, in an interview in Cucinelli's home in Solomeo, central Italy (page 120).

Perhaps not many of you will have heard of the entrepreneur and philanthropist Hani Farsi, but if you read our interview with him in this issue (page 126), you will want to shake his hand. As well as being a hotshot backgammon player (who thrashed me during our conversation), Hani has committed his life and the memory of his late father to the empowerment of the needy and oppressed. From women in the Middle East to children in Africa, Hani's foundation has helped write some of the more uplifting stories in our global modern society.

This Christmas, and for the second year running, Savile Row will play host to a luxury pop-up store created by Anda Rowland and Tom Stubbs that is designed to benefit the British homelessness charity Crisis. We speak to Anda and Tom on page 130 — we encourage you to read, visit the store, and donate.

In this issue we also hear from the co-president of Chopard, Karl-Friedrich Scheufele, about the roll-out of Fairmined gold in his company's watches and jewellery, and Aleks Cvetkovic discusses how tailoring and luxury goods — as long as they are made with sustainable materials, from fair trading practices and on the back of workers' rights — can be as ethical a subject as any.

This letter should end on a positive note, lest my misanthropic ways filter into the magazine. The release of the El Rey del Mundo La Reina, the U.K.'s latest regional edition cigar, gives us not necessarily cause to celebrate but certainly reason to reflect and consider all the things we can be grateful for. I'll have boxes sent to Messrs Juncker and Johnson to get the ball rolling. A sense of gratitude is important, and if we spent half our time making lists of the things we have rather than indulging in self-righteousness by judging others, world peace would be the logical next step.

This reverie of mine is not a random one, either. This issue of The Rake will be published during the solemn and reverential period of Remembrance Sunday in the U.K., and close to the festivities of Thanksgiving in the United States. This year I will be thinking about Digby Tatham-Warter, a former major in the Parachute Regiment who took out a German tank during Operation Market Garden with his umbrella, which he insisted on carrying into battle. He went on to be the creator of the concept of modern safaris, whereby people are encouraged to observe and photograph animals rather than shoot them. I like Digby because most people have never heard of him, though I also suspect those people would be happy to be enlightened. This issue, in fact, is dedicated to the pioneers and philanthropists you might never have heard of but wish you had. There are legacies currently being made (and broken) in the world's corridors of power, but don't let that distract from the fact that others continue to do great things without boasting about them. It is a bit like bespoke tailoring in that way — it is enough merely to know, and to have the confidence in yourself to wear it without proclaiming it. Let's find pleasure in these stories and remember always Churchill's simplest but most effective line: "If you're going through hell, keep going."

> — Tom Chamberlin, Editor @tfchamberlin





THE PROPHET OF SOLOMEO

Brunello Cucinelli is the luxury industry's spiritual leader. He values the bottom line, but not at the expense of human dignity, and he understands the need to replenish nature, not plunder it. In other words, writes **wei koh**, he practises ethical capitalism with a rigour that is inspiring. Is it any wonder Pope Francis has given him his blessing?

photography kristina tochilko

f the various men I've met since I founded *The Rake* 11 years ago, the two I've found most inspiring are Ralph Lauren and Brunello Cucinėlli. Lauren, because he is my spiritual father: he and his eponymous brand formed my tastes at an early age. What was amazing upon getting to know him was the discovery that he was far more than a design genius — I prefer America's poet laureate of style and, ultimately, one of the best human beings I know. As for Brunello, each conversation we have had over the past decade has deepened my respect and admiration for him. Here is a man who, from the very beginning, has professed a belief in what I feel is the most important philosophy in the luxury world: ethical capitalism.

It was Cucinelli who told potential investors in his company before his IPO was launched (and he became a billionaire) not to invest in his company if they were interested only in quick profit. He wasn't going to move production to eastern Europe, as other Italian brands had. Quite the opposite, in fact: he was going to do everything he could to connect the next generation with the artisanal skillset of their country. For him it was important to create a successful empire but also to give dignity to the people who worked for him. It is for this reason he intentionally pays his workers 20 per cent above the market rate. It is for this reason he gives every employee the chance to purchase his garments at a price that reflects only the cost of the raw materials. He wants them to be proud of what they make. And it is for this reason he feeds them the best communal lunch in the fashion industry, all from locally sourced produce.

Brunello is one of those people whose motivation is to do good, to positively benefit everyone around them and humanity in general, and I think you can sense that in the clothing he makes. His clothes are about softness, liberation, comfort, individuality and timelessness. In the same way you can feel Lauren's extraordinary sense of optimism each time you wear a Ralph Lauren garment, I believe you can feel Brunello Cucinelli's sense of ethics and his desire to positively impact the world each time you put on one of his sweaters or gilets or one–and–a–half–breasted, deconstructed jackets. And because he has been such a pioneer in making ethics

the highest priority in a business, it would be impossible to create the Ethics issue of *The Rake* without visiting his home in Solomeo. Over a wonderful conversation, which ended with cigars on the terrace of his daughter Camilla's house, I had the opportunity again to learn from this magnificent man about the values that have shaped both his luxury empire and his vision for living.

It seems that sustainability has become a major topic in luxury, yet you were always promoting its importance at the beginning...

You know, I don't like to use this term 'sustainability'. Because when we were farmers we lived in harmony with the Creator. We would harvest the grain. We would cut down a tree to use but we would plant another in its place. Some winters we didn't have heat. The rabbits were the most delicate of the animals. When they were cold we would bring them into the bedroom with us. We harvested grapes for wine, olives for oil, we used what we needed but ensured that we returned to nature what she needed, and everything was in balance. The fields were harvested once a year. The grain and seeds just once a year. Now our fields are over-harvested. My grandfather would say, "May God send us the right amount of wind and the fair amount of fog". What would he implore the Creator for? The fair amount. The correct amount. For this reason I don't like to use the term 'sustainability'; I prefer to use the term 'harmony'. Because we need to live in balance with nature and with other human beings. Epicurus said that human beings have two issues: the first relates to curing the unhappiness of the soul, and that means constant research on happiness. The second is that human beings must use what the land gives us but never consume it. Consuming implies there are finite resources. But the land will give us eternally as long as we respect the land. People forget that luxury, wool, cashmere, and so on also come from the land.

Can you give us more insight into the philosophy of balance and harmony?

I think about the Japanese Emperor Akihito, who on the first of May [this year] gave up his throne for his son [Naruhito]. And







the new dynasty was named 'harmony and hope'. I think this is beautiful. Jean–Jacques Rousseau said that a human being is creative when everything around him is in peace with creation. Today the term 'sustainability' is a little too focused on one specific thing — focused, for example, on plastic. Which is an important issue. But this is just one part of the bigger equation. I like to call what is important to me, 'human sustainability'. Everything derives from the land. So after harvesting, my grandfather would always take the first sack and he would

give it back to the community.

You are famous for paying your factory workers 20 per cent above the market rate. Why is this important to you?

I feel that life is about fair profit and fair growth. It is important to profit but for those working with you to keep their dignity. Would you want to buy something if you knew that it was made through unfair profit, through someone losing his dignity? How can we have luxury that would create this negativity in the world? Profit must come hand—in—hand with giving. And giving can be at any level in society. For example, we are restoring a theatre here in Solomeo. A donation for nine euros arrived with a letter that said, "This is to help sustain the theatre for another 300 years". I investigated, and it came from a retired older woman, a pensioner who lived on €500 a month. But she was expressing the importance of giving. Because in this world we must have

fair profit, fair growth, but also fair giving to create a correct equilibrium and balance for humanity.

Do you feel we live in a dystopian world amid political extremism and divisiveness embodied by some of the world's most prominent leaders?

It's interesting, because I think President Trump getting elected was a positive thing. This is actually quite fascinating. The day he

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was elected was the day when young people became involved. As a result I have never seen more young people wanting to question the politics of the world we live in. You can see from the history of the Roman

emperors: every time there was a genius he was succeeded by a tyrant. And every time there was a tyrant he was succeeded by a genius. It means that during the period when a genius is in power it is easy for us to grow complacent. But when a tyrant emerges we begin to question him and eventually to overthrow him. Remember, we are custodians of this world for just a short period of time.

Do you feel as a generation we've been too complacent politically, ethically and otherwise?

To me, the last 30 years for us has been characterised as something of a civilisation crisis. Great ideals have somehow passed into the shadows. We've tried to govern humanity only with science and



technology, and this is simply not possible. The Greeks had the mind of Apollo and the soul of Dionysus. The Illuminists had the mind of Voltaire and the soul of Rousseau. So we need to blend the mind and the soul together.

What is needed to unite mind and soul?

We need to have empathy for others, but true empathy. Why do I say this? Because the mobile phone has changed humanity. When I see young people with a mobile phone in their hands I hope that in their other hand they will have a book or something else that expresses ideas that provokes them to think. I would encourage them to be individuals, and that all begins by being true to yourself and not living your life by how you are perceived by a community that exists only on an electronic device. To be credible you need to be truthful. When you're happy, when you're sad, when things don't work out for you, you need to be truthful. The mobile phone and social media can sometimes distort this truth. But I sense a new era emerging, one where we go back to true politics, family values and spiritual values.

How can we learn from our mistakes to positively benefit the next generation?

We have made a big mistake with the younger generation. We transmitted this message of fear. The fear of failing, the fear of not being good enough, the fear of striking out on your own. Tomorrow, if we substitute this fear with hope, your entire perspective of life completely changes. My father fought in a war.

My grandfather fought in a war. He faced famine. They faced atrocious things in life, and I think this is where this culture of fear comes from. But why are we fearful? Look at how many millions of people are no longer suffering from famine. The world is at peace. It is full of potential. Hope is the real enemy of any tyrant. And so we must now instil hope in the next generation.

Do you feel the mobile phone and social media have created a prevailing sense of insecurity, because we are constantly comparing ourselves to others?

The key to living correctly in the age of the mobile phone is to keep an internal life, which is a secret life. A life that is unknown to this device. So you have a public life, of course, but then you have a secret life that is not secret in a bad way but personal and private in a positive way. It would be nice to see the next generation react against the mobile phone and return to discretion. What is incredible to me is that in the last 30 years we've probably had more scientific, medical and technological breakthroughs than ever before. As a result, people are living so much longer. And yet there is a prevailing malaise of the soul. Human beings are born with this malaise of the soul and it remains a constant companion for us throughout our lives. The mobile phone has many practical benefits but it has also made this feeling of malaise a little bit heavier. I believe the human mind today receives so many strong impulses that we are in a constant state of tension, fear, malcontent and anger. The solution is not to dwell on this inequality but instead to develop a culture in which each time



someone is unhappy they make an effort to do some kindness for someone else. This is the only antidote to this malaise, and it has always been since the beginning of humanity. Pavel Florensky, a Russian theologian and philosopher, was sentenced to death in 1937 during the Great Purge. Just before he was executed he wrote a letter to his children. He told them, When your soul is heavy, when someone offends you or humiliates you, when something doesn't work out for you, go outside and look up at the stars and everything will regain its balance. We need to rediscover looking at the sky and stars.

But could you live without technology? You are most certainly not a Luddite.

Don't get me wrong, I would like to be modern. I am modern. I accept change. But I do not want a device to rob us of the soul our Creator has given us. Thirty per cent of our time during work is dedicated to nothing. And you know who is robbed at the end of the day? We are. We are robbed of our intimacy and our focus. We need to rediscover the balance between work and life. At Brunello Cucinelli you cannot work more than eight hours a day. But I would ask you to work eight true hours. Without sending thousands of messages, or splitting your focus between your work and social media. Here we don't send emails. We pick up the phone and talk to each other, so we can sense how the other person is feeling. We respect each other's humanity in this way. And in so doing it is an affirmation of dignity. To send an email, especially one that has a harsh message, is a denial of dignity.

You've been an outspoken admirer of the pope. Why is that?

Because he understands the value of human relationships. He took the name of Francis of Assisi, who lived 800 years ago. One of the most important things Francis did was in 1219, when he went to Egypt to meet the Islamic sultans at great risk of being killed. And he asked, Can we become friends? He sustained this great theory of relationships. He was a genius at human relationships.

Is it true the pope reached out to you to help him on a special project?

It was a Friday morning and the Church called me to ask if I could write a piece on dignity in the workplace. So I wrote this essay. The following day they announced that in March next year, in Assisi, the pope will come. And he would like to meet the younger generation and hold a conference where the subject is about dignity at work. This is the big topic in life. So I am very happy.

What is style to you?

Let's just say that human beings need to feel good when they are dressed — perhaps now more than ever, because people are constantly posting images. This creates research and a constant desire for perfection. Especially now that people can zoom in on details on their phones. This is the reality. But there is an ethical consideration regarding how long clothes should endure. I was born into a farming family. And we had a belief that we cannot waste anything, and this applied to clothes. We would wear handme-downs or we would alter clothing to fit the next generation. I



remember a group of Buddhist monks came to visit us in Solomeo. Before eating, the monks said this prayer: "Let's eat in a modest way, so there is enough for the rest of humanity."

What does quality mean to you?

We have a saying where I come from: 'There are three things you cannot hide for long: the sun, the moon and the truth.' Clothing made to be disposable will show this truth the same way clothing

meant to endure for ever will show its truth. Everything I buy, even if it's a watch, I hope my grandchildren and their children will use. I hope these things will endure for 100 years or more.

"On the men's design team there is not a single person who went to fashion school — we recruited them from our factory."

Is it true you donate a substantial amount of your excess inventory to charities around the world?

I don't like to talk about it. Because publicity is not the goal. But we donate things. We have organisations around the world, I like to call them friends, from Peru to Africa. And we send them things.

Why is it important that everyone in your organisation can afford to wear your clothing?

This is a big topic. Because how else could someone that is earning €1,500 a month afford the garments that we make or to be

dressed primarily in our clothing? For me it is important that they have the possibility to buy our clothes for no more than the cost of the raw materials, because then they can wear what they create. And this gives their work a real sense of dignity. But it also helps to express their sense of style and taste. When you go to lunch at our canteen, you will see young men dressed in our style but each has put his own unique twist on his look. It is a bit of a competition between them to see who is most chic. A lot of the guys that work

with us on the product and design team were spotted in this way. On the men's design team there is not a single person who went to fashion school — we recruited them from our factory based on

their style, the way they combined things in a beautiful way.

How does this restore dignity to the people working for you?

Marx talked about how workers became disconnected from the fruits of their labour and that this brought about a great sense of unhappiness. Because they could not see what the final product of their work was. This is why, throughout the factory, we set up displays of what the final product looks like. But I want the people working with me to not only see the product but to be able to put it on and wear it every day. This is the restoration of pride and dignity to them and is fundamental to my belief in ethical capitalism.













